

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic success, a goal that we want all students to achieve, can be measured in many ways. This section identifies and explains the standards that Western has established as measures of academic success and indicates the policies and procedures that apply to the students who fail to meet the standards. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the Faculty Academic Policies Committee and the Faculty Senate, is responsible for the development and implementation of these academic standards and policies.

Unit of Credit

Western uses the semester hour as the basic unit of credit. The semester credits assigned to a course are based on the specific learning objectives and the expected outcomes. The University's assigned semester hours are consistent with the Federal definition of a credit hour and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's minimum class times for credit courses. The minimum expectation for one semester credit is one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for at least fifteen weeks in seminar and lecture-based classes. An equivalent amount of work is required in laboratories, internships, practica, online, studio work, and other academic work which results in the awarding of credit hours.

Contact Hour Guide

To establish a statewide approach for reporting FTE student enrollment, CCHE and IHEs have established criteria for assigning credit hour values to courses since 1985. This guide identifies the typical relationship between base contact hours, credit hours and types of faculty involvement.

Base Contact Hour: The Base Contact Hour represents a standard measurement of student academic engagement in a course. Per the US Department of Education, "a student is expected to be academically engaged through, for example, classroom attendance, examinations, practica, laboratory work, internships, and supervised studio work. In the case of distance education and correspondence education, academic engagement would include, but not be limited to, submitting an academic assignment; taking an exam, an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction; attending a study group that was assigned by the institution; contributing to an academic online discussion; and initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course. Merely logging into the electronic classroom does not constitute academic engagement."

Semester System Term: One contact hour (chrs) = 50 minutes. A base contact hour is 750 minutes. This translates to a minimum of fifteen 50-minute hours per semester.

Contact/Credit Hour Conversion Table I

Instructional Activity	Definitions	Minimum Base Contact HRs For One Credit Hour
Lecture	Formal presentation/ communication by faculty.	1.0 (15 chrs)
Recitation: Discussion/ Seminar	Two-way (student and faculty) communication of course materials.	1.0 (15 chrs)

Laboratory: Academic/ Clinical	Instructional activities conducted by faculty requiring student participation, experimentation, observation or practice.	2.0 (30 chrs)
Laboratory: Vocational/ Technical	Instructional activities involving training for employment in a work-like environment with active faculty teaching role.	1.5 (22.5 chrs)
Art Studio	Painting, sculpture and other lab-type activities conducted by faculty.	2.0 (30 chrs)
Field Instruction	Instructional activities conducted by faculty and designed to supplement individual course work.	2.5 (37.5 chrs)
Music: Private Instruction	Formal presentation in a one-to-one relationship between student and instructor.	0.5 (7.5 chrs)
Music: Studio	Band, ensembles, music labs and the like conducted by faculty.	2.5 (37.5 chrs)
Physical Education/ Recreation Courses	Physical education and Recreation activities conducted by faculty designed for the development of skill proficiencies.	2.0 (20 chrs)

contact/credit hour conversion table ii

Instructional Activity	Definitions	Minimum Base Contact HRs For One Credit Hour
Thesis/Dissertation	A thesis, which may be research or expository, critical or creative work, required for graduation with a master's degree. A dissertation is an original investigation showing mature scholarship and critical judgment, demonstrating knowledge of research tools and methods, required for graduation at the doctoral level. Thesis and dissertation credits should correlate with the scope and level of research work	1.67 (25 chrs)

Internships	Credit hours for placement in business and industry environments that offer degree-seeking students professional-level experience and responsibility. To qualify for state support, the internship should be well supervised and carefully structured (i.e., based on learning objectives that are related to the student's academic discipline and established in cooperation with the student, employer, and faculty advisor).	2.5 (37.5 chrs)
Independent Study Research	Student projects or other required activities with minimal faculty associated direction where a student is formally enrolled during a period of research or independent study instruction in pursuit of a CCHE- approved degree program.	1.67 (25 chrs)
Practicum; Clinical Practicum	Practical student work under the supervision of a faculty member or under supervision of a professional in the student's field and regular consultation with faculty member.	1.67 (25 chrs)
Student Teaching	Student teaching and practicums in which university faculty are actively involved and present in the field.	The State of Colorado requires students participating in an accredited teacher licensure program to complete a minimum of 800 hours of student teaching over the course of one academic year. Western students complete 848 hours per year because of the length of our semesters. 848 hours per year equates to 24 hours per week, plus 5 full weeks of full-time lead teaching in their final semester. Semester I: 384 hours. Semester II: 464 hours.

