

09-07

July 27, 2009

## Final Course Grades, Grading Procedures, And Final Assessments

(This policy statement incorporates and supersedes Policy Statements 73-11, 77-23, 78-25, 78-36, 80-02, 80-08, 83-07, 85-01 (Rev.), 85-16, 95-09 (Rev.), 96-11, 98-07, 99-19, 02-02 (Rev.), 02-12, and 05-07, and 08-10.) It complies with Executive Orders 268, 320, and 792, and 1037.

This policy was recommended by the Academic Senate on May 14, 2009 and approved by the President on May 22, 2009.

### Part One: Definitions

The following definitions apply to final course grades assigned in all undergraduate and graduate courses:

"A" - Performance of the student has been at the highest level, showing sustained excellence in meeting all course requirements and exhibiting an unusual degree of intellectual initiative.

"B" - Performance of the student has been at a high level, showing consistent and effective achievement in meeting course requirements.

"C" - Performance of the student has been at an adequate level, meeting the basic requirements of the course.

"D" - Performance of the student has been less than adequate, meeting only the minimum course requirements. "F" - Performance of the student has been such that minimal course requirements have not been met.

"CR/NC" - In some courses, the university permits students to select evaluation on a "Credit" or "No Credit" basis. These grades are defined as follows:

"CR" is usually equivalent to an "A," "B," or "C;" and "NC" is equivalent to a "D," "F," or "WU" (defined below). In two circumstances a final course grade of "CR" reflects work at the level of "B" or better, and a final course grade of "NC" reflects work at the level of "C," "D," "F," or "WU." Those two circumstances are:

- 1) in certain professional preparation courses, providing that the students are notified of such a policy both in class materials and in the catalog course description; and
- 2) For graduate students in all courses at the 300, 400, 500, and 600 levels.

Special regulations and procedures governing the "CR/NC" grading system are described below in Part Two.

The following definitions apply to administrative grading symbols assigned in all undergraduate and graduate courses:

"AU" - "Audit." Enrollment as an auditor is subject to permission of the instructor, provided that enrollment in a course as an auditor shall be permitted only after students otherwise eligible to enroll on a credit basis have had an opportunity to do so. Auditors are subject to the same fee structure as credit students and regular class attendance is expected. It is the responsibility of the student to request from the instructor what is meant by regular class attendance. The symbol "AU" is posted to the student's permanent academic record unless the student fails to attend a sufficient number of class meetings. In these cases, the instructor will request that the student be administratively withdrawn from the course. Once enrolled as an auditor, a student may not change to credit status unless such a change is requested prior to the last day to add classes. A student who is enrolled for credit may not change to "Audit" after the last day to add classes.

"I" - "Incomplete". The symbol "I" indicates that a portion of required course work (normally not more than one-third) has not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period due to unforeseen, but fully justified, reasons and that there is still a possibility of earning credit. No instructor may assign an Incomplete if the student must attend a major portion of the class when it is next offered. No student may re-enroll in any course in which he/she has received an "I" until that "I" has been converted to a grade other than "I," i. e., "A," "B," "C," "D," "F," "CR," or "NC." In such cases, the instructor must assign a grade of "A," "B," "C," "D," "F," "CR," or "NC" based on the available assessments of that student's performance. It is the responsibility of the student with an "I" to bring pertinent information to the attention of the instructor and to determine from the instructor the remaining course

52 requirements that must be satisfied to remove the "Incomplete." A final course grade is assigned when that work  
53 has been completed and evaluated.

54 An "I" must normally be made up within one calendar year immediately following the end of the term during which it  
55 was assigned. This limitation prevails whether or not the student maintains continuous enrollment. Failure to  
56 complete the assigned work will result in an "I" being converted to an "F," except as noted in item 3 below. An  
57 extension of time may be granted for contingencies such as military service or documented, serious health or  
58 personal problems.

59 The conditions for removal of the "Incomplete" shall be documented by the instructor on an "Assignment of  
60 Incomplete Grade" form. This form shall include a statement of:

- 61 1. all work completed in the course, the grades assigned for that work, and the percentages of the final course grade  
62 accounted for by each item;
- 63 2. the work not completed and the percentage that each uncompleted assignment will count toward the final course  
64 grade; and
- 65 3. The final course grade the instructor will assign if the course requirements are not completed within one calendar  
66 year, or a shorter period as specified on the form, immediately following the term in which the "I" was assigned,  
67 without respect to continuous enrollment of the student during this period.

68 If clear percentages for assignments cannot be delineated, instructors shall explain any special conditions for  
69 determining final course grades for work wholly or partially made up.

