



Regulation

Title: Academic Standards – GRADES

Approved: (Original copy signed by the President)
(Ann Everatt, President)

April 9, 2019
(Date)

Sponsorship: Student Services

Policy or Compliance Reference: Student Services - Admissions Policy

To Be Reviewed: April 9, 2024

Review and Revision Dates: August 25, 2009; September 6, 2011; January 9, 2013;
February 13, 2019, April 9, 2019

First Approval Date: May 2005

Stakeholders Consulted: (Academic Council: January 9, 2012; February 13, 2019);
(Deans' Council: February 15, 2012; March 7, 2019); (Policy Review Committee: April
9, 2019); (Senior Management Team January 9, 2013)

Reference to other Documents:

Academic - Academic Calendar Regulation
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Legislation
Student Services - Admissions Procedure
Student Services - College Parchments Procedure
Student Services - Management of Student Information Procedure
Student Services - Student Appeals Procedure
Student Services - Student Conduct Procedure
Student Services - Student Fee Payment and Refunds Procedure

Regulation:

Principles

Grading must:

- Be clearly communicated in all course outlines

- Be consistently applied student to student, section to section and year to year in a fair, objective and timely manner
- Accurately reflect the College's academic standards and demonstrate academic integrity
- Be treated with care and confidentiality

1. Post-Secondary Programs

Northern Lakes College uses the 4-point, Alpha, and percentage scales for marks.

Students will receive a letter grade as a course mark. These letter grades will appear beside each course on student transcripts. A numeric grade point average (GPA) ranging from 4.0 (highest) to 0.0 (insufficient) is included on the transcript. The grade point values for each grade, together with the weight for each course taken, are used to calculate the GPA.

A. Grade Point Scale

GRADE POINT SCALE			
ALPHA	4 POINT	Percentage	RATING
A+	4.0	90-100	Distinction
A	4.0	85-89	Honours
A-	3.7	80-84	Honours
B+	3.3	76-79	Very Good
B	3.0	73-75	Good
B-	2.7	70-72	Good
C+	2.3	67-69	Satisfactory
C	2.0	64-66	Satisfactory
C-	1.7	60-63	Satisfactory
D+	1.3	55-59	Probation
D	1.0	50-54	Probation
F	0	0-49	Insufficient

B. Grading Symbols

AEG Aegrotat

A student who has not officially withdrawn from a course, and who has outstanding work and/or final exam to complete at the end of the academic term (completed 75 per cent of required course work), may be awarded Aegrotat standing if:

- The student is unable to complete the required work due to extensive extenuating circumstances
- Has displayed satisfactory knowledge of the key course learning outcomes based on the evaluation of achievement in the term (minimum C+) Credit is earned. No grade is assigned, nor calculated in the GPA.

ADP Advanced Placement (Exemption)

Equivalent course work and/or experience are accepted in lieu of a required Northern Lakes College course. Advanced placement or exemption from a required course carries no academic credit. The student must continue to meet the total required credits for program completion.

Equivalent course work taken at another institution or agency is recognized as academic credit. Minimum grade and stale date of original course work are considered.

AUD Audit

Performance is not evaluated for course outcomes. Credit is not earned and NOT calculated in the GPA. Audit courses may not be used as a co requisite or a prerequisite for courses. Change of status from non-credit to credit status must occur within the ten working days of course start date. Not all courses are available for audit.

IP In Progress

A permanent grade awarded when course instruction continues after the prescribed end date. Credit is not earned and it is NOT calculated in the GPA.

NS No Show

A student who does not attend the first day of class for a course and who has not contacted the College within one working day, of the start date, to provide a valid reason for his/her absence will be assigned the grade of “NS” and his/her seat will be forfeited. Credit is not earned and it is NOT calculated in the GPA.

P/F Pass/Fail

Credit is earned for Pass grade. It is NOT calculated in GPA.