Master's Capstone	Non-standard graduate course offerings, such as Capstones that do not match the description of any other instructional activity type. The graduate faculty advisor is required to keep records.	1.67 (25 chrs)
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Course Numbering System

Following is an explanation of the numbers used in identifying courses offered at Western:

001-099 Preparatory skills courses not counted toward the required 120 credits for a bachelor's degree. Students enrolled in preparatory skills courses will be assessed tuition separately for those courses.

100-199 Courses primarily for freshmen.

200-299 Courses primarily for sophomores. Freshmen may take them after consultation with an advisor. Many 200-level courses have specific prerequisites which must be completed prior to enrolling.

300-399 Courses primarily for juniors and generally not open to freshmen. Sophomores may enroll after consultation with their academic advisor.

400-499 Courses primarily for seniors and generally not for freshmen and sophomores.

500-599 Graduate level courses that may lead to certificates, or serve in some professions as evidence of continuing education or professional development. Course formats include workshops and seminars and are primarily practice-based. May not be used to satisfy degree requirements.

600-699 Graduate level courses intended for degree-seeking students. They are more than an extension of the baccalaureate education and at a minimum, students should be required to undertake original scholarly/creative activity, assume greater responsibility for mastering the subject matter, and develop close working relationships with professors. It is assumed that students taking 600-level graduate courses have acquired the ability to use language and information sources effectively, and engage in analytical thought and creative processes.

Student Classification by Class Level

Students are classified according to the number of semester credits they have earned.

Classification	Semester Credits Earned
Freshmen	0-29
Sophomores	30-59
Juniors	60-89
Seniors	90+

Academic Load

A standard course load over a 16-week semester is 15 credits. This is the most common load leading to graduation in four years. Students are discouraged from carrying an overload. An overload is defined as more than 18 credits in a 16-week semester and must be approved via petition. Under no circumstances is a student to enroll in more than 21 credits in a 16-week semester¹.

Summer semester is 13-weeks. A student may enroll in no more than 15 credits without special approval. The maximum credits for each session are as follows:

Parts of Term	Full Load	Overload by Petition ¹
Maymester	3 credits	4 credits
1st 5 week session	6 credits	7 credits
2nd 5 week session	6 credits	7 credits
10 week session (occurs during both 5 week sessions)	12 credits	13-14 credits

Under no circumstances is a student to enroll for more than 18 credits in the 13-week summer semester.

¹ Petitions for overload may be obtained on the Office of the Registrar website in the forms link. Petitions must be signed by the student's advisor and chair of the student's major department. If the student's cumulative grade point average is below 3.000, the petition also requires approval of Academic Affairs. Students taking an overload are assessed a surcharge for each overload credit.

The completed petition must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar.

Registration

Advising. All Western Colorado University students are assigned an academic advisor who can assist them in developing their educational plans and accomplishing career and life goals. Academic advisors are an important resource as students develop course schedules. Consultation with an academic advisor is required prior to registration each semester.

Course Descriptions. Course descriptions provide a summary of the course content. If there is a prerequisite that must be met before a student can register for the course, this information is stated in the course description. Prerequisites may include specific courses, class standing, declared major, and other requirements. If there is a corequisite course in which a student must be registered, this information is also stated in the course description. The Course Schedule, available prior to registration, includes information about courses offered in the given semester, such as the names of instructors, class meeting times and locations, and additional requirements.

Registration Procedures. New students are required to participate in new student orientation. Information about registration and orientation is provided to all new students admitted to the University. Currently enrolled students may register during the present semester for the next semester or summer session. Registration timelines and procedures are detailed on the Office of the Registrar website.

Conflict-Avoidance Registration Policy. Each student classification (based on credits passed) has an assigned registration date and time through the Office of the Registrar. Identified Honor students, Military Veterans, and students determined by Disability Services to need scheduling accommodations may register on day one of registration with the first time block. Student-athletes with less than 60 credits passed register immediately following junior registration and prior to sophomore registration.

Late Registration. Students should register for classes prior to the beginning of the semester. While they may register during the first week of the semester, students must understand that the limited availability

of classes may prevent them from obtaining complete schedules. Late registrants may be assessed additional fees.

Add/Drop. After classes have begun in a 16-week semester, students may add an open class without petition until 5 p.m. on the fourth day of the semester. After the fourth day and until the end of the official drop period, students may add a course only with approval by the instructor. The add deadline for any course that meets for less than 16 weeks is two days. The student is responsible for understanding and communicating with the instructor, understanding course policies, and understanding any consequence of adding a course after the first class meeting. In extenuating circumstances, the student may add a course after the drop deadline but this process will require both the instructor and Department Chair's approval.