70 A copy of the form is to be given to the student and a copy is to be filed with Enrollment Services within 30 calendar  
71 days after final course grades are submitted. When the work agreed upon has been completed and evaluated, a final  
72 course grade will be assigned by the instructor. If Enrollment Services does not receive an acceptable "Assignment of  
73 Incomplete Form" by 90 calendar days after the end of the semester, they will assign a grade of "WU" to the student  
74 instead of an "I." The "Assignment of Incomplete Grade" form will not be accepted if

- 75 1. more than one-third of the work remains to be completed, and no justification has been provided;
- 76 2. the work required to complete the course has not been specified;
- 77 3. the faculty member failed to sign the form; or
- 78 4. the percentage fields have not been filled in, and no justification for their absence has been provided.

79 "RD" - "Report Delayed". This symbol is used exclusively by Enrollment Services to permit processing of all final  
80 course grades when the final course grades for an entire course section have not been reported by the instructor.  
81 The symbol does not imply any academic evaluation. Individual instructors may not assign "RD." Students who  
82 remain on rolls but for whom the instructor has no assessments must receive a "WU."

83 "RP" - "Report in Progress". The "RP" symbol is used in connection with courses requiring multiple enrollment, i.e.,  
84 that extend beyond one academic term. It indicates that work is in progress but that assignment of a final course  
85 grade must await completion of additional work. Re-enrollment is permitted prior to assignment of a final course  
86 grade provided the cumulative units attempted do not exceed the total number applicable to the student's  
87 educational objective. Work is to be completed within one calendar year immediately following the end of the term  
88 during which it was assigned except for graduate degree theses. If the "RP" symbol is not replaced by a final  
89 course grade within the specified time period or prior to the student's declared graduation date, it will be changed  
90 to a "W." An "RP" symbol cannot be replaced by an "I" (Incomplete) symbol; an "I" is not a final course grade.

91 "W" - "Withdrawal". The symbol "W" indicates that the student was permitted to drop a course after the second week  
92 of instruction with the approval of the instructor and appropriate campus official. It carries no connotation of quality  
93 of student performance and is not used in calculating grade point average.

94 Students are held responsible for completion of every course in which they register or for withdrawing during the  
95 first two weeks of a regular semester (13% of non-standard session) of classes from courses that they do not  
96 intend to complete. Application for withdrawal from CSULB or from a class must be officially filed by the student  
97 with Enrollment Services whether the student has ever attended the class or not; otherwise, the student will  
98 receive a grade of "WU" (unauthorized withdrawal) in the course.

99 Regulations governing the refund of student fees in the California State University system are prescribed by the  
100 CSU Board of Trustees; see California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education, Section 41802.

- 101 1. Withdrawal during the first two weeks of instruction:

102 Students may withdraw during this period and the course will not appear on their permanent records.

- 103 2. Withdrawal after the second week of instruction and prior to the final three weeks of the regular semester  
104 (20% of a non-standard session) of instruction:

105 Withdrawals during this period are permissible only for serious and compelling reasons. The approval  
106 signatures of the instructor and department chair are required. The request and approvals shall state the  
107 reasons for the withdrawal. Students should be aware that the definition of "serious and compelling  
108 reasons" as applied by faculty and administrators may become narrower as the semester progresses.  
109 Copies of such approvals are kept on file by Enrollment Services.

110 3. Withdrawal during the final three weeks of instruction:

111 Withdrawal during the final three weeks of instruction are not permitted except in cases such as accident  
112 or serious illness where the circumstances causing the withdrawal are clearly beyond the student's  
113 control and the assignment of an Incomplete is not practical. Ordinarily, withdrawal in this category will  
114 involve total withdrawal from the campus except that a Credit/No Credit grade or an Incomplete may be  
115 assigned for other courses in which sufficient work has been completed to permit an evaluation to be  
116 made. Request for permission to withdraw under these circumstances must be made in writing on forms  
117 available from Enrollment Services. The requests and approvals shall state the reasons for the  
118 withdrawal. These requests must be approved by the instructor of record, department chair (or  
119 designee), college dean (or designee), and the academic administrator appointed by the president to act  
120 in such matters. Copies of such approvals are kept on file by Enrollment Services.

121 4. Limits on Withdrawal

122 No undergraduate student may withdraw from more than a total of 18 units. This restriction extends  
123 throughout the entire undergraduate enrollment of a student at CSULB for a single graduation, including  
124 special sessions, enrollment by extension, and re-enrolling after separation from the university for any  
125 reason. The following exceptions apply:

- 126 a. withdrawals prior to the end of the second week of a semester (13%) of instruction at CSULB,
- 127 b. withdrawals in terms prior to fall 2009 at CSULB,
- 128 b. withdrawals at institutions other than CSULB, and
- 129 c. withdrawals at CSULB for exceptional circumstances such as serious illness or accident (the  
130 permanent academic record will show these as a WE to indicate the basis for withdrawal).

