

Memo To: All UH-Downtown PS Holders

UH-Downtown/PS 03.B.04

From: Loren J. Blanchard, President

Issue No. 2

Effective date: 05/15/2023

Subject: Grading System for Graduate-Level Courses

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1. PURPOSE

This Policy Statement (PS) describes the grading system used at the University of Houston Downtown in the graduate programs. The end-of-course grades are intended to convey the level of achievement of each student in the class. These grades are used by students, faculty, university administrators, and prospective employers to make a multitude of different decisions. The policies and procedures described in this policy are designed to assure consistency in the assignment of grades at UHD. Graduate programs are professional degrees that require a sustained level of high-quality academic achievement. Consequently, students who matriculate in graduate programs are held to higher standards than students in undergraduate programs. Individual graduate programs may have requirements that go beyond those described in this policy.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Census Date:** The official day of record is the day the UHD must determine the enrollments that are reported to the Coordinating Board for state reimbursement. Also called the Day of Record, this is the last day a student may drop a course without a grade. The Day of Record is posted in the academic calendar.
- 2.2 **Dropped Course:** A course in which a student at an institution of higher education has enrolled for credit, but does not complete and receives a grade of W, while still staying enrolled in one or more courses for the semester or term. To drop a course, a student must notify the Office of the Registrar via MyUHD of the drop before one of the deadlines specified in sections 4.2 or 4.3 of this policy. It is advised that a student consult an academic advisor before dropping a course.
- 2.3 **Enroll:** For the purposes of this policy, registration in a course at the census date.
- 2.4 **Grade Points:** A course score value that is derived by multiplying the number of semester hours of academic credit for a course by a point value for each possible grade in the course. The grade point values are listed below.

Grade	Definition	Grade Points per Semester Credit Hour
A	=	4.0
B	=	3.0
C	=	2.0
D	=	1.0
F	=	0
AUD	= Audit	---
IP	= In Progress	---
S	= Satisfactory (Passed)	---
U	= Unsatisfactory (Failed)	---
I	= Incomplete	---
I/F	= Incomplete/Failed	---
W	= Drop	---
CA	= Credit Awarded	---
WM	= Withdrawn-Military	---

2.5 Graduate Grade Point Average (GPA): A measure of the overall level of a student's academic achievement in a graduate program. It is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned at UHD in a graduate program by the total number of semester credit hours earned in the graduate program.

2.6 Good Academic Standing: while enrolled in any UHD graduate program, students must maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 to remain in good academic standing.

2.7 Semester Credit Hours: Graduate-level semester credit hours earned at UHD.

3. POLICY

3.1 Calculation of Graduate Grade Point Average (GPA): All and only UHD semester credit hours attempted within a graduate degree program will be calculated in the Graduate GPA and used in determining academic standing within the graduate program. The following formula represents the method of computing the Program Grade Point Average.

UHD Graduate Program GPA = total number of graduate grade points earned at UHD that are applied to the program ÷ total number of semester credit hours taken UHD that are applied to the program.

- 3.2 Grades for Repeated Courses: If a student repeats a course as a student enrolled in a graduate program, both grades are calculated in the Graduate Program GPA.
- 3.3 Grades for Thesis or Sequenced Thesis Courses: Students cannot be credited with more than 6 credits toward the degree in designated, sequenced thesis/final experience courses. Students should only enroll in the second thesis/final experience course during the semester in which they anticipate defending and submitting their work to the College.

For programs with 6 hours of thesis requirements, a passing grade must be earned in the first thesis course before enrolling in the second/final thesis course. Students who do not successfully complete the thesis proposal may be granted an Incomplete or In Progress, at committee discretion.

If a student is not able to defend in the second course, or if the thesis/final experience does not receive final approval by the College in that semester, then the student will receive an IP grade for the course and enroll again in the course in the following semester. A letter grade is only awarded during the semester of the defense and the final approval by the College.