Students may drop a course during the first 15% of the class meetings. This rule applies for both classes that meet for a full semester and classes that meet in sessions shorter than a full semester. (Note the difference between this rule and "withdrawal" explained on the next page.)

Western Colorado University faculty reserve the right to drop students from class rolls if they miss the first class meeting. Not all instructors require attendance at the first class meeting, but many do. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all of their first class meetings. If circumstances such as weather or travel arrangements prevent students from attending the first class session, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor of each course to request that their seat in the class be held.

Class Attendance and Participation. Faculty and students have shared responsibility in the education process. Class attendance and participation is the student's responsibility. The interactions a student has with the instructor and fellow students represent a significant portion of the learning process in coursework. Therefore, class attendance and participation is essential for a successful education. Instructors may set attendance and participation policies for each of their courses, which are specified in the course syllabus. If a student violates an attendance or participation policy, instructors may withdraw a student from class, lower the earned grade, and deploy other actions as specified by the course policy.

An important responsibility for students is to be prepared for class. Such preparation for the average student expecting an average grade ("C") typically requires 2-3 hours of studying or other types of preparation for every hour of coursework.

Variable Credit Courses. Variable Credit courses are courses which may be offered for a range of credits. The range of credits is set by the discipline, and is published in the catalog and class schedule. The types of courses generally encompassed by the term "variable credit" include Field Experience, Internship (described below), Independent Study, Directed Study, Practicum, Senior Thesis, and Research Problems. The learning objectives and academic requirements for these courses are established between individual faculty and individual students, and have specific academic outcomes defined before the course work begins.

Students must register for variable credit courses prior to beginning the studies associated with the course. Internship hours or study completed before the course registration is complete will not be counted towards the hours required for the course credit.

The student must be enrolled for the credits during the term in which the studies begin. This coursework is part of a student's academic load for

the semester and course contact hours must be able to be completed by the end of the semester for registration to be approved. A request for changes to variable credit registration after the work begins may be considered through a petition process in extenuating circumstances. The petition must be signed by the instructor for the variable credit course, the department chair, and the Registrar.

To register for a variable credit course, the student must submit a completed and signed Variable Credit Course form to the Office of the Registrar. Some disciplines may have additional requirements for registration in Variable Credit Courses. Substituting variable credit courses for required courses in the major or minor is at the discretion of the discipline; no variable credit course may be used to meet General Education requirements.

Internships. Internships offer students the opportunity to combine academic credit with work in their career field. The learning objectives and academic requirement for these experiences are established in collaboration with the student's faculty advisor, based on the employer's job description. The faculty advisor, employer, and student sign off on the learning objectives, agreeing in advance to the parameters of the internship. Students earn credit based on the number of hours to be worked, which is determined in advance. Each academic department establishes a requirement for the number of hours to be worked for each credit earned in line with established minimal contact hour requirements for credit hours. Employers complete an evaluation of the intern at the end of the experience which faculty use in assessing the student's performance and grade.

Minimum eligibility requirements for internships are a 2.000 GPA and completion of at least 12 credits in the academic area of the internship. The internship policy of individual disciplines may be more stringent. Assignment of internship credit toward requirements of a degree program is to be decided by the academic area of the internship, and in no case can it count towards General Education requirements.

In order for internships to maintain academic integrity, Western Colorado University and a faculty member must be involved from the initial development of the learning objectives through the completion of the internship.

Students must register for internship credit prior to beginning the work associated with the internship. The student must be enrolled for the credits during the term in which the work is initiated. This course work is part of a student's academic load for the semester and course contact hours must be able to be completed in order for registration to be approved.

Auditing Courses. Students in good academic standing may broaden and deepen their educational experience by auditing courses. Auditing permits the student to attend a course without being required to complete exams and assignments. An audited course is not graded and does not carry academic credit, nor does it satisfy any degree or program requirement. Students auditing a course will receive a "No Credit (NC)" on their transcript. Audited courses are treated as part of a student's course load for the purposes of determining Western Colorado University course load limits only. Regular tuition and fees apply for audited courses, but audited courses are not eligible for financial aid or the COF tuition stipend. A student may audit no more than 6 credit hours per semester.

Auditing is on a space-available basis and some courses are not conducive to auditing and do not allow students to audit. This decision is made at the discretion of the course instructor.

It is highly recommended that students considering auditing a course discuss this decision with their academic advisor and ensure that it will not disrupt the student's progress towards a degree or negatively impact their financial aid. The decision to audit a course must be made at the time of registration, and students may not change from audit to credit or from credit to audit after a class has begun.

