Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders  UH-Downtown/ PS 03.A.04  Issue No. 9  From: William Flores, President  Effective date: 06/22/2015  Subject: Grading System

1. PURPOSE

This PS describes the grading system used at the University of Houston-Downtown in the undergraduate and 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.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Grade: A score indicated by a letter grade that reflects the instructor's evaluation of a student's achievement in a specific course.

2.2 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Grade Points per Semester Credit Hour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>In Progress</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Satisfactory (Passed)</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory (Failed)</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Drop</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Credit Awarded</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Grade Point Average (GPA): A measure of the overall level of a student’s academic achievement. (See 4.8.1 for graduate GPA calculation.) It is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned at UHD by the total number of semester hours at UHD (not including courses repeated for a grade). The following formula represents the method of computing the GPA.
GPA = \text{Total Number of Grade Points Earned} \div \text{Total Number of Semester Hours Counted}

2.4 Dropped Course: A course in which an undergraduate student at an institution of higher education has enrolled for credit, but does not complete, while still staying enrolled in one or more courses for the semester or term. To drop a course, a student must notify the Registrar’s Office via Student e-Services of the drop before one of the deadlines specified in 4.2 or 4.3 of this policy. It is advised that a student consult an academic advisor before dropping a course. For more information on dropping a course and course drop limits, please see PS 03.A.36 Course Drop Limit.

2.5 Withdrawal: A student withdraws from the university by dropping all courses in which the student is enrolled for the semester or term.

2.6 Class Day: A day on which the University has one or more classes scheduled.

2.7 Census Date: 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.

2.8 Home Department: The program or department that offers the academic course.

3. POLICY

3.1 Developmental Course Grades: An asterisk (*) next to a grade indicates that it was received for a developmental course. Grades for developmental courses are not included in the GPA calculation nor do developmental courses count toward graduation.

3.2 Grades for Repeated Courses: When a course is repeated, only the highest grade will be used in computing the grade point average. If a course taken initially at UHD is repeated later at another institution for credit, only the UHD grade is included in the grade point average.

3.3 GPA Certified at Graduation: 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. A student’s eligibility for honors at the time of graduation shall not be adjusted. Grades for courses repeated after graduation and new courses completed after graduation, do not change the GPA certified at the time of graduation. A student’s overall GPA at UHD may be updated based on courses taken subsequent to the certification and award of the degree. Transfer grades are not included in the calculation of the UHD GPA.

3.4 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 prevents students from completing the remaining course requirements. Before instructors assign a grade of I, they must file with, and get approved by, their department chair a form documenting the work necessary for removal of the I and signed by the student and the instructor. If a student is unable to sign the form, the instructor must state on the form the reason for granting the I and the work necessary for the removal of the I.
3.4.1 A grade of I will be changed to a letter grade specified by the instructor if the missing work that resulted in the grade of I for a Fall semester is completed before the end of the following Spring semester. If the I is earned in the Summer or Spring semesters, the missing work must be completed before the end of the following Fall semester. If the I was earned during a part of term or mini-term course, the missing work must be completed before the end of the following long semester. If the missing work is not completed in this time period, the grade of I will be changed to I/F.

3.4.2 Students who have received I grades because their enrollment has been interrupted by duties to the United States military must complete the missing work within one year from the conclusion of those duties. It is the responsibility of the veteran to provide official documentation of their required duties to the Office of Veterans Affairs. If the work is not completed within one year the grade automatically converts to an I/F.

3.4.3 A grade of I counts as an F in calculating the graduation GPA for purposes of determining eligibility for graduation.

3.5 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 (i.e., once an IP is given, the grade cannot be changed).

3.6 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.

3.7 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.

3.8 Grade of W (Drop): The grade of W is assigned when a student drops a course after the census date.

3.9 Grade of CA (Credit Awarded): A grade of CA will be assigned to non-course based credit subject to the 24 hour limit in PS 03.A.11: Credit by Examination and Credit by Approved Equivalencies.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 The instructor for a course is responsible for assigning end-of-course grades to students enrolled in the course.

4.1.1 The instructor for a course is responsible for assigning end-of-course grades based on the
description of the grade calculation and the rubrics for evaluation expressed in the syllabus for the course.

4.1.2 The instructor for the course is solely responsible for ensuring that end-of-course grades are submitted to the Registrar’s Office 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 Registrar’s Office via Student e-Services and officially drop a course within the appropriate deadline listed below:

(a) the first 12 days of classes during a long term,
(b) the first 8 days of classes during a 10 week term,
(c) the first 6 days of classes during a 8 week term,
(d) the first 3 days of classes during either a 4 week term or a 5 week term, or
(e) the first 2 days of classes during a 3 week term.

*Note:* For terms of other lengths, the Registrar will publish the date.

4.3 Student Deadlines for Receiving a Grade of W: Students receive a grade of W for any course from which they drop via Student e-Services after the dates specified in 4.2 but before the end of the following days:

(a) Thursday of the 10th week of classes during a long term,
(b) Thursday of the 7th week of classes during a 10 week term,
(c) Thursday of the 5th week of classes during a 8 week term,
(d) Thursday of the 3th week of classes either a 4 week term or a 5 week term, or
(e) Thursday of the 2nd week of classes during a 3 week term.

*Note:* For terms of other lengths, 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 course taken during a semester) must appeal to the academic dean in the college in which the student has declared a major. Students requesting a partial retroactive withdrawal (i.e., withdrawal from one or more but not all courses taken during a semester) must appeal to the academic dean in the college in which each course is taken. If the dean finds sufficient documented justification for a retroactive withdrawal, the dean will file an administrative request in the Registrar’s Office. Notification of the administrative change resulting from a retroactive withdrawal will be sent to the course instructors (provided they are still employed at UHD) and to the appropriate department chairs. 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 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 “home” 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 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 department chair must be approved by the dean and notification must be sent to the instructor.

4.6.2 A change of course grade issued by the dean must include notification to the instructor and department chair.

4.7 **Procedures Unique to Graduate Programs:** 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.

4.7.1 In many graduate programs, average work (i.e., grade of C) may lead to suspension or expulsion. Students should refer to their graduate program handbooks for details.

4.7.2 Below average work (grades of D and F) is not acceptable and constitute immediate
grounds for expulsion from the program.

4.8 All credit hours attempted as part of a graduate degree will be calculated in the GPA and used in determining academic standing.

4.8.1 This policy applies to repeated courses. If a student repeats a course as a student enrolled in a graduate program, both grades are calculated in the GPA.

4.8.2 Grades earned at other institutions in courses that are accepted for transfer and transferred into a graduate degree program at UHD are not calculated in the GPA at any point.

5. EXHIBITS

There are no exhibits associated with this policy.

6. REVIEW PROCESS

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

Review: Every 5 years, or as necessary.

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

7. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 06/04/1982
Issue #2: 05/10/1984
Issue #3: 02/15/1985
Issue #4: 05/12/1988
Issue #5: 08/01/1988
Issue #6: 04/25/1994
Issue #7: 01/29/2014
Issue #8: 03/13/2015
Issue #9: 06/22/2015

8. REFERENCES

Texas Education Code §51.907: Limitations on the Number of Courses that may be Dropped under Certain Circumstances
UHD Policy Statement 03.A.36: Course Drop Limit
Grade Appeal Form