- 3.4 GPA at the Time of Graduation: UHD Grade Point Average (GPA) is used at the time of graduation and is used to certify the degree. When a graduate course is repeated, both grades are used in computing the UHD grade point average. Unless a grade appeal has been found in the student's favor as outlined in the grade appeal process (section 4.5 of this policy) the GPA certified at the time of graduation remains the official GPA for the certified degree and shall not be subject to change. Grades for courses repeated after graduation and new courses completed after graduation, do not change the GPA certified at the time of graduation. Transfer grades are not included in the calculation of the graduate program GPA.
- 3.5 Grades of A through F – All students are expected to maintain high academic standards throughout their graduate programs. Graduate students who receive grades of “C” in 9 or more graduate semester credit hours are subject to dismissal. Specific programs may have more stringent requirements that must be provided in their program handbook.
- 3.6 In addition, any grades of D or F are grounds for dismissal from a graduate program (see PS 03.B.07).
- 3.7 Grade of I (Incomplete): A grade of I is given only when students have completed a significant portion of the course requirements and a documented emergency prevent

the student from completing the remaining course requirements. Before an instructor can assign a grade of I, they must file with, and get approved from, their department chair. This approval is documented by a form signed by both the instructor and the student that describes the necessary work that can be submitted before the deadlines described in the subsections below. If a student is unable to sign the form, the instructor must state on the form the reason for granting the I grade and the work necessary for the removal of the I grade.

- 3.7.1 Fall Semester: If the incomplete grade was assigned during the Fall semester, the grade of I will be changed to either the grade earned based on the assignments submitted before the end of the subsequent Spring term. It is the instructor's responsibility to submit the grade change to the Office of the Registrar. If the instructor is unavailable, the home department is responsible for submitting the grade change to the Office of the Registrar. If no grade is submitted to the Office of the Registrar at the end of the subsequent Spring semester, the incomplete grade is automatically changed to an I/F.
- 3.7.2 Spring Semester and Summer Term: If the incomplete grade was assigned during the Spring semester or a Summer term, the grade of I will be changed to grade earned based on the assignments submitted before the end of the subsequent Fall term. If no grade is submitted to the Office of the Registrar, the incomplete grade is automatically changed to an I/F.
- 3.7.3 Mini-terms: If the incomplete grade was assigned during the part of a term or mini-term, the grade of I will be changed to grade earned based on the assignments submitted before the end of the subsequent long semester.
- 3.7.4 Military Leave: Students who have received I grades because their enrollment has been interrupted by active military duty in the United States military must complete the missing work within one year from the conclusion of those duties. It is the responsibility of the student to provide official documentation of their required duties to the Office of Veterans Affairs and to the Office of the Registrar. If the work is not completed within one year from the conclusion of those duties, the grade of I is changed to WM.
- 3.7.5 Title IX Medical Leave: In compliance with Title IX, students with applicable leave designation may complete outstanding coursework within one long semester after the expiration of the leave. It is the responsibility of the student to provide a supporting statement to the Title IX coordinator and to the Office of the Registrar. If the student does not complete the outstanding coursework within one long semester after the expiration of the leave, the student's grade will remain indefinitely I, unless the student decides to accept the grade earned in the class. If the student wished to accept the earned grade, they should request to do so, who will defer to the instructor of record as to the earned grade in the class.
- 3.7.6 Outstanding Incompletes at Graduation: A grade of I counts as an F in

calculating the graduation GPA for purposes of determining eligibility for graduation.

- 3.8 Grade of IP (In Progress): A grade of IP may be assigned only in courses that have been officially approved for such designation. The grade of IP is used primarily in thesis and selected research courses in which a student is registered in order to use university resources. In calculating the GPA, a grade of IP receives no grade point value and it may remain on a student's transcript in perpetuity. To receive grade credit for a course in which an IP was assigned a student must repeat the course and earn a passing grade.
- 3.9 Grade of S/U (Satisfactory Pass/Unsatisfactory Fail): A grade of S/U may be assigned only in courses that have been officially approved for such designation. Credit received with a grade of S/U is not included in calculating the GPA.
- 3.10 Grade of AU (Audit): In accordance with [PS 03.A.03 – Auditing Courses](#), a grade of AU may be assigned only in those courses officially approved for such designation. Grades of AU are not included in calculating the GPA.
- 3.11 Grade of W (Drop): The grade of W is assigned when a student drops a course after the census date. Grades of W are not included in calculating the GPA.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 The instructor for a course is responsible for assigning end-of-course grades to students based on the method of evaluation expressed in the description of weights given to each assignment.
 - 4.1.1 The instructor for the course is solely responsible for ensuring that end-of-course grades are submitted to the Office of the Registrar via electronic means by the deadline established for such submission.
- 4.2 Student Deadlines for Dropping from Courses: Students will not receive a grade for a course and the course will not appear on their transcript (academic history) if they notify the Office of the Registrar via [MyUHD](#) and officially drop a course before or on the census date (the official day of record), as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for publishing these dates before the start of any term on the university's academic calendar. It is advised that a student consult a graduate advisor before dropping a course.
- 4.3 Student Deadlines for Receiving a Grade of W: Students receive a grade of W for any course from which they drop via [MyUHD](#) after the dates specified in section 4.2 but by the 60% completion point in the period of enrollment. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for publishing the deadline before the start of any term on the university's academic calendar. **Note:** For terms of other lengths, the Office of the Registrar will publish the date.