Western invites citizens 60 years of age or older to participate in classes at the University on a space-available, no-credit, no-cost basis with instructor approval. (This does not apply to The Center for Learning and Innovation courses) Students qualified to audit courses in this manner should make arrangements with the Office of the Registrar. The 6 credit hours per semester cap on audits does not apply to students qualified to audit in this manner.

Withdrawal from Individual Courses

After the official add/drop period, a student may only withdraw from a course with approval by the course instructor and the student's academic advisor. Students who obtain these authorizations will receive a grade of "W" (which has no effect on the student's grade-point average; refer to sections on Grades and Grade-Point Average that follow). If two-thirds of the scheduled class time in any given course has been completed, the student is not allowed to withdraw, and a grade for the course (which does affect the student's grade-point average) is recorded. Specific withdrawal deadlines are published on the Office of the Registrar website at <http://www.western.edu/registrar> (<http://www.western.edu/registrar/>).

Course instructors may also withdraw a student from a class for reasons such as inadequate academic progress or attendance, academic dishonesty, or disruptive behavior.

Withdrawal from the University

Students who wish to withdraw from the University may do so in the first two-thirds of any term. Contact the Vice President for Student Affairs to initiate an official withdrawal from the University. Students should also consult with course instructors and their academic advisor.

If two-thirds of the scheduled term has been completed, the student will be allowed to withdraw from the university only under documented, mitigating circumstances such as prolonged illness, a death in the immediate family, etc., pending approval by the Office of Student Affairs.

After the official Add/Drop period, but before the withdrawal deadline, a student wishing to withdraw entirely from the University will be given a grade of "W" for all courses except variable credit and short term courses. Once two-thirds of the scheduled class time in any course has been completed, a student wishing to withdraw from the University will be given a "W" grade for each course.

Withdrawal from Variable Credit and Short Term Courses. After 15% of the course has been completed, a student wishing to withdraw from the University during a term when he or she is enrolled in a variable credit or short term course (e.g., internship, practicum, field experience, independent study, HWTR 100) must receive the approval of the supervising instructor. If a student obtains this authorization, a grade of "W" or a "WF" may be assigned. The academic advisor can explain the guidelines and consequences resulting from dropping or withdrawing from selected courses. If a course has already concluded, the student will receive the grade earned for the course.

Withdrawal in Absentia. If illness, injury, or other circumstances prevent a student from being on campus to request withdrawal from the University

in person, the student may notify the Office of Student Affairs (970) 943-2011 and request that the Vice President for Student Affairs act as the student's agent in notifying course instructors and the student's advisor.

Leaving the University

Students leaving the university for a semester or longer who plan to return can complete an application for readmission. Students returning to Western are given the same priority registration as continuing students when applications for readmission are received by mid-October for spring course registration and mid-March for fall registration. Students should discuss departure plans with their advisor, as well. Contact the Office of the Registrar for more information about this process.

Prior to departure from Western all students should check out by contacting applicable departments. Students who have on-campus housing must contact Residence Life. Students with financial aid should contact the Student Financial Services/Financial Aid Office for exit counseling and should not be registered for courses in a future term. Additionally, contact the Office of Student Affairs to complete an exit interview.

Transfer Courses

College-level academic courses with grades of C- or better, completed at an institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency, are generally accepted. Western accepts up to 90 credits, combined total, from accredited institutions, military credit, AP, IB, Challenge Exams, Experience-Based Learning Portfolio Assessments, and CLEP exam.

- Western only applies grades earned through Western toward the calculation of GPA.
- Western will only grant upper division credit if the transfer course is taken at an upper division level, regardless of Western equivalency.
- No credit will be granted for remedial or vocational-technical courses; except for some military training, as part of an articulation agreement, or for students admitted in the Adult Degree Completion program whereby no more than 12 vo-tech or professional pathway credits will be granted as general elective credit at Western.
- Courses recommended by the American Council on Education may be considered for credit.
- Total combined credit permitted under AP, IB, Challenge Exams, Experience-Based Learning Portfolio Assessments, and CLEP exams leading to credit is limited to 40 semester credits, **with a maximum of 18 semester credits allowed for CLEP and a maximum of 30 credits allowed from Experience-Based Learning Portfolio Assessments.**
- Continuing students must receive approval in advance for transfer credit.
- Credit earned from non-Western Study Abroad programs are treated as transfer credit.
- To graduate from Western, students must complete a minimum of 30 credits at Western. At least 15 credits in the major and at least 8 credits in the minor. Of the 40 upper division credits, numbered 300, 400, or 600, required for graduation from Western, at least fifteen credits must be courses in the major. Exceptions to evaluations of transfer credit by the Office of the Registrar may be requested by the appropriate academic department

Additional information regarding transfer policies may be found in the Admission Policies section of the catalog.

