Advising, Enrollment & Evaluation

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ADVISING

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Advisors

Academic and scholarly advising varies by graduate program across the University. Each graduate academic unit has one or more graduate advisors, and every graduate student is assigned an advisor at the time of admission or shortly thereafter. This advisor may also be the student’s thesis or dissertation advisor. The advisor and student typically meet soon after the student’s admission to the program to develop a plan of study and on a regular basis thereafter to monitor and review progress. In most programs the plan of study should be in place no later than the end of the student’s first semester.

Plan of Study

All graduate students must have a plan of study, which is a formal agreement between the student and their program faculty regarding the conditions the student must meet to earn the desired degree. The plan of study usually lists required courses and activities and describes the timeline for these requirements. The plan may also include suggested or optional courses and activities. Each college or school determines the mechanisms for establishing, changing, and monitoring students’ progress on plans of study.

Advising of Non-Degree Students

Each dean establishes a mechanism to advise non-degree graduate students who intend to take the majority of their coursework in the dean’s college or school. Such mechanisms may include designating a faculty or staff member at an advising office or center to advise non-degree students. Non-degree
students with an interest in programs in two colleges or schools may be assigned to either by the Office of Admissions. It is expected that the student will take responsibility for understanding the policies of each unit and facilitate any needed communication between advisors.

Yearly Evaluation

All graduate students who enrolled in at least one credit during the academic year are provided with a written evaluation from their program following the end of each spring term. This requirement may be waived for students in good standing who are expected to graduate in spring or summer.

ENROLLMENT

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Credit Loads and Limits

Nine credit hours is the minimum load to be considered a full-time graduate student in the fall and spring terms and six credit hours is the minimum load to be considered a full-time graduate student in the summer term. Courses taken under the audit option are counted toward attaining full-time enrollment status. Graduate students are not permitted to take more than sixteen hours in a fall or spring term or more than twelve hours in a summer term without approval by their college or school and by the Office of Graduate Education and Life. Requests for more than eighteen hours in a fall or spring semester or fifteen hours in the summer, or from students with a grade point average below 3.25 will not normally be approved.

Minimum Enrollment

In any term during which a graduate student is using University libraries or research facilities, consulting with graduate committee members, or completing a thesis or dissertation (including the thesis or dissertation defense and submission of the ETD), the student must enroll for at least one hour of graduate credit. Students who take courses intermittently may be excused from such continuous enrollment if they are not using University facilities or consulting with faculty while they are not enrolled. However, students formally admitted to candidacy for graduate degrees are required to register for at least one credit hour each fall and spring term as a condition of their continued candidacy. Individual programs may also require summer enrollment. By pursuing a degree, such persons by definition are utilizing University services, facilities, and other resources, including faculty expertise; this situation continues in cases where students have completed all required coursework and are working on a thesis or dissertation. Candidates for graduate degrees who fail to maintain continuity of enrollment may be dropped from candidacy.

Students who have completed all requirements for a degree (including the thesis or dissertation defense and submission of the ETD) prior to the beginning of the term of graduation do not need to enroll during that term.

Non-Degree Students

Non-degree students are normally those taking classes for enrichment purposes, public school teachers taking classes for certification renewal, or students taking classes as prerequisites for admission to degree programs. Non-degree students may enroll in any course in the University for which they have the prerequisites and permission from the academic unit. However, some departments that cannot accommodate non-degree students may restrict enrollments to majors only or require permits.

A non-degree graduate student may accumulate unlimited graduate credit hours. If the student is later admitted to a degree program, the faculty of that program will decide whether any credit earned as a non-degree student may be applied to the degree. Under no circumstances may a non-degree student apply more than twelve hours of previously earned credit toward a degree.

Auditors

An auditor may register for courses and must pay full fees but does not receive credit for the course. A student who audits a course must let one semester pass before enrolling in the course for credit. A student may change his or her status from audit to grade or grade to audit only during the registration period. Attendance requirements for auditors are determined by the instructor of the course. The instructor may direct the Office of the University Registrar to remove an auditor from a class list or grade report if attendance requirements are not met.
Attendance Policy

IMPORTANCE OF CLASS ATTENDANCE

At West Virginia University, class attendance contributes significantly to academic success. Students who attend classes regularly tend to earn higher grades and have higher passing rates in courses. Excessive absences may jeopardize students’ grades or even their ability to continue in their courses. There is a strong correlation between regular class attendance and academic success. Faculty are strongly encouraged to require attendance in all 100-level classes. (*)

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Instructors must set attendance policies that are appropriate for the goals and instructional strategies of their courses. Instructors may include attendance records in determining the final course grade. All attendance policies that affect students’ grades must be announced in writing within the first week of class. Moreover, instructors are responsible for keeping accurate enrollment records, and for keeping accurate attendance records when attendance is used in grading. Attendance policies thought to violate the statement on student attendance should first be discussed with the instructor, then with the department chair, and finally the college dean, if necessary.