RW Required to Withdraw

Required to Withdraw is assigned for suspension from a course or program. No credit is earned. The grade is assigned under any one of the following conditions:

- The student has not been successful in meeting the minimum required GPA during a probationary term. This is calculated as a failing grade of “F” with a GPA of 1.0 and below.
- The student has contravened the academic provisions of Northern Lakes College’s Student Conduct procedure.
- The student has contravened the non-academic provisions of Northern Lakes College’s Student Conduct procedure.

TC Transfer Credit Assigned/Unassigned

Transfer credit is provided where an equivalent post-secondary course is accepted in lieu of a required Northern Lakes College course. A minimum grade of a “C- “,

60% or 1.7 GPA is required for transfer. Courses must typically have been taken within the last ten years. Exceptions may apply.

Assigned Credit

Credit is granted for a specific course and year level where there is an NLC course equivalent. Assigned credit can be used towards program completion.

Unassigned Credit

Credit is granted for a non-specific subject and year level where there is not a Northern Lakes College course equivalent. Unassigned credit can be used as an elective towards program completion.

W Withdrawal

The student officially withdrew from the course prior to the prescribed deadline as listed in the Academic Calendar Regulation. Credit is not earned, and it is NOT calculated in the GPA.

C. Credit Earned by Challenge

Where a student challenges a course, the grade awarded will be the student's mark for that course whether or not the challenge is successful. It will not be differentiated from a mark earned by completing the same course. Course challenge is not offered by all departments, nor is it offered for all courses. A student may not challenge any course whose equivalent appears on the student's transcript, whether or not the student successfully completed the course. A specific course may be challenged only once. The course challenge must be completed by the end of the term in which the student is enrolled. It may take the form of assignments, comprehensive exam, projects and the like, but must measure the learning outcomes expected of a successful course completer. The student may opt to purchase the Learning Resources associated with the course to assist in preparing for the challenge. The program area is responsible for determining which courses can be challenged, and for determining the form that the challenge will take.

D. Credit Earned by Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)

PLAR credits awarded for a course are equivalent to the credits earned by taking the course. The student must be registered in or have completed a minimum of one course in his/her program to which the PLAR credits apply. PLAR credits will not be differentiated on the student's transcript from a mark earned by completing the same course. A student may not earn credit for PLAR for any course whose equivalent appears on the student's transcript, whether or not the student successfully completed the course. PLAR for a specific course may be applied only once.

E. Apprenticeship Programs

Students enrolled in Apprenticeship programs will be graded according to the system established by the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training (AIT). Transcripts and credentials are issued through the College and AIT.

F. Continuing Education and Corporate Training Courses

Students enrolled in Continuing Education and Corporate Training courses will be graded according to the system established by the external credentialing body where applicable. Credit is not earned and it is NOT calculated in the GPA.

G. Residency Requirements

Unless otherwise specified, a student must complete a minimum of 25% of course credits with Northern Lakes College in order to meet program requirements.

H. Program Completion Timelines

Students enrolled in one-year programs on a full-time basis typically have two years in which to complete requirements. Students enrolled in one-year programs on a part time basis typically have three years in which to complete the requirements. Students enrolled in two-year programs on a full-time basis typically have four years in which to complete the requirements. Student enrolled in two-year programs on a part time basis typically have five years in which to complete requirements.

Upon approval by the Vice President Academic, individual program areas may set different program completion timelines. Once approved, those atypical timelines must be communicated to the Registrar.

I. Academic Expectations

Students are expected to maintain an overall GPA of at least 1.7. Upon approval by the Vice President, Academic, individual departments may set higher minimum academic standards. Changes in academic standards must be communicated to the Registrar upon approval.

i. Probation

Full-time students (minimum of 60% of full load per term), whose program GPA falls above 1.0, but below 1.7 will be placed on academic probation for the following term. Part time students (less than 60% load per term) who do not meet the academic grade of 1.0 or term GPA of 1.0 result in the same academic expectations as full-time students. While on probation, students must maintain an overall GPA of 1.7 and successfully complete all courses in which they are registered. Students have up to two consecutive terms of probation. Failure to maintain the minimum required program GPA in the second term will result in students being Required to Withdraw (9.b.).