Experience-Based Learning Portfolio Assessments

Students may choose to submit a portfolio of experience-based learning to meet the requirements of many but not all Western courses. Please contact the Office of the Registrar for specific instructions.

- The student will be referred to appropriate Dean/Chair/Director of academic unit **where credit is sought** to determine whether experience-based learning PLA is suitable for the student's experience.
- Ordinarily, credit will not be awarded for courses that are prerequisites of courses already completed.
- Letter grades will not be assigned for credit awarded through portfolio assessment.
- Experience under consideration in portfolio is not equivalent to Western's internship or variable credit policies.
- **No more than two portfolio submission attempts will be allowed per requested course.**
- Credit awarded through portfolio assessment may not transfer to another institution. Students are encouraged to check with the specific college or university that they are interested in transferring to about their transfer policies.
- **A maximum of 30 credits is allowed from Experience-Based Learning Portfolio Assessments.**
- **To earn credit via experience-based learning PLA, a student must be currently enrolled in good standing.**

Military and Emergency Personnel Deployment

In times of emergency, certain students (including reserve military units, individuals with specialized skills, or firefighters) are called to provide services to the state or country.

When the call for service or emergency deployment is issued, it is often necessary for students to interrupt their coursework in mid-semester without advance notice. The university recognizes that normal refund and withdrawal policies may not be appropriate and therefore will make the following provisions for individuals who leave the institution mid-semester.

Instructors will accommodate student absences of up to twenty percent of the class time for mandatory military training or an emergency or short-term deployment. Students must be given the opportunity to make up missed assignments and tests later, and they cannot be penalized for their absence during their deployment. Students must notify the Office of Student Affairs, which will contact all instructors on their behalf; in order to receive permission to return to the classroom after short-term training or deployment, activation letters or orders must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs.

- Any student ordered to active duty must:
 - Contact the Office of Student Affairs immediately; they must complete and submit a withdrawal form if they wish to withdraw.
 - Provide a copy of activation letter or orders.
 - Notify their instructors of deployment and make arrangements for withdrawal or delayed completion.
- The Office of the Registrar will withdraw the student with the following conditions:

- **On or Before the Drop Deadline** - Students will be dropped from all of their courses if ordered to active duty or to respond to a state or national emergency. There will be no notation of that semester enrollment in their transcripts.
- **After the Drop Deadline** - Students will have a choice to:
 - i. Be dropped with W grades. A notation of "Military or Emergency Services Withdrawal" will be made under the semester of deployment in the student's transcript.
 - ii. In consultation with the instructors, receive a grade of incomplete if:
 1. At least 50% of the work has been completed.
 2. The student has obtained a C or better in the class thus far.
 3. Student and instructor share a plan for the completion of the course work with the department chair. Class work must be completed within one calendar year. If the student remains deployed or has recently completed deployment he/she may request an extension through the Registrar's Office.

Rebates and Financial Aid

Students who choose to be withdrawn will receive a full refund of all tuition and fees, including room and board. Veterans' Aid payments may have to be repaid to the funding agency under certain circumstances, and the Veteran's Certifying Official will assist with the paperwork.

If the student is receiving financial aid, the Veteran's Certifying Official will work with the Financial Aid Office to determine the best refund for the student (based on the Department of Education's rules governing financial aid).

Western realizes that active duty and emergency personnel students may encounter extreme and unforeseeable circumstances during their educational career. We are committed to helping these students succeed no matter what challenges come their way. Therefore, the offices of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and the Registrar are willing to review and potentially make additional accommodations for cases in which students encounter exceptional situations or circumstances.

Grades and Grade-Point Average

For the purpose of calculating a student's grade-point average (which determines academic standing), numerical values are assigned to letter grades on the following scale:

Grade	Grade Points
A	4.000
A-	3.670
B+	3.330
B	3.000
B-	2.670
C+	2.330
C	2.000
C-	1.670
D+	1.330
D	1.000
D-	0.670
F	0.000

Computation of Grade-Point Average (GPA)

Only grades earned through Western are used to calculate GPA. To obtain grade points earned in a course, multiply the number of credits per course by the numerical points for the grade earned in the course. Following is an example of a GPA calculation for 12 credits earned by a student taking four courses with each course worth three credits.

