

Provost and Academic Vice President's Office



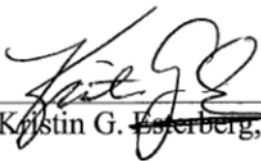
TO: Kristin G. Esterberg, Provost and Academic Vice President
 FROM: Stephen Young, Chair, All-College Committee
 RE: Request for Changes in the Grading System and Administrative Grades
 DATE: May 29, 2013

Enclosed for your review and approval is the request for changes to the established grading and census/walkaway reporting practices and to the academic policy on administrative grades and the grading system.

This request has been recommended by Enrollment Management, the Academic Policies Committee, and the All-College Committee. All Contractual obligations have been met. The effective date is Fall 2013.

I also recommend approval.

Approve:


 Kristin G. Esterberg, Provost and Academic Vice President

Disapprove:

05/13
 Date

Comments, if any:

- Distribution:
- President's Cabinet
 - Dean's Council
 - Department Chairpersons
 - Registrar
 - Director, Academic Advising
 - Director, Career Services
 - Associate Dean, Admissions
 - Chair, All-College Committee
 - Chair, Curriculum Committee
 - Chair, Academic Policies Committee
 - Chair, Student Affairs Committee
 - President, Salem Chapter/MSCA
 - President, Salem Chapter/APA
 - President, SGA

SY/vsr

Proposal # 13:223

Approved by:

APC _____

ACC _____

Salem State University Undergraduate Governance
Academic Policy Proposal Form

Title:

Grading System and Administrative Grades

(please give your request a brief descriptive title)

New Policy

Description of policy as it would appear in the catalog:

Rationale for new policy:

Change to an Existing Policy

Existing Policy as it currently appears in the catalog:

See Attached

Proposed Policy (as it would appear in the catalog):

See attached

Rationale for change to existing policy:

See attached

Proposed effective date: Fall 2013

Submitter: Scott James/Megan Miller/Judy Cramer

Department: Enrollment Management

Date Submitted: May 6, 2013



MEMORANDUM

TO: Steven Young, Chair
All College Committee

FROM: Scott James, Vice President
Enrollment Management and Student Life

DATE: May 3, 2013

RE: Recommended Revisions to Established Grading and Census/Walkaway
Reporting Practices
Revision to the Academic Policy on Administrative Grades and the Grading
System

Background

In the 2011-2012 academic year, a change to the "Walk-Away" Census reporting process was approved (12:108) that incorporated an optional mid-term grade reporting process and a final mandatory census reporting process as the point of course grading, to be implemented for the Fall 2013 semester. This policy was developed to address concerns raised by the University's auditors with our existing process-- they felt that the university was not meeting federal regulatory requirements of due diligence in ensuring that students who were receiving federal financial aid funds were, in fact, attending class and, therefore, entitled to those funds. It was also developed to address the issue of identifying students who were in academic difficulty in their classes at the mid-point of the semester, consolidating the multi-office requests for this information into a voluntary mid-term grade reporting process that also incorporated an element of census reporting on students who had "walked away" from a class or classes. The recommended policy changes were developed by a subcommittee of the Enrollment Management and Retention Committee composed of both faculty and administrators.

Recent developments have made a further revision to this policy necessary both in order to meet the increasingly high standards of federal regulation in this area, and in light of the implementation of the MAP-Works student retention and early warning system. A thorough review by our Financial Aid Officer of the federal regulations surrounding our institutional responsibility to collect information on the attendance status of our students resulted in a request for adjustments in the policy. We believe that this plan will satisfy our audit requirements that this institution must comply with both the spirit and the intent of the law, which, simply stated, means there must be a means to communicate information that will affect a student's eligibility. [Part and subpart: 668.16 (b)(3)]. Additionally, the implementation of the

MAP-Works student retention and early warning system has altered our institutional approach to the identification and tracking of students in academic and other difficulty during the course of the semester, making a revision to the previously approved policy necessary.

Proposed Revision to the Walkaway Reporting Process:

In order to address the need to identify students early in the semester who have ceased attending Salem State University prior to the disbursement of federal financial aid, we are proposing the following:

1. **Roster Validation/Census Reporting.** At the end of the second week of classes, all faculty will be asked to review their class rosters and report on any students who have not initiated attendance, stopped attending, or who have been attending but do not appear on the class roster. Faculty will work with their department chairpersons to ensure registration of any student who does not appear on the roster but who is attending the class. All graded course components will be selected for roster verification. This will serve several purposes:
 - a. It will ensure that students who are attending a particular class are actually registered for the section in question. ;
 - b. it will ensure that the University does not incorrectly disburse financial aid to students who are registered for, but not attending classes. This eliminates the present activity and expense of recovering funds disbursed to nonattending students.
 - c. it will allow our academic support services personnel to reach out to students early in the semester at risk of failing one or more classes because of nonattendance.
2. **Student Status Post-Roster Validation.** Students who have been reported as never attending or attending only through the first week will be dropped from the class(es) in question without penalty. Students reported as no longer attending as of the end of the second week will be withdrawn from the course with a "W" grade. Thereafter students will be responsible for withdrawing themselves from the class(es) that they have stopped attending. All students will be notified in writing regarding a report of nonattendance, and will have the opportunity to correct their status upon the Registrar's Office receiving written confirmation from the faculty instructor of the class that the student is still attending class.
3. **Mid-semester Grade Reporting.** In order to address concerns raised about identifying students at academic risk mid-semester, faculty will be asked to report voluntarily students who are failing or are in danger of failing at the mid-point of the semester by logging a report in the MAP-Works early warning system. MAP-Works allows the faculty member to report a number of reasons for the student's academic difficulty, including nonattendance among the various options. Students reported as being in academic difficulty will receive follow up intervention from student support services personnel. Assigned staff will follow up with Advising Office, Financial Aid and the Registrar's Office on any student who is reported as no longer attending any of his/her classes at the mid-point of the semester.

The mid-semester voluntary report will replace the current multi-office requests for this information and will increase the coordination of outreach to students in academic difficulty.

4. **Final Grade Reporting.** In order to indicate final student attending status at the point of final grade submission, we are proposing the following modification to the self-service grades available in the grade roster in Navigator to faculty:

Elimination of the "NG" grading option and modification of the manner in which F grades are collected from the faculty to incorporate information about students who have ceased to attend.

Students who have not attended the class in question or have ceased attending, or who have failed the class, will be graded with one of the following self-service grades that will appear on the student's official transcript with either a grade of F* (Administrative F) or F (Earned F Grade):

- F0 Never Attended (F*)
- F1 Attended through week 1 of the semester (F*)
- F2 Attended through week 2 of the semester(F*)
- F3 Attended through week 3 of the semester(F*)
- F4 Attended through week 4 of the semester(F*)
- F5 Attended through week 5 of the semester(F*)
- F6 Attended through week 6 of the semester(F*)
- F7 Attended through week 7 of the semester(F*)
- F8 Attended through week 8 of the semester(F*)
- F9 Attended through week 9 of the semester(F*)
- F10 Attended through week 10 of the semester(F*)
- F11 Attended through week 11 of the semester(F*)
- F12 Attended through week 12 of the semester(F*)
- F13 Attended through week 13 of the semester(F*)
- F14 Attended through week 14 of the semester (F)
- F15 Attended the whole semester or attendance not reported.(F)

F0-F13 will appear on the student's official transcript as an F*, or Administrative F grade, eliminating the need for the NG grade and for the lapsing process associated with the NG grade. The use of the administrative F* reflects the fact that the student, by ceasing attendance, has unofficially withdrawn from the class.

F14-F15 will appear on the student's official transcript as an earned F grade.

Because the student's official grades as recorded on the official transcript reflect current grade policy, no major changes to the official grading scheme of the University are necessary, but minor revisions to that policy and the policy on administrative grades follow this section. Full instructions to the faculty on the use of the F grades indicated above will be provided at the time that grade rosters are generated each semester. Faculty may choose to use the F15 grade to indicate that either the student attended the full class and earned his/her F grade, or that attendance simply was not reported.

The information recorded above by the faculty member will be used by the Financial Aid Office to correctly evaluate whether or not a student was eligible to receive federal financial aid. In each case, if a student did not complete any classes in a term, and they have received any financial assistance for that term, including, but not limited to, Title IV funds, scholarships, military assistance, etc., a Return To Title IV (R2T4) calculation must be completed by the Financial Aid Office, a process that requires the approximate last date of attendance in class by the student to determine what portion of the funds

must be returned to the funding agency. It will also allow student support services personnel to work with students in academic difficulty moving forward as they will have additional information about the source of the failing grade.

As is the case with all existing grades, faculty members may make corrections by submitting a grade change in accordance with normal procedures—discrepancies between assigned grades and the original report of non-attending status will be addressed by the Financial Aid Office.

Grade Policy and Administrative Grade Policy

To support the process outlined above, and, additionally, to update the grade policy to reflect current grades that appear on student transcripts, minor revisions to the existing policies on the grading system and administrative grades need to be made.

Current Policies:

Grading System

A	4.0	C	2.0
A-	3.7	C-	1.7
B+	3.3	D+	1.3
B	3.0	D	1.0
B-	2.7	D-	0.7
C+	2.3	F	0.0

F* (See Administrative Grades)

W (See Administrative Grades)

NG (See Administrative Grades)

Administrative Grades

In addition to the academic grades listed previously, two grades may be assigned administratively: W (Withdrawal) and F* (Administrative F) grades are used in connection with withdrawal from courses (see Withdrawal from Courses). The W grade carries no grade-point value, whereas the F* grade carries a point value of 0 and is used in exactly the same way as an academic F grade in calculating the grade-point average. Note: NG (No Grade) changes to an F*.

NG (No grade) is an additional administrative "grade" which changes to an F* after the sixth week of the following semester if the student does not immediately contact the instructor of the course to rectify the circumstances which led to the NG. An F* will be treated as an F in computing the student's grade point average (GPA).

Proposed Changes:

Official Grading System

A	4.0	C	2.0
A-	3.7	C-	1.7
B+	3.3	D+	1.3
B	3.0	D	1.0
B-	2.7	D-	0.7
C+	2.3	F	0.0

F* (See Administrative Grades)

W (See Administrative Grades)

~~NG (See Administrative Grades)~~

Administrative Grades

In addition to the academic grades listed previously, two grades may be assigned administratively: W (Withdrawal) and F* (Administrative F), both used in connection with official or unofficial withdrawal from courses. The W grade carries no grade-point value, whereas the F* grade carries a point value of 0 and is used in exactly the same way as an academic F grade in calculating the grade-point average. ~~Note: NG (No Grade) changes to an F*.~~

~~NG (No grade) is an additional administrative "grade" which changes to an F* after the sixth week of the following semester if the student does not immediately contact the instructor of the course to rectify the circumstances which led to the NG. An F* will be treated as an F in computing the student's grade point average (GPA).~~

~~LAST REVISED: 10/2011
PURPOSE OF CHANGE: ...
WHICH THE EMPLOYERS TO ...
JOB AT THE ...~~