

# GRADES AND ACADEMIC STANDING

## Grading System

### Grades and Calculating the Grade Point Average (GPA)

All grades and marks will appear on the permanent record. Quality points represent the translation of letter grades into numerical values. Quality points are assigned to each letter grade earned, as noted below:

A	4.00	C	2.00
A-	3.67	C-	1.67
B+	3.33	D+	1.33
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.67	F	0.00
C+	2.33		

The cumulative GPA is the result of dividing the total of all quality points earned (QPTS) by the total number of quality hours carried (QHRS).

**Scholastic marks, which do not qualify for quality hours, are as follows:**

I - Incomplete	P - Pass
W - Withdrawal	AU - Audit
NGR - No Grade Reported	
SC - Successfully Completed (used for Study Abroad only)	

### Incomplete (I) Grade

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the work in a course due to extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance. The term "extenuating circumstances" includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a period of at least two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter course schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by employer, or (5) other emergencies of this nature. Documentation of the circumstances cited to justify an incomplete grade is required. Such a student may petition the instructor of the course for time beyond the end of the semester to finish the work. If the instructor agrees, two grades will be placed on the final grade list for the student: an I and a letter grade for the course computed as if the missing work were zero.

The student is then required to complete the work by the time agreed upon, or not longer than 12 months. If no change of grade has been submitted by the instructor within the prescribed period, the I grade will be removed and the letter

grade originally submitted with the I will remain as the permanent grade for the course.

### Changing Grades

Changing grades is the sole responsibility of the instructor of record, subject to existing procedures of the University Code of Policies and Procedures for review and due process. Necessary forms may be obtained from the Registrar's Office (TSC 246) or the student's academic department. Students should not be permitted to handle the Change of Grade form. A staff/faculty ID Card will be required of anyone hand-delivering the form to the Registrar's Office.

### Academic Renewal

Under certain circumstances, an undergraduate student who has been admitted to the University after an interruption in his/her collegiate education of five or more years may petition to have certain credits removed from the calculation of GPA needed for credit. The renewal procedure allows the student's academic records to be reviewed for the purpose of eliminating from grade point average computation any or all grades of D+ or below that were entered on the academic transcript prior to admission. Petition forms are available in the Office of Enrollment Management. A \$25 processing fee will be assessed.

Guidelines:

1. Academic Renewal *does not* apply to graduate students or students pursuing a second undergraduate degree.
2. Academic Renewal may be applied *only once* and is *irreversible*.
3. An absence of *five or more years* must have elapsed between admission and the last enrollment at an institution of higher education. (Note: A student must be currently enrolled at USU to apply for Academic Renewal.)
4. After admission, but before application for renewal, the student must have completed at least one of the following at Utah State University:
  - a. 10 semester credits with at least a 3.00 GPA.
  - b. 20 semester credits with at least a 2.75 GPA.
  - c. 30 semester credits with at least a 2.50 GPA.

For students with an absence of ten or more years, the requirements in guideline number 4 are waived, but they must have completed one term at USU under their new requirement.

5. Academic Renewal applies *only* to courses having

grades of D+, D, or F and taken prior to readmission. All such courses will remain unaltered on the transcript with the appropriate notation added to the transcript to indicate Academic Renewal. Courses designated in the petition will not count for computation of GPA for earned credits, nor for satisfying any graduation requirements. Courses with a grade of C- (or P) or better will be carried forward.

### Petition for Academic Record Adjustment

Occasionally, changes must be made on a student's permanent transcript because of clerical errors, etc. A student who desires such a change may petition for an adjustment on the permanent grade transcript. Before this process is carried out, the student should discuss the matter with his/her faculty advisor, course instructor, and/or department head, as necessary.

The procedures for petitions for academic record adjustments are as follows:

- \* The student picks up the blank form in the Registrar's Office.
- \* The student completes the form and attaches a typed explanation/justification and any supporting documents (i.e. a doctor's note, work schedule, etc.). The student may consult with the academic advisor while completing this portion.
- \* The student returns all documents to the Registrar's Office along with a \$10 processing fee (this fee is a processing fee and does not guarantee approval).
- \* The Registrar's Office reviews the petition, consulting with instructors as needed. Clarification and comments will be added to the form.
- \* The Registrar's Office signs the form certifying that all statements are correct according to the official record. The form is then forwarded to the academic advisor.
- \* The academic advisor adds comments, consulting with instructors as needed. The academic advisor signs the petition indicating whether the petition is justified in his/her opinion. The form is then forwarded to the academic dean\*.
- \* The Academic Dean\* (or designate) reviews the petition including the written appeal by the student and the comments by the Registrar's Office and advisor.
- \* The dean is responsible for final approval.
- \* When a final decision is made by the dean, the form is forwarded to the Registrar's Office for processing and filing. Denied petitions should also be sent for filing and student notification.
- \* If a course is being added, the Registrar's Office will assign an NGR (no grade reported) code and send the instructor(s) of record a Change of Grade form to collect the appropriate grade(s).