Grade Earned	Grade Points	GPA
B	3	9
C+	2.330	6.999
C	2.000	6.000

Total GPA credits = 12 Total grade points = 30.000

A student's semester GPA is calculated by dividing total grade points by total GPA credits (in the above example $30.000/12 = 2.500$ GPA). A student's cumulative GPA is calculated by dividing all grade points earned by all GPA credits.

All grade-point averages at Western are calculated to three decimal places and all requirements specifying grade-point averages (e.g., scholarships) are stated in terms of three decimal places.

Repetition of Courses

A student who has received a low grade in a course can improve his/her cumulative grade-point average by repeating that course and earning a higher grade. If the student repeats a course under the same title and/or number, only the credits and grade points of the most recent enrollment in that course (even if the repeated course grade is lower) are used to determine whether a requirement has been met and in calculating that student's cumulative GPA, although all courses will still appear on the student's transcript (notated as: I = included, E = excluded). If a student withdraws and receives a "W", or takes the course "S/U" (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) and receives a "U", the previous letter (A-F) grade, or credit in the instance it was a transferred class, will be included and the "W" or "U" will not be counted. In addition, the following conditions apply to repeating a course:

Variable-credit courses are handled as exceptions to the policy on course repetition. A student who wishes to enroll in a variable-credit course to repeat credit previously taken under that course number, but not for additional available credit under that same course number, must contact the Office of the Registrar.

Students wishing to repeat and replace the grade from a course taken on National Student Exchange or a Study Abroad program must send a letter of petition to the Registrar.

Course work repeated after the undergraduate degree has been recorded on the student academic record will not be included in the undergraduate GPA.

Grades Assigned Other than A, B, C, D, F

At the discretion of the faculty member teaching the course, a student who is unable to complete a course for reasons beyond the student's control (e.g., illness) may be assigned an "Incomplete" (IN). The student must have completed more than one-half of the course work at an acceptable level at the time of the request for an "Incomplete." The student and the faculty member must agree upon a plan for the completion of the work within a time period not to exceed one calendar year. When faculty give an "Incomplete", they must designate the student's existing grade in the course, the work to be completed for

the “Incomplete” to be removed, and also indicate the grade that will be automatically given after one year if the work is not satisfactorily completed.

A grade of “Technical Failure” (TF) indicates that the student discontinued participation in the course without official approval. A “TF” is assigned 0.000 grade points.

Selected courses have been approved to be graded as “Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory” only and are so noted in their course descriptions. Only grades of “S” or “U” may be recorded for courses so designated. The grade of “S” is equivalent to letter grades of C- or above. The grade of “U” is equivalent to the letter grades of D+ or below, and no credits are earned. In no case may the grade of “S” or “U” be converted to a traditional letter grade. The S/U grade cannot be used in classes which allow the letter grades A-F.

Some courses or projects are intended to last longer than one semester. Such courses may be designated by the department or department chair at the time of registration and will be given an “In Progress” designation at the end of the semester. The “In Progress” (IP) designation can be used for a maximum of one year, the end of which a grade must be assigned. Grades of “IN,” “IP,” “NC,” “W,” “S,” and “U” are not counted in the computation of a student’s grade-point average (GPA). Since “S” is not counted in calculation of grade point, it does not assist the student toward inclusion on the Dean’s List or Honors designation at commencement.

“Incomplete” (IN) or “In Progress” (IP) grades completed after the undergraduate degree has been posted will not be included in the undergraduate GPA.

Attendance-Related Grades

A course grade of “Technical Failure” (TF) may be assigned by course instructors for students who failed to attend classes but who did not officially withdraw from the course. A “TF” is assigned 0.000 grade points for purposes of computing grade-point averages. Whether students have completed enough of the course to be assigned a grade other than “W,” “TF,” or “IN” (see sections explaining letter grades) is determined by the respective course instructors.

Grade Corrections

Faculty members must submit requests for grade corrections to the Registrar within one year following the recording of the incorrect grade.

Academic Standing

The faculty recognizes that the adjustment to university life may have a negative effect on the early academic performance of some students. To allow for this adjustment period, the 2.000 cumulative grade-point average requirement (ultimately necessary for graduation with a bachelor’s degree) is not immediately imposed on beginning students, though all students should strive to achieve at least the minimum level of a 2.000 GPA every semester.

A sliding scale of categories of “academic deficiency” is applied to students who fall below this minimum. Students who are notified that they fall into any of these categories should re-examine their academic goals and their study habits and should avail themselves of the services provided by Western to help them to succeed academically. Students who perform at less than a 2.000 level, even if they are not technically “academically deficient,” should take steps to improve their academic performance.