CLASS ABSENCES

Students who are absent from class for any reason are responsible for all missed work and for contacting their instructors promptly, unless the instructors’ policies require otherwise. However, instructors cannot require documentation of student illness from any medical provider as part of an attendance policy, since medical conditions are confidential and frequently not verifiable.

MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS

Students absent from regularly scheduled examinations because of authorized University activities will have the opportunity to take them at an alternate time. Such make-up examinations should be of comparable difficulty to the original examination. Students in courses with regularly scheduled evening examinations shall have the opportunity to make up these examinations if they miss them in order to attend a regularly scheduled class that meets at the same time. Such make-up examinations should be of comparable difficulty to the original examination. Attendance at a regularly scheduled evening examination will not excuse a student from a regularly scheduled class that meets at the same time as the examination.

DAYS OF SPECIAL CONCERN

Instructors are urged not to schedule examinations or field trips on “Days of Special Concern” that are identified in the Schedule of Courses.

Withdrawal Policy

There are two types of withdrawals: withdrawal from individual courses for which a student has registered and a complete withdrawal from the University. Deadlines for withdrawals for each semester are available at: http://registrar.wvu.edu/current_students/withdrawal_policies. If students follow all established University procedures and withdraw before the published deadline, they will receive a W on their transcript. The grade point average is not affected in any way by this mark. If formal withdrawal procedures are not executed by the student, a failing grade/s will be recorded. It is the student’s responsibility to see that all forms are properly executed and delivered to the appropriate authorities for recording.

WITHDRAWAL/DROP FROM INDIVIDUAL CLASSES

Students may drop individual classes within a term based on established deadlines. These deadlines are posted on the Office of the University Registrar’s website. Students, with the help of their academic advisors, are responsible for determining:

• If their course load would be reduced below the minimum requirement set by their program
• If their course load would be reduced below the minimum hours required to qualify for a graduate assistantship, financial aid, or international full-time student status
• If the course to be dropped is a co-requisite for another course the student is taking or a prerequisite for a course required the following semester. The student may be required to drop the co-requisite course or asked to take a substitute course the following semester.

WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL CLASSES FOR THE TERM

Students may withdraw from WVU for the term in which they are enrolled at anytime before the last day of classes of the term on which regular classes are scheduled to meet. Students will receive grades of W in all classes for that term.

PROCEDURES

1. To withdraw from all classes through the last day to drop a class with a W, a student would log on to their MIX account and drop their classes through STAR.
2. To withdraw from the term after the last day to drop a class with a W, a student must submit a request to the Office of the University Registrar. Instructions for submitting this request (in person or by email, mail, or fax) are found on the Office of the University Registrar’s website (http://registrar.wvu.edu/current_students/withdrawal_policies).
Important Notice: Financial aid recipients who withdraw from all classes before sixty percent of the term is completed may be required to return a portion of any financial aid that was received for the term. Students who do not receive at least one passing grade for classes in a term must provide documentation which verifies continued participation in educational activities. If documentation cannot be provided, those students are considered to have informally withdrawn from WVU prior to sixty percent of the term and may be required to return a portion of any financial aid which was received. This review and return of financial aid is done in accordance with federal regulations.

RE-ENROLLMENT AFTER WITHDRAWAL

After a student withdraws from WVU in two consecutive semesters (excluding summer sessions), a student may not register for further work without approval of the dean of the college or school in which the student wants to register. Enrollment is subject to conditions set by that dean. In the case of a general studies major, the student must seek approval from the director of the University College.

GRADES

In this section:
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Grades in Graduate Courses

Letter grades are assigned in many graduate courses. Grades of C or below are considered substandard. Some programs allow credit for courses in which a grade of C is earned; others do not.

Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent (Given only to students of superior ability and attainment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good (Given only to students who are well above average but not in the highest group.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Fair (Average for undergraduate students.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Poor but passing (Cannot be counted for graduate credit.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdrawal from a course before the date specified in the University calendar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass (See Pass/Fail grading below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Auditor, no grade and no credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Credit but no grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Progress; final grade to be issued at end of second semester (HSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Honors course (Professional school courses only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF</td>
<td>Incomplete grade not removed by next regular term (Computed as an F.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UF</td>
<td>Unforgivable F (Not eligible for D/F repeat policy.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Grades that are not reported by faculty at the end of a term will be designated with an NR on the official transcript. Grades that are not reported will become an F at the conclusion of the next semester if a final grade is not submitted.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory - Pass/Fail Grading

At the graduate level, the satisfactory-unsatisfactory ("S/U") grading option is used only for the course numbers 697/797 "Research." The "S" and "U" grades for 697/797 are not applied to the calculation of the GPA. "S/U" shall be the only grading option for 697/797.