Students must achieve a pass mark for prerequisite course(s) in order to register for the courses that require the prerequisite. This may mean that students are

unable to enroll in any courses in the following term. If this occurs, they must re-apply for their program in the future term when their required courses are once again scheduled.

ii. Required to Withdraw

If at the end of the probation period the student's program GPA remains less than 1.7, but above 1.0, the student will be required to withdraw from their program for a period of one year and/or next intake and must reapply for admission to the program. Please note the decision to pursue a *Required to Withdraw* status for the student will be based on a review of appropriate retention strategies between the Program Dean and Registrar to assess whether an additional probationary term is warranted. Upon re-admittance to the program, the student will be placed on academic probation and must maintain a program GPA of 1.7 and successfully complete all courses in which they are registered. If these academic standards are not met in the first term when students are re-admitted, they will be removed from their programs for a period of at least one year. If they wish to complete their program, they will have to apply for Re-Admission according to the standards set in the Admissions Procedure.

Students whose program GPA falls to 1.0 or lower, will be *Required to Withdraw* for a period of one term from the program. However, they may apply to an alternate program during the term that they are required to withdraw from the original program. Please note the decision to pursue a *Required to Withdraw* status for the student will be based on a review of appropriate retention strategies between the Program Dean and Registrar to assess whether a probationary term is warranted. Re-admittance is probationary for a period of one year. During this year, students must maintain a program GPA of 1.7 and successfully complete all courses in which they are registered. If these academic standards are not met in the first term when students are re-admitted, they will be removed from their programs. If they wish to complete their program, they will have to apply for re-admission according to the standards set in the Admissions Procedure, Section 12. *Required to Withdraw* may also be applied if a student has contravened Northern Lakes College's non-academic Student Conduct Procedure.

iii. Academic Warning

A Letter of Academic Warning will be issued to students whose GPA falls below his/her program's cumulative GPA requirement for graduation or where a core course pass mark has not been satisfied. Academic warning addresses those students who have a GPA greater than the probationary GPA for their program. Academic Warning letters will be issued in each term. If students are eligible for a third Academic Warning letter, they will be placed on Academic Probation even if their GPA is greater than 1.7. Processes for Academic Probation will be followed as outlined in Section I. i.

Academic Performance Letters

Academic Warning	GPA > 1.7, but less than required for graduation from a program; After two letters, Academic Probation
Academic Probation	FT, GPA=1.1-1.69; PT, GPA<1.0; Single term, failure to raise grades over 1.7 results in Required to Withdraw
Required to Withdraw	Returning on Probation, GPA<1.7 Any term, GPA <1.0 Single term withdrawal initially; full-year withdrawal upon return from RTW

iv. Passing Grades

The minimum passing grade is 50% (D) unless otherwise stated in an official Northern Lakes College program completion guide. Where a passing grade for a course is higher than 50% (e.g. 70%), the passing grade shall be converted to the 4 Point scale. The printed grade statement will indicate the pass mark for the course, for example: 70% on the 4 Point scale is converted to 2.7.

v. Repeat Course Grade

A student may repeat a course no more than three times and the highest mark achieved will be used for calculating the program GPA. Students may attempt a practicum twice. However, allowance is made for the second attempt only if the student has failed the practicum. All attempts will be recorded on the transcript. Any course repeated may be counted no more than once as a graduation requirement. If a student has failed a course three times for one program at the college, s/he will not be allowed to take that course to fulfill different program requirements in the future.