Academic Dean’s List

Students who have attained a grade-point average of 3.70 during a semester, while carrying a full course load, will be placed on the Academic Dean’s List. A full course load is 12 or more credits of letter-graded courses in a 16-week semester or six or more credits of letter-graded courses in a summer session.

Good Standing

Students whose Cumulative grade-point average exceeds that which would place them on probation are considered to be in good standing. A student who has a Cumulative GPA above a 2.0 meets this requirement. Fourth year students in 3+2 programs must meet graduate program requirements for GPA and course grades. Refer to the Western Graduate Catalog for further details.

Academic Probation

Students will be placed on academic probation if their cumulative GPA falls between 0.00 - 1.99. A student will remain on academic probation as long as their semester GPA is a 2.0 or higher and their cumulative GPA is below 2.0. Students who have attempted less than 45 Western credits may remain on academic probation indefinitely. At the end of a probationary semester, students with 45 or more Western credits will be suspended if their semester and cumulative GPA are below 2.0.

As a supportive intervention, all students on academic probation will be contacted by the Academic Success Advisor and are required to complete the Turning Point Program (TPP) during the first two weeks of every semester that they remain on academic probation.

Academic Suspension

After a probationary period in which a student has attempted 45 or more Western credits and fails to bring their cumulative GPA to or above a 2.00, the student is suspended.

Academic Suspension requires a minimum period of one calendar year before a student may become eligible to return to Western as a full-time student. A student suspended at the end of the spring semester is eligible to return a year later, at the beginning of the summer session.

A student suspended at the end of the summer semester is eligible to return a year later, at the beginning of the fall session. A student suspended at the end of the fall semester is eligible to return a year later, at the beginning of the spring session.

The one-year period is intended to be a pause for a student struggling academically, during which time the student is expected to reflect upon his/her academic career and take steps towards identifying and creating a productive pathway forward. It is recommended that a student complete a minimum of 6 credit hours of successful coursework at an accredited two or four-year institution before filling an appeal through the Academic Appeals Committee for re-admission to Western. A student is allowed one opportunity for re-admission to Western following an Academic Suspension.

Students who believe that *exceptional circumstances* contributed to their suspension may submit a written petition to the Academic Appeals Committee (a sub-committee of the Faculty Academic Policies Committee). The petition form and instructions for appeal are available on the public website and must be submitted based on the schedule posted there. Each petition is reviewed by the Academic Appeals Committee to determine whether the appeal is granted. It is recommended that a student complete a minimum of 6 credit hours of successful coursework at an accredited two or four-year institution

before filing an appeal. Credits earned at another institution during a period of academic suspension are evaluated by the criteria explained in the Admissions Policies and Procedures section of this *Catalog*.

The Academic Appeals Committee is authorized to specify conditions, beyond those described in these general policies, which reinstated students must meet in order to continue at Western.

Academic Dismissal

If a student returns after a standing of academic suspension, the student's academic standing will return to "probation." If the student does not earn a 2.00 or higher semester grade-point average during any subsequent semester, no further probationary semester is allowed, and the student is issued an immediate notice of academic dismissal.

Readmission from an academic dismissal is possible only by action of the Academic Appeals Committee, according to the established procedures of that committee, posted on the public website. The committee will not accept for review any dismissal appeal petition before two calendar years have transpired since the dismissal. If a student is granted readmission following academic dismissal, credits earned at another institution are evaluated by the criteria explained in the Admissions Policies and Procedures section of this *Catalog*.

Academic Standing Table

Cumulative GPA	Semester GPA	Academic Standing
greater than or equal to 2.0		Good Standing
0.00-1.99	* Students placed on probation will remain on probation in subsequent semesters as long as their SEM GPA is ≥ 2.0 but their CUM < 2.0 . *If at the end of a probationary semester the students SEM & CUM GPA is below a 2.0, the student will be suspended.	Academic Probation
0.00-1.99	*A student cannot get suspended until they have attempted 45 credits at Western.	Academic Suspension
below 2.0	below 2.0. * Following suspension, * SEM & CUM GPA < 2.0 at any point will result in suspension/dismissal. * If, CUM ≥ 2.0 and SEM < 2.0 you will return to probation.	Academic Dismissal

Errors in Determining Academic Suspension/Dismissal

Students whose suspension or dismissal resulted from an error in grading or recording will be readmitted (the suspension or dismissal will be removed from their academic records) upon receipt by the Registrar of written notification from the appropriate faculty member. Such errors in grading or recording should be resolved before the Add Deadline of the semester the student is to be readmitted.