\* Petitions for graduate students should be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Figure 6 on page 59 is a sample of a Petition for Academic Record Adjustment.

### Academic Appeals

When a student feels that he/she has been treated unfairly by a specific professor or existing rules or regulations, there is a sequential process which should be followed in handling the situation. (Problems in this area include disagreements regarding a course grade, intervening circumstances which prevented the student from following an assigned procedure, etc.)

When a student experiences such difficulties, he/she should first go to the specific professor or administrator and discuss the situation. It may be possible to resolve the problem at this level. Should no agreement be reached, the student may then take the situation to the department head. If no resolution is reached at that level, the student may take the problem to the dean of the college. If there is still no resolution, the matter will be forwarded to an appeals committee. As a final recourse, the student may take the problem to the Provost's Office, where a final decision will be made.

Students should be aware of the legitimacy of their problem, the implications involved, and the procedural order. Consultation with the specific professor or administrator is a fundamental starting point for resolving difficulties. The student may simply have a misunderstanding of the nature of the situation; proper procedures for appeals can avoid unnecessary use of time and potential embarrassment.

### Academic Standing

Criteria which are used to determine a student's academic standing are as follows:

#### Good Standing

A student is considered by the University to be in good standing when his/her USU cumulative GPA is 2.0 or higher. An undergraduate student whose USU cumulative GPA is less than 2.0 is placed on academic warning or academic probation, based on the student's class rank and the USU cumulative GPA. A freshman with a USU cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 is placed on academic warning. A sophomore, junior, or senior with a USU cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 is placed on academic probation.

#### Academic Warning

A freshman student placed on academic warning shall be notified in writing of that action by the dean of his or her college. A notation "Placed on Warning" is placed on the student's transcript. The student remains on warning status

as long as his or her semester GPA is 2.0 or higher until his or her USU cumulative GPA rises to or exceeds 2.0; the student will then be in good standing. A student on academic warning shall be placed on academic probation at the end of any semester in which his or her semester GPA is less than 2.0. When a student's class standing changes to sophomore, and his or her USU cumulative GPA is less than 2.0, the student is placed on academic probation. Students on academic warning are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor.

### Academic Probation

An undergraduate student placed on academic probation shall be notified in writing of that action by the dean of his or her college. A notation "Placed on Probation" is placed on the student's transcript. The student is required to meet with his or her academic advisor before the end of the fifth week and to sign a statement acknowledging the terms of the probation. Signed statements shall be maintained in the academic dean's office. The student remains on probation status as long as his or her semester GPA is 2.0 or higher until his or her USU cumulative GPA rises to or exceeds 2.0; the student will then be in good standing. A student on academic probation is placed on suspension at the end of any semester in which his or her semester GPA is less than 2.0.

### Academic Suspension

An undergraduate student placed on academic suspension shall be notified in writing of that action by the Associate Vice President for Student Services. A notation "Academic Suspension" is placed on the student's transcript. If a student suspended for the first time and enrolled in the present semester desires to remain in school, implementation of the suspension can be delayed until the end of the present semester. Students enrolled for the present semester and having more than one suspension will be required to withdraw from school. The academic records for each suspended student with 75 or fewer credits will be transferred to the Division of General Registration. Students with more than 75 credits will need to be retained by their College Dean in order to finish the current semester. Students who are allowed to remain in school on delayed suspension and achieve a 2.0 semester GPA or higher will be considered for continuation without a required layout. Students who are allowed to remain in school on delayed suspension and achieve less than a 2.0 GPA will have an additional suspension and be required to withdraw from school. Any questions about this academic action may be directed to Recruitment/Enrollment Services, 797-1079.

### Readmission Following Academic Suspension

Students who have been suspended once and do not remain in school under the above delayed suspension option may apply for readmission after a one-semester layout.

Students who have been suspended two or more times may apply for readmission to the University following a layout of one full calendar year.