131 5. Medical Withdrawal:

132 CSULB may allow a student to withdraw without academic penalty from classes if the following criteria are  
133 met:

- 134 a. A completed Medical Withdrawal Form, including any required documentation, is submitted to  
135 Enrollment Services before the end of the semester, and
- 136 b. The student presents evidence to demonstrate that a severe medical or debilitating psychological  
137 condition prevented the student from attending and/or doing the required work of the courses to the  
138 extent that it was impossible to complete the courses.

139 Although students will normally withdraw from all courses, those with serious and compelling reasons  
140 may withdraw from only some of their courses; such instances will require additional justification.

141 The academic administrator appointed by the president to act in such matters will review the evidence  
142 presented and, in consultation with appropriate medical or psychological professionals as needed,  
143 determine whether the request for a medical withdrawal should be granted. Once granted, all such  
144 medical withdrawals will show on the permanent record as a WE to indicate the basis for withdrawal  
145 and will not count toward the limit described in 4 above.

146 Repeat Complete Medical Withdrawal:

147 If the student has received a complete medical withdrawal in the immediately preceding term, then an  
148 additional complete medical withdrawal request must consider the question of whether or not the student  
149 can complete appropriate educational objectives and must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After a  
150 repeat medical withdrawal is granted, the student may be required to obtain a clearance from an  
151 appropriate medical or psychological professional that states the student is well enough to return to  
152 classes with the full expectation that the student will be able to complete the semester and intended  
153 educational objectives.

154 6. Instructor Withdrawal:

155 An instructor may withdraw a student who has never attended a class, if done before the end of the second  
156 week of classes. Because instructors are not required to do this, students should not rely on them and  
157 should officially withdraw from classes themselves to avoid assignment of a "WU" in the course.

158 An instructor may also withdraw a student during the first two weeks of classes who has enrolled in a course  
159 requiring "permission of the instructor", completion of prerequisites, or concurrent enrollment in  
160 corequisites if the student has not properly secured this permission, satisfactorily completed the  
161 prerequisites before enrolling, or enrolled in the required co-requisites.

162 "WE" – "Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances". The symbol "WE" indicates the student withdrew for  
163 reasons, usually medical or psychological but not restricted to those, clearly beyond the student's control.  
164 Such cases will normally involve the withdrawal from all courses that semester. Withdrawals for  
165 extenuating circumstances will not count toward the limits on withdrawal. The symbol "WE" is not a grade  
166 and does not alter a student's grade point averages.

167 "WU" - "Unauthorized Withdrawal". The symbol "WU" indicates that an enrolled student did not complete  
168 course requirements but did not withdraw from the course. It is used when, in the opinion of the  
169 instructor, completed assignments or course activities or both were insufficient to make normal evaluation  
170 of academic performance possible (letter grades "A," "B," "C," "D," "F," or an "I"). Instructors of record  
171 must report the last known date of attendance for all students who receive a "WU." A student who  
172 receives a "WU" may not complete additional work and have the "WU" changed to a letter grade. In  
173 courses that are graded "Credit/No Credit" or in cases where the student has elected "Credit/No Credit"  
174 evaluation, use of the symbol "WU" is inappropriate and "NC" must be used instead. For purposes of  
175 grade point averages a "WU" is equivalent to an "F."

## 176 **Part Two: Course Grading Option**

177 The faculty determines in advance which courses may be taken for "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" grade only, "CR/NC" only,  
178 or either. When a course is designated for "CR/NC" grading only or for "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" grading only, mention of  
179 this fact shall be incorporated in the catalog course description. Any undergraduate course may be designated for or  
180 closed to the option of "CR/NC" grading whether or not the course is a requirement for an undergraduate degree major,  
181 minor, certificate, credential, or concentration.

182 No course in which a final course grade of "CR" has been assigned may be used to fulfill the requirements for a  
183 master's degree, except that the final course grade of "CR" may be permitted for master's theses or projects (to a  
184 maximum of six units) when the individual department has specifically designated "CR/NC" grading for the thesis/project  
185 course in the department, and for fieldwork, practicum, research, or internship courses (also to a maximum of six units).  
186 The option of "CR/NC" grading for graduate students in undergraduate courses is subject to specific regulations of the  
187 individual departments regarding their graduate students and regarding the authorization for this option intrinsic to the  
188 approved course. Otherwise, no limitation exists as to the number of courses taken by graduate students under this  
189 policy. An undergraduate student may elect "CR/NC" grading in no more than a total of 24 units, of which no more than  
190 twelve may be upper division units. No more than eight units per semester may be taken for "CR/NC" grades.

191 Exemptions from these limitations are

- 192 1. courses graded "CR/NC" taken at another institution,
- 193 2. course credit earned by examination, and
- 194 3. courses in which "CR/NC" grading is the only form of grading.