J. Deferred Examinations and Course Extensions

A deferred examination or course extension may be granted for extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. In addition, the following conditions must be met:

- Documentation of the extenuating circumstances must be provided by the student
- Application for deferment/ extension must be received before the last day of the course
- The student must be at least 50% through the course
- The student must have passing grades prior to the request

The responsibility to approve deferred examinations and course extensions rests with the Program Chair and is granted by the Registrar.

K. Supplemental Examinations

A supplemental exam may be granted for extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. In addition, the following conditions must be met:

- Documentation of the extenuating circumstances must be provided by the student
- Course is failed based on the passing grade established by the program

- Request for supplemental exam must be received within five working days of having received the final grade for the course
- Final examination is 40% of, or greater than, the final mark

The responsibility to approve supplemental exams rests with the Program Chair and is granted by the Registrar.

Some programs may vary in the granting of supplemental examinations. If such variances exist, they will be noted in the student handbooks and approved by the Program Dean.

L. Submission of Final Grade

To enable students to receive transcripts in a timely manner for the purposes of planning further enrolment or employment, final grades must be received by the Registrar's Office no later than three (3) working days after the day of the final exam or where no final exam is provided, the last day of class.

Deans and Chairs will be advised by the Registrar's Office when final grades have not been submitted by the deadlines.

M. Change of Grades

Students can apply for a reassessment of grades. Such applications must be made within ten working days of the final mark assignment

- They must apply in writing to the Instructor indicating the reason for the request for the grade reassessment. The instructor must provide the student with a decision within five working days of receipt of the letter.
- If the student is not satisfied with the grade reassessment by the instructor, they may appeal to the Program Chair in writing within five working days of receiving the response from the instructor. The Chair must follow procedures outlined in the Appeals Procedure.
- If the student is not satisfied with the grade reassessment by the Program Chair, they may appeal to the Registrar in writing. A Level Two Appeal is completed (as outlined in the Student Appeals Procedure), and all decisions are final.

If the reassessment results in a change of grade, that grade, whether higher or lower will, be the official grade. Grade changes must be communicated to the Registrar as soon as they are determined.

N. Program and Course Credits

Academic credits assigned to courses are used to calculate the student grade point average and tuition. Academic credits reflect a measure of learning opportunities based on the number and type of instructional hours (or equivalent learning experiences).

i. Definitions

Credit: The equivalent of 15 hours of instruction (exceptions may be warranted). Exceptions must be approved by the Dean for the program and communicated to the Registrar as soon as they are approved.

Course: A series of learning opportunities within a specific subject area to which a final grade is assigned, among which are the following:

- a. Class: Instructor directed learning aimed at acquiring theory through lecture, discussion, and application of concepts, theories and principles to individual and group activities. Class hours may be supplemented by additional hours of supported learning activities.
- b. Continuing Education and Corporate Training Course within a credit program: Normally these are externally certified courses only. e.g. First Aid
- c. Tutorial and Individual Practice: Scheduled tutorials facilitate individual practice to ensure successful completion by students. Both tutorials and field placement must be taken in conjunction with a regularly scheduled class but credits are not assigned.
- d. Lab: activities structured by an instructor to facilitate the application of concepts, theories and principles.
- e. Clinical: instructor supervised and directed activities aimed at application of theory in prescribed clinical experiences.
- f. Work Experience (includes Practicum and Field Placement): Work experience that provides the opportunity for the application of theory to the development of specific occupational skills. If a practicum has hours set by industry standards (i.e. a typical week of work) the hours of work become the acceptable hours per credit for the work experience.

ii. Assignment of Credits and Hours

Based on the type of course, credits will have the following relationship to hours of instruction (Fractions of a credit will be rounded to the first decimal place):

Type of Course	Credit	Hours/Credit
Class (except for select introductory courses)	1	15
CECT course within a credit program	1	15
Tutorial and Individual Practice	0	n/a
Lab	1	15
Clinical	1	35-40
Work Experience	1	30-50