## Academic Honors, Awards, and Recognition

### Honor Roll (Dean's List)

To qualify for the semester honor roll (Dean's List), a student must earn a 3.5 GPA in 15 or more graded credits, except for summer semester for which 12 or more graded credits are required. Students who receive A grades for 15 or more graded credits for two consecutive semesters in residence are presented with scholarship "A" pins.

### Honors at Graduation

To qualify for graduation with "Honors" a student must have 40 semester credits in residence at USU and have the following USU GPA to qualify for the honors indicated:

Summa Cum Laude	3.950 to 4.000
Magna Cum Laude	3.800 to 3.949
Cum Laude	3.500 to 3.799

### Honors Program

See Honors Program on page 131 of this handbook.

## Transfer of USU Credits to Other Institutions

Students transferring to other institutions of higher education will need to forward copies of their USU grade transcript to the institution. Individual institutions have differing policies regarding the types of and amount of credits which will be accepted by the institution. As such, students should be aware of some of the criteria used in evaluating the transcript. Following are some general guidelines which students should be made aware of early in their education at USU.

### Pass/D+, D, F Grades

(See page 52.)

In general, other institutions will look at the nature of the course in which the P was received, when the P was received in the student's academic career (i.e., at the freshman level, sophomore level, etc.), and how many P grades have been received in relation to how many courses the student has

completed. The institution will be particularly concerned with whether or not the P grade has been abused, and if it is indicative of the student's scholastic abilities.

**Repeating Courses**

(See pages 51-52.)

Students generally repeat a course to improve a grade previously received for the course. If the student repeats the course several times, it may give the impression that the student is unable to learn the course content and thus reflect a lack of sufficient skills in that area. Students should also be aware that some colleges or departments, such as Engineering, may limit the number of times particular courses may be repeated.

The repeat can be used to the student's advantage. When a course is repeated and the grade is improved, it demonstrates dedication and perseverance on the part of the student, and improves the student's GPA. The repeat, when necessary, can be useful to those students desiring to continue their education in graduate or professional schools. Repeating and improving a grade in a particular course may enhance the student's chances of being accepted by the school.

**Credit by Examination**

(See pages 44-49.)

Credits earned through special examinations (i.e., CLEP, AP, etc.) generally pose no problems for students who wish to transfer those credits. Whether or not the credits will be accepted for transfer will, of course, depend on the particular institution and the nature of the credits.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

**General Information**

This law, commonly referred to as the *Buckley Amendment*, (1) provides that students will have access to inspect and review their educational records and (2) protects the rights of a student to privacy by limiting access to the educational record without express written consent.

**Definitions**

A **student** is defined as any individual who is attending or has attended Utah State University. (Note: Certain rights are extended to the parent(s) of a dependent student, where dependency is defined by Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.) An **educational record** is any record (1) directly related to a student, and (2) maintained by Utah State University or by an agent of the University.

**Notices**

With respect to a student's educational records, FERPA affords a student the right:

- a. to inspect and review the student's educational records;
- b. to request the amendment of the student's educational records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
- c. to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; and
- d. if a complaint cannot be resolved within the University, to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by Utah State University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

**Categories of Records**

There are two categories of educational records under FERPA. **Directory information** (or releasable information) is general information that may be released to anyone without consent of the student, unless the student indicates otherwise. **Personally identifiable information** (or nonreleasable information) includes all information not defined as directory information and may not generally be released without consent of the student. The following is considered releasable information/directory information at Utah State University:

- Name
- Local and Permanent Address
- Electronic Mail Address
- Telephone Number
- Most Recent Institution Attended
- Date of Birth
- Residency Status
- Degrees and Awards Received
- Current Semester Schedule of Classes
- Academic Level
- Major Field of Study
- Department and/or College
- Participation in Official Activities/Sports
- Dates of Attendance and Graduation
- Weight/Height of Members of Athletic Teams
- Student Photographs

Students may control the release of directory information by completing forms at the Registrar's Office. Students accessing educational records must provide identification. It is important to **note** that for educational purposes, University officials have access to all student records. Additional information, including the FERPA tutorial, may be accessed

at:

[www.usu.edu/registrar/records/privacy.html](http://www.usu.edu/registrar/records/privacy.html)

Forms

The following forms are available through the Registrar's Office: USU Change of Personal Information Form (Figure 7 page 60), Privacy Hold Form (Figure 8 on page 60), and a Release of Student Information form (Figure 9 on page 61).