Other courses for which faculty wish to use a binary grading option should use the pass-fail ("P/F") grading option. Grades of "F" earned using this option do apply to the GPA.
Grade Point Average

GRADE POINTS

Each letter grade has a numeric value. Grade points are based on this number value and the credit hour value of the course.

• A- 4
• B- 3
• C- 2
• D- 1
• F- 0
• I- 0
• U- 0

The grade point average is computed on all work for which a student registers, with the following exceptions:

• Courses with a grade of W, P, S, and X carry no grade value. The grade of incomplete (I) initially carries no grade value.
• When a student receives the grade of I and the incomplete grade is later removed, the grade point average is calculated on the basis of the new grade. If the I grade is not removed within the next semester, the grade is treated as an F (failure).
• If a student is working toward teacher certification, he or she is responsible for every registration in a course in which the grade of A, B, C, D, F, P, X or I is received.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

All academic units of the University have minimum standards of scholastic quality that must be met or exceeded. Grade point average (GPA) is computed on grades earned in courses taken at WVU and institutions in the West Virginia system of higher education; beginning in January 2012, grades earned in baccalaureate-level college work attempted at other accredited institutions are also included in the calculation of the overall GPA. To be eligible to receive a baccalaureate, a student must have a GPA of at least 2.0 at the time of graduation. Some degree programs require a higher grade point average overall or in the major courses. GPA is based on all work for which a student received a letter grade other than W, and P. See D/F Repeat Policy. The grade point average for honors consideration for a baccalaureate is based on baccalaureate-level college work attempted at WVU as well as other accredited institutions.

Students are responsible for knowing their grade point standing and can obtain the necessary information from their advisor or the dean of their college or school. GPA is determined according to the method described in the section on grade points.

GPA CALCULATION

1. Students need to know how to calculate their overall and semester grade point averages. The following example shows how to do it. Assume you are registered for 16 hours and receive the following grades in these courses:
   A. English 101 – B
   B. Mathematics 126 - A
   C. Geology 101 - C
   D. Political Science 101 - B
   E. Spanish 101 - D
   F. Psychology 201 - P

2. Course, Credits, Grade, Value, Credits x Value, Grade Points Earned
   A. English 101, 3, B, 3, 3 x 3 = 9
   B. Geology 101, 3, C, 2, 3 x 2 = 6
   C. Spanish 101, 3, D, 1, 3 x 1 = 3
   D. Mathematics 126, 3, A, 4, 3 x 4 =12
   E. Political Sci. 101, 3, B, 3, 3 x 3 = 9
   F. Psychology 201, 1, P, 0, 1 x 0 = 0

3. Multiply the credit by the grade value to get the grade points earned for each course
4. Add the total grade points, in this case, 39.
5. Divide the total grade points earned by the total credit hours with a grade value. Remember that P grades have no grade value, so in this case, there are 15 credit hours for the GPA calculation: 39 divided by 15 = grade point average of 2.6.
Incompletes

The grade of “I” is given when the instructor believes that the coursework is unavoidably incomplete or that a supplementary examination is justifiable. Before any graduate degree can be awarded, the grade of “I” must be removed either by finishing the incomplete or by having it recorded as a permanent incomplete. Only the instructor who recorded the “I” or, if the instructor is no longer at WVU, the chairperson of the unit in which the course was given, may initiate either of these actions. When a student receives a grade of incomplete and later removes that grade, the grade point average is recalculated on the basis of the new grade. If a student does not remove the “I” grade within the next semester, the grade of “I” is treated as an “IF” (failure). The dean or designee of the appropriate college or school may allow a student to postpone removal of the “I” grade if a delay can be justified.

Repeated Courses

Courses repeated that cannot be taken again for credit follow this procedure:

1. The original grade is included in determining the overall GPA. It is excluded from earned or degree hours and is marked with an (A).
2. The original grade is not deleted from the student’s permanent record.
3. The second grade is entered on the student’s transcript and marked as included (I) in the semester that the course was repeated.
4. Courses repeated more than once are handled the same way with the final attempt carrying earned or degree hours. All attempts are used for determining the GPA.

Official Transcripts

Students can order official transcripts through their MIX account at any time or go to http://registrar.wvu.edu/transcripts. All orders require a valid e-mail address and a credit/debit card which will be charged by e-Pay West Virginia once the transcript request has been entered and a confirmation number is provided.

Before ordering a transcript, students should log on to their MIX account to ensure that all grades and degree(s) have been posted. Transcript requests are processed immediately. They are not held for posting of final grades and/or degrees.

All financial obligations to West Virginia University must be cleared before transcripts can be released. Transcripts may not be picked up by another party unless the student has given written authorization with the request. The designated person will be expected to show a picture I.D. before obtaining the transcript.

A West Virginia University transcript is a complete record of a student’s enrollment at WVU. This includes all undergraduate, graduate, and professional courses. Partial transcripts are not available.