



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Operating Policy and Procedure

**OP 34.12: Grading Procedures, Including Academic Integrity**

**DATE:** January 12, 2024

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to clearly articulate grading procedures.

**REVIEW:** This OP will be reviewed in March of even-numbered years by the Vice Provost for Academic Innovation and Student Success with substantive revisions presented to the Provost and Senior Vice President.

**POLICY/PROCEDURE**

**1. Grades and their Interpretations**

The instructor of record determines all grades for a course. The method of determining the grade will be included in the course syllabus presented to the students at the beginning of the semester. The grades used with their interpretations are **A** = Excellent; **B** = Good; **C** = Average; **D** = Inferior (passing, but not necessarily satisfying degree requirements); **F** = Failure; **P** = Passing; **PR** = In Progress; **I** = Incomplete; and **W** = Withdrawal. The letter **R** designates a course repeated to remove an **I** for undergraduate courses only. The grades of **CR** (credit) and **NC** (no credit) are given in certain instances.

Instructors may choose to add a plus or a minus to the grade. These will be entered on the transcript but will not be used in the calculation of the student's cumulative grade point average.

The grade of **PR** is given only when the work in a course extends beyond the semester or term; it implies satisfactory performance. The grade of **PR** is not to be used for graduate students except for when a course spans multiple terms; e.g., Rawls College of Business working professional MBA courses.

The grades of **CR** (credit) and **NC** (no credit) are used primarily in thesis and dissertation courses, and in other instances deemed necessary by the academic unit; e.g., in the College of Education for student teaching.

The grade of **I** is given only when all of the following criteria are met:

- a. The deadline for student-initiated drop has passed; and
- b. The student is unable to complete the course and associated requirements due to an unforeseen circumstance that is appropriately documented; and
- c. The student was passing the course at the time the Incomplete was requested.

A grade of Incomplete is not given in lieu of an **F**, **W**, **PR**, or **NC**. The instructor assigning the grade must complete and submit the *Grade of Incomplete* form available on the Registrar's website. A change of grade resulting from the completion of work specified on the *Grade of Incomplete* form must be recorded within one calendar year from the date the **I** is awarded. Failure to submit a change of grade within one calendar year from the date the **I** is awarded results in an **F** for that course for graduate and undergraduate coursework. In rare cases, an extension may be approved and processed by filling out the same incomplete form. The **I** may be replaced by an **R** if the undergraduate course is repeated within one year (not available for graduate courses). The appropriate grade will be given for the second registration. The incomplete (**I**) form should be initiated by the instructor of record online through the Office of the Registrar at <https://db.reg.ttu.edu/faculty>.

Mid-Semester and Semester Grade Reports: Instructors of record shall post mid-semester grade reports for freshmen, student-athletes, and undergraduate students in a negative academic standing. After mid-term grades are posted between the 34th and 40th class days, students can view the grades on Raiderlink (MyTech). At the close of each long semester and each summer term, final course grades are available on <raiderlink.ttu.edu> (MyTech).

Failure to meet certain university obligations may result in an administrative hold being placed on a student's access to such university procedures as registration, release of transcripts, and course add/drops. It is the student's responsibility to get the hold released, which can be accomplished by meeting the requirements of the department placing the hold.

Faculty members may not publicly post grades for any examinations, including final examinations, unless the department chairperson grants permission and a substantiated random identification procedure specifically without students' names, student IDs, and/or social security numbers is in place.

## 2. Dropping a Course

Students may officially drop a course through the 45th class day of a long semester or the 15th class day of a summer term and receive a drop grade indicator regardless of their progress in the class. All students who attend a Texas state institution of higher education are restricted to a maximum of six course drops during their undergraduate academic career. This includes all courses that were dropped at any Texas state institution of higher education the student has attended.

Undergraduate students who find it necessary to withdraw (drop to zero hours) from the university before the end of the semester will not have to use their state drop count for withdrawal.

## 3. Grade Changes

- a. Grade changes must be initiated by the instructor of record through the system provided by the Office of the Registrar. Justification for the change must be documented. Common justifications are completion of requirements satisfied for a previous "**I**," grading error, clerical error, etc.
- b. On the rare occasion when an instructor of record is unable to be reached after due diligent effort, a department chair may initiate a grade change on behalf of the instructor of record.

This grade should not be in conflict of the instructor of record and may only be initiated after documentation of due diligent efforts to reach the faculty member.

- c. In the event of a successful grade appeal under [TTU OP 34.03, Student Grade Appeal](#), an academic dean may initiate an administrative grade change on behalf of the instructor of record by providing the outcome of the grade appeal as justification.

#### 4. Texas Tech University Statement of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers. [Texas Tech University ("University") Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Integrity Task Force, 2010]

#### 5. Academic Dishonesty Definitions

Students must understand the principles of academic integrity and abide by them in all class and/or coursework at the university. Academic misconduct violations are outlined in Part I, section B.1 of the [Code of Student Conduct](#). If there are questions of interpretation of academic integrity policies or about what might constitute an academic integrity violation, students are responsible for seeking guidance from the faculty member teaching the course in question.

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, violations of published professional ethics/standards, and any act or attempted act designed to give unfair academic advantage to oneself or another student. Additional information about academic misconduct is available in the Texas Tech University Handbook in Part II, section B of the Community Policies section in the [Student Handbook](#).

##### a. Cheating

- (1) Copying from another student's academic work, test, quiz, or other assignment.
- (2) Receiving assistance from and/or seeking aid from another student or individual to complete academic work, test, quiz, or other assignment without authority.
- (3) The use or possession of materials or devices during academic work, test, quiz, or other assignment that are not authorized by the person administering the academic work, test, quiz, or other assignment.
- (4) Possessing, using, buying, stealing, transporting, selling, or soliciting in whole or in part items including, but not limited to, the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program/software. Possession, at any time, of current or previous course materials without the instructor's permission.