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196 The decision to elect the "CR/NC" grading option for a course must be made by the last day to add classes. To elect  
197 "CR/NC" grading, the student must obtain the signature of the student's major advisor and a stamp from the  
198 department/program in which the course is offered on the appropriate form. The student must then file the signed form  
199 with Enrollment Services. The decision to register for a course on a "CR/NC" basis remains in effect unless a change is  
200 requested prior to or on the last day to add classes.

201 The only exception to this rule is for students who declare new majors after the last day to add classes. If the newly  
202 declared major requires letter grading for the course in question and the student has elected "CR/NC" grading, then the  
203 student may request that "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" grading be used. Such a change must be requested no later than the  
204 last day of instruction. The grading option may not be changed after the end of the semester.

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206 **Part Three: Final Assessments**

- 207 1. Every course shall have a final assessment appropriate to the course that shall cover a significant proportion of the  
208 course.
- 209 2. Every course except Distance Learning Courses shall meet and have an educational experience at the date and  
210 time listed in the Final Examination Schedule.
- 211 3. All instructors shall administer the final assessment (e.g., an exam or presentation) or have it due (e.g., a paper or  
212 project) at a specified time that falls within the date and time listed in the Final Examination Schedule, as part or all  
213 of an educational experience.
- 214 4. The college dean must approve any exception to these requirements.  
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216 **Part Four: Assignment of Final Course Grades**

- 217 1. The instructor of record in a course section (i.e., the faculty member officially assigned to teach that section) has the  
218 exclusive responsibility and authority to assign final course grades to all students in that section, subject only to the  
219 following exceptions:
- 220 A. should the instructor of record be unable or unwilling to complete this task because of death, disability,  
221 separation of employment, or prolonged absence from campus during a regular academic term, the  
222 department chair or program director, following notification of the instructor of record where appropriate and  
223 with the approval of the college dean, may appoint another instructor with the most appropriate qualifications  
224 in the discipline to complete the assignment of final course grades; or
- 225 B. in the event of a successful grade appeal (detailed below in Part Five: Change of Final Course Grades).  
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- 227 2. Final course grades shall be based on at least three, and preferably more, demonstrations of competence by the  
228 student. Exceptions require the college dean's approval.
- 229 3. In no case shall the grade on any single demonstration of competence count for more than one-third of the final  
230 course grade. Exceptions require the college dean's approval. This provision does not abridge a faculty  
231 member's right to assign a course grade of "F" for a single act of cheating.
- 232 4. At the start of the course and in keeping with PS 04-05 (Course Syllabi), instructors shall provide to their students  
233 in writing the grading policies and practices to be employed in the class and the rules that will apply to withdrawals.
- 234 5. Instructors shall keep a record of students' scores on each of the demonstrations of competence on which the final  
235 course grade is based.
- 236 6. Instructors shall provide students with an opportunity for demonstration of competence, relevant to the  
237 determination of their final course grade in the course, as early as is reasonable and no later than the midpoint of  
238 the term.
- 239 7. Students have a right to be informed promptly of their scores and to review each of their demonstrations of  
240 competence with their instructors.
- 241 8. If materials submitted for a demonstration of competence are not returned, these materials must be retained for at  
242 least two subsequent semesters by the instructor. The materials shall be accessible to the department office. In  
243 the absence of the original instructor, an instructor with appropriate qualifications may be appointed by the chair to  
244 review the demonstration of competence with the student.
- 245 9. Grades reported to Enrollment Services are considered to be official and final course grades.  
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246 **Part Five: Change of Final Course Grades**

- 247 1. Changes of final course grades or grading symbols can be made only on the basis of an error, a successful grade  
248 appeal (detailed in the separate policy statement on grade appeals), or resolution of an "Incomplete" ("I"). A final  
249 course grade or grading symbol shall not be changed on the basis of additional work submitted, except where an  
250 "I" was recorded.
- 251 2. Original final course grades are replaced only when the change is due to an error, the grade change is the result of  
252 a grade appeal, or Enrollment Services receives a late report of final course grades for which the symbol "RD" was  
253 substituted pending receipt. Original final course grades or grading symbols are not replaced when the change of  
254 grade is the result of the resolution of an "Incomplete" or the repetition of a course. Final course grades  
255 or administrative grading symbols must be recorded for all enrollments beyond the census date.

- 256 3. Except for changes of final course grades resulting from grade appeals, all changes of final course grades must be  
257 filed within one year from the date of the filing of the first final course grade, without respect to continuous  
258 enrollment of the student. Only as the result of a successful grade appeal or the correction of an error will a final  
259 course grade be changed after the award of a degree or credential or certificate.
- 260 4. All requests for change of a final course grade shall carry the recommendation of the instructor (except as provided  
261 for in the grade appeals procedures) and the department chair and the approval of the college dean.
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265 EFFECTIVE: Fall 2009

Obsolete policy