Academic Amnesty

Students who have not attended Western Colorado University for six years or more may, upon returning to Western, petition for academic amnesty. Academic amnesty allows students to count prior credits earned at Western of "C-" and above in meeting total graduation requirements. It also allows students to have a fresh start in their overall grade-point average, as the previous credits attempted at Western will not be used in calculating the overall grade-point average. Petitions by students may be submitted, through the Registrar, to the Faculty Academic Policies Committee. Students must submit petitions for academic amnesty before the end of their first term of re-entry. Academic amnesty will be granted to a student only once.

Graduation Requirements (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/graduation-requirements/>) Certificates

An Undergraduate Certificate is a programmatic or topically-linked series of courses, either from a single field or across disciplinary boundaries. The certificate provides a focused, structured and deeply interrelated set of courses, defined by faculty, that enhances the student experience in areas of disciplinary, interdisciplinary, regional or global interest, or which may be targeted toward a defined professional development need. Creating relevant, and academically rigorous, undergraduate certificates presents an opportunity to respond to evolving conditions in higher education and concurrent shifts in student and employer needs. Undergraduate certificates are available to degree seeking and certificate-only seeking undergraduate students.

1. International students (J or F-1 visa students) may pursue certificates only as degree-seeking students.
2. Degree-seeking students may add a certificate before completing degree requirements by meeting admission and/or completion requirements for the desired certificate.
3. Non-degree seeking students must follow Western's current policy for Non-Degree Admission (as described in the Western Undergraduate Catalog). Per current policy, a maximum of 12 credits taken as a non-degree student will apply toward a degree at Western. The academic program(s) offering the certificate may set additional or more stringent admission criteria.
4. The total number of credits required for an undergraduate certificate may vary by academic discipline, but must require a minimum of nine (9) credits per certificate.
5. All existing University policies apply, including academic, grading, admission, transfer, contact hours, and faculty eligibility to teach. Students are required to have a minimum GPA of 2.0 or higher in order to obtain an undergraduate certificate. Program(s) of origin may establish higher course grade minimums in certificate programs as part of the proposal and approval process.
6. Coursework and credits used for a Western undergraduate certificate may also be used to fulfill major and/or minor requirements for a Western degree.
7. Certificates will be included in the University catalog once approved through Western's shared governance process.
8. Program(s) of origin may determine whether coursework taken at another institution may be applied to a certificate, utilizing Western's existing transfer policies. A minimum of 25% of their credits used

to satisfy certificate requirements must be taken in residence at Western, or at program discretion.

9. Certificates may be stand-alone, linked to an existing degree program, or be offered as a result of collaboration among multiple academic programs at Western.
10. Certificates may be offered by an academic program (s) that does not currently offer a related degree program.
11. Certificates should enhance existing programs, not take the place of them. Sufficient resources must exist to support the certificate.
12. Officially approved certificates will be posted to Western transcripts. A paper certificate will be provided per our diploma/certificate third-party services upon completion. Completion of a certificate will be verified by the managing academic program/school and the Registrar's Office.
13. All changes to certificate requirements must be approved by the relevant shared governance structure (e.g., Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate).

Academic Integrity

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The University assumes, as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters, that students will be honest and that they will submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for practices that are fair require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable conduct in the course of their academic work. Dishonest work may include, but is not limited to, the following infractions:

Plagiarism. Presenting another person's work as one's own, including paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment and the submitting of another student's work as one's own is considered plagiarism.

Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or foot-notes the quotation of paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else.

Cheating on Examinations. Giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination is considered cheating. Examples of unauthorized help include the use of notes, texts, or "crib sheets" during an examination (unless specifically approved by the instructor).

Unauthorized Collaboration. Submission for academic credit of a work product, or a part thereof, represented as being one's own, which has been developed in substantial collaboration with assistance from another person or source, is a violation of academic honesty. It is also a violation of academic honesty to knowingly provide such assistance. Collaborative work specifically authorized by an instructor is allowed.

Falsification. It is a violation of academic honesty to misrepresent material or fabricate information in an academic exercise or assignment (e.g., false or misleading citation of sources or the falsification of the results of experiments or of computer data).

Multiple Submissions. It is a violation of academic honesty to submit substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the instructor(s) to whom the material is submitted for additional credit.

Consequences of Violations

Violations of academic integrity may result in the following: a grade of "F" or a "zero" for the assignment, an "F" for the course, withdrawal from the course, or suspension or expulsion from the University. Serious violations of academic integrity are reported to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Academic Due Process for Students US Department of Education Program Integrity Regulations Complaint Process

Pursuant to the United States