Courses offered by an alternate format (e.g. independent study, teleconference, computer assisted instruction) are assigned credit weighting reflecting equivalence to a conventional course in learning opportunities and study time.

iii. Grade Point Average

The grade point average (GPA) measures achievement in credit courses. The GPA is calculated for the term, for the program and for credit course listings on

the transcript. Each GPA value appears on a student's transcript. The GPA is calculated as follows:

$$\text{GPA} = \text{Total Grade Points} \div \text{Total Credits}$$

Step 1: Take grade points received on a course and multiply by the number of course credits.

e.g. received a 3 (out of 4) on an accounting 3 credit course (solution = 9)

e.g. received a 4 (out of 4) on an English 6 credit course (solution = 24)

Step 2: Add or total both the credits and the grade points from each course

e.g. using above example total credits = 9 total grade points = 33

Step 3: Divide the total grade points value by the total number of credits

e.g. 33 grade points divided by 9 total credits = 3.66 GPA

The grade point average calculation is used to determine:

- Eligibility for awards and scholarships
- Progression to next term of study (if applicable)
- Program honour status
- Transfer requirements

iv. Delegation of Authority

Assignment of credits to new courses will be recommended by the program Chair and approved by the Dean and Registrar.

2. Academic Upgrading & Adult Basic Education

Northern Lakes College has adopted Alberta Education's mark scale for the Academic upgrading Program. This is an external mark scale that is developed and transcribed by Alberta Education. All transcribed grades will be actual percentages earned in courses. Marks received in a high school course at Northern Lakes College are recognized by other institutions in Alberta.

Students entering Northern Lakes College who are functioning below the grade ten level are registered in the Adult Basic Education Program (ABE). The main emphasis of the ABE Program at Northern Lakes College is Communications and Mathematics. Full time ABE students generally take three courses. One double class of Communications, one of Math and one optional course is taken each term. Northern Lakes College has adopted a percentage scale for the Adult Basic Education program. All transcribed grades will be actual percentages earned in courses. This is an internal grade system that is not transcribed by Alberta Education or transferable to other educational institutions.

A. Credit Earned by Challenge

Where a student challenges a course in the Academic Upgrading program, the grade awarded will be the student's mark for that course whether or not the challenge is successful. It will not be differentiated from a mark earned by completing the same course. Course challenge is not offered by all program areas, nor is it for all courses. A student may not challenge any course whose equivalent appears on the student's transcript, whether or not the student successfully completed the course. A specific course may be challenged only once. No challenges will be made available for ABE courses.

B. Grading Symbols

IP In Progress

A permanent grade awarded when course instruction continues after the prescribed end date. Credit is not earned.

NS No Show

A student who does not attend the first day of class for a course and who has not contacted the College within one working day, of the start date, to provide a valid reason for his/her absence will be assigned the grade of "NS" and his/her seat will be forfeited. Credit is not earned and it is NOT calculated in the GPA.

P/F Pass/Fail

Credit is earned for Pass grade. It is NOT calculated in GPA.

RW Required to Withdraw

Required to Withdraw is assigned for suspension from a course. No credit is earned. The grade is assigned under any one of the following conditions:

- The student has not been successful in meeting the minimum required passing grade (50%) during a probationary term.
- The student has failed to maintain satisfactory progress within the term and not been successful in meeting the minimum required passing grade (50%).
- The student has contravened Northern Lakes College's Student Conduct Procedure.
- The student has contravened Northern Lakes College's non-academic Student Conduct Procedure.

W Withdrawal

The student officially withdrew from the course prior to the prescribed deadline. Credit is not earned. Students who do not withdraw prior to official published deadlines and fail to successfully complete the course will be assigned a failing grade.

C. Academic Expectations

Students are expected to receive a mark of 50% or greater in all courses taken as part of their Academic Upgrading or ABE Program. Students who fail to maintain satisfactory progress will be subject to student performance management.