- (5) Obtaining by any means or coercing another person to obtain items including, but not limited to, an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program/software, or information about an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program.
- (6) Transmitting or receiving information about the contents of academic work, test, quiz, or other assignment with another individual who has completed or will complete the academic work, test, quiz, or other assignment without authority.
- (7) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself, in order to take a course, take a test, quiz, or other assignment, or sign in/register attendance.
- (8) Taking, keeping, misplacing, damaging, or altering the property of the university or of another if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct.
- (9) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit.
- (10) Failing to comply with instructions given by the person administering the academic work, test, quiz, or other assignment.

b. Plagiarism

- (1) The representation of words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, other expression, or media of another as one's own and/or failing to properly cite direct, paraphrased, or summarized materials.
- (2) Self-plagiarism, which involves the submission of the same academic work more than once without the prior permission of the instructor and/or failure to correctly cite previous work written by the same student.

c. Collusion

The unauthorized collaboration with another individual to complete academic work, test, quiz, or other assignment; providing unauthorized assistance to another student; allowing another student access to completed academic work; and/or conspiring with another person to commit a violation of academic dishonesty.

d. Falsifying academic records

- (1) Altering or assisting in the altering of any official record of the university and/or submitting false information.
- (2) Omitting requested information that is required for, or related to, any official record of the university.

e. Misrepresenting facts

- (1) Providing false grades, falsifying information on a resume, or falsifying other academic information.
- (2) Providing false or misleading information in an effort to injure another student academically or financially.
- (3) Providing false or misleading information or official documentation in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on academic work, test, quiz, other assignment, or credit for attendance, and/or obtain an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual.

NOTE: Examples include, but are not limited to, fabricated, altered, misleading, or falsified documentation for medical excuses, family and personal emergencies, and signing into class and failing to remain the entire time.

f. Violation of Professional Standards

Any act or attempted act that violates specific professional standards or a published code of ethics.

NOTE: Students are held accountable under this policy based on their college or school of enrollment, declared major, degree program, and/or pre-professional program.

g. Unfair Academic Advantage

Any other action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or may result in creating an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for another student that is not enumerated in items a–f.

## 6. Academic Dishonesty and Instructor Responsibilities

Any person becoming aware of alleged violations of academic integrity should report the allegation to the instructor of record in the course as soon as feasibly possible. The instructor of record in a course is responsible for initiating action in each case of alleged academic dishonesty that occurs in that class. Upon learning of an alleged act of academic misconduct, the instructor should follow guidance for reporting allegations of academic dishonesty including departmental protocol as applicable.

Instructions for reporting allegations of academic dishonesty are available in Part II, Section B of the [Code of Student Conduct](#). To ensure a fair and timely process, the instructor should refer the allegation along with supporting documentation or analysis no later than 30 days after learning of the alleged misconduct. In the event of special circumstances that do not allow for a referral to be made within 30 days of learning of the allegation (e.g., undergraduate/graduate research, thesis, dissertation, etc.), the instructor must contact the Office of Student Conduct to discuss the referral.

The instructor should attempt to discuss the matter with the student and receive a response from the student about the allegations. Then, the instructor may notify the student of possible academic penalties including, but not limited to, assigning a paper or research project related to academic

integrity, assigning a make-up assignment that is different than the original assignment, issuing no credit for the original assignment, reducing the grade for the assignment and/or course, issuing a failing grade on the assignment, and/or issuing a failing grade for the course. The academic penalty will not be implemented or assigned until all disciplinary procedures are complete. Instructors should not enter a final grade in the course while an investigation or adjudication process is pending or not finalized. All academic integrity violations should be referred to the Office of Student Conduct as a central clearinghouse of violations and for adjudication as a Code of Student Conduct violation where disciplinary sanctions will be assigned.

## **7. Academic Integrity Allegations and Withdrawal/Assignment of Grades**

- a. If a student is referred to the Office of Student Conduct for an academic integrity allegation, the student may not drop the course until the academic integrity processes are complete. If a student drops or withdraws, the student will be reinstated to the course in question. A student should continue attending class and participating in coursework until the disciplinary process is complete. If it is determined that the student was not responsible for academic integrity violations and/or the referring faculty member allows the student to withdraw from the course, the student may file a request with their academic associate dean for approval to drop the course or withdraw from the university retroactively.
- b. If a referring faculty member must submit a final course grade before an academic integrity violation allegation is resolved, the faculty member should leave the final grade blank and notify the department chair and the student's academic dean. The involved student may be given a temporary grade of **X** by the Office of the Registrar, which does not affect the student's GPA, until the academic integrity adjudication process is complete. When the academic integrity adjudication process is complete, the final grade will be assigned through the completion of a grade change form by the instructor of record.

## **8. Academic Integrity Appeals**

Appeals of academic integrity decisions are separate from the grade appeal process. The designated appellate officer in academic integrity cases is the associate academic dean of the college where the student is enrolled or the associate academic dean of the college housing the course where the violation occurred. In situations where the associate academic dean participated in the hearing as the student conduct officer/investigator or instructor of record, the designated appeal officer is the academic dean. The appeals process related to academic integrity violations is detailed in Part I, section C.5 (Disciplinary Appeals Procedures) of the *Code of Student Conduct*.

9. Grading procedures in the School of Law are set forth in the School of Law's academic policies. For more information, please contact the School of Law's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or the Assistant Dean for Academic Services. Law Students are subject to disciplinary procedures as described in the Honor Code for the School of Law as well as the *TTU Code of Student Conduct*.