- 4.4 Retroactive Withdrawal: Grades of W are granted retroactively (i.e., after the published deadline) only under unusual and well documented circumstances. Students requesting a complete retroactive withdrawal (i.e., withdrawal from all courses taken during a semester) must submit an appeal to the Office of the Registrar, which is responsible for archiving these documents; submitting the appeal documents to the academic dean in the college of the student's home department; and carrying out the academic dean's decision.

The process is the same for students requesting a partial retroactive withdrawal (i.e., withdrawal from one or more but not all courses taken during a semester), except that the Office of the Registrar will submit partial retroactive withdrawal appeals to the academic dean in the college in which each course is taken. If the relevant dean finds sufficient documented justification for a complete or partial retroactive withdrawal, the dean will file an administrative request with the Office of the Registrar. When an approval has been granted, the dean's office will also notify the course instructors, department chairs, and graduate director of the decision and change of grade (provided they are still employed at UHD). The Office of the Registrar is responsible for letting the student know the relevant dean's decision, which is final. Students seeking a retroactive withdrawal must appeal within one calendar year after the close of term for which the request is made.

- 4.5 Appeal of Course Grades: If a student believes a course grade to be in error (i.e., if it appears to be a miscalculation, or if it appears that grade was not calculated and/or evaluated according to the course instructor's stated procedure) a student may file an appeal by proceeding in the following sequence: (1) appeal first to the course instructor, (2) if the appeal is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, then appeal to the appropriate home department chair, (3) the final level of appeal would be to the appropriate dean.

4.5.1 If a student does not appeal a grade within one calendar year after the close of the semester in which the grade was received, the grade is final and no appeal will be heard.

4.5.2 The responsible party at each level has 14 academic calendar days to respond to students in writing with their decision regarding the appeal, unless granted an exception by the dean of the college in which the original grade was awarded.

4.5.3 [Appeals must be submitted in writing](#). Students bear the responsibility for providing documentation related to the grade appeal. If the appeal reaches the chair or dean and it is determined that there is evidence of a grading error, the chair or dean will consult with the course instructor before making a final decision. Final decisions must be communicated in writing to all concerned parties.

4.5.4 When the appealed grade is from a course that is housed in a multidisciplinary or multi-college program, all appeals will be handled within the course's department and college. A student may file an appeal by proceeding in the following sequence: (1) appeal first to the course instructor, (2) if the appeal is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, then appeal to the chair of the department in which that course is housed (for courses in programs that do not have a department chair, the appeal is initiated with the program director), (3) the final level of appeal would be to the dean of the college in which that course is housed.

4.5.5 An instructor may appeal the chair's decision to the Office of the Dean.

4.6 Change of Course Grade: A change of course grade initiated by the instructor must be approved by the home department chair within one calendar year after the close of the semester in which the grade was received. If the time period extends beyond one year or involves change from an F, it must also be approved by the dean.

4.6.1 A change of course grade issued by the home department chair must be approved by the dean and notification must be sent to the instructor and appropriate graduate director.

4.6.2 A change of course grade issued by the dean must include notification to the instructor, home department chair, and appropriate graduate director.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Review: Every five years, or as necessary.

Signed original on file in the Office of Human Resources.

6. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 4/27/2018

7. REFERENCES

[MyUHD](#)

[PS 03.A.03 – Auditing Courses](#)

[PS 03.A.36 Course Drop Limit](#)

[PS 03.B.07 Graduate Academic Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal](#)

[Texas Education Code §51.907: Limitations on the Number of Courses that may beDropped under Certain Circumstances](#)

8. EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: [Grade Appeal Form](#)

Exhibit B: [Incomplete Grade Request Form](#)