Student performance management includes supports and conditions put in place to assist the student to be successful in completing academic requirements. These may include, but are not limited to, a learner action plan, performance contract, or conditions outlined in a letter of expectation.

i. Probation

Students who fail to successfully maintain an overall average of 50% in their courses at the end of a term will be placed on academic probation in the following term. Part time students (less than 60% load) who do not meet the academic average of 50% will also be placed on academic probation. While on probation, students must maintain a 50% overall average and pass all courses in which they are registered. Students have up to two consecutive terms of probation. Failure to maintain the minimum required program grade average in the second term will result in students being Required to Withdraw (9.b.).

Students must achieve a pass mark for prerequisite course(s) in order to register for the subsequent courses in their program.

ii. Required to Withdraw

If at the end of the probation period the student's course grades are below 50%, the student will be required to withdraw for a period of one term and/or next intake and must reapply for admission to the program. The decision to pursue a Required to Withdraw status for the student will be based on a review of appropriate retention strategies of the institution to assess whether an additional probationary term is warranted. Re-admittance is probationary for a period of one term. During this probationary term, the student must maintain a minimum grade of 50% and successfully complete all courses in which they are registered. If these academic standards are not met once students are re-admitted, they will be removed from their programs for a period of at least one year. If they wish to complete their program, they will have to apply for re-admission according to the standards set in the Admissions Procedure.

If students are re-admitted to their program, they must pass all courses, and maintain a GPA higher than 50%. If these academic standards are not met in the first term when students are re-admitted, they will be removed from their programs. If they wish to complete their program, they will have to apply for re-admission according to the standards set in the Admissions Procedure, Section 12. Required to Withdraw may also be applied to a student who has contravened Northern Lakes College's non-academic student conduct procedure.

During their time away after a Required to Withdraw status is assigned, qualified students will be allowed to apply for, and to take courses at the college that are

outside of the program from which they have been required to withdraw for academic reasons.

iii. Repeat Course Grade

A student may repeat a course no more than three times and the highest mark achieved will be used for calculating the program GPA. Any course repeated may be counted no more than once as a graduation requirement. If a student has failed a course three times for one program at the college, s/he will not be allowed to take that course to fulfill different program requirements in the future.

D. PASSING GRADES

The minimum passing grade is 50% (D) unless otherwise stated in the official Northern Lakes College program completion guide.

E. PROGRAM AND COURSE CREDITS

Academic credits reflect a measure of learning opportunities based on the number and type of instructional hours (or equivalent learning experiences). Academic credits assigned to courses are used to calculate students' enrolment status (part-time or full-time) and tuition.

i. Definitions

Credit: The equivalent of 25 hours of instruction.

Course: A series of learning opportunities within a specific subject area to which a final grade is assigned, among which are the following:

- a. **Class:** Instructor directed learning aimed at acquiring theory through lecture, discussion, and application of concepts, theories and principles to individual and group activities. Class hours may be supplemented by additional hours of supported learning activities.
- b. **Continuing Education and Corporate Training Course** within a credit program: Normally these are externally certified courses only. e.g. First Aid
- c. **Facilitated Learning Activities:** Scheduled or facilitated individual practice to ensure successful completion by students. No separate credits are assigned to these activities.
- d. **Work Experience:** Work Experience provides an opportunity for the development and application of occupational skills across a variety of job categories.

ii. Assignment of Credits and Hours

Based on the type of course, credits will have the following relationship to hours of instruction (Fractions of a credit will be rounded to the first decimal place):

Type of Course	Credit	Hours/Credit
Class	1	25
Work Experience	1	25

Courses offered by an alternate format (e.g. independent study, teleconference, computer assisted instruction) are assigned credit weighting reflecting equivalence to a conventional course in learning opportunities and study time.

iii. Delegation of Authority

Assignment of credits to new courses will be recommended by the program Chair and approved by the Dean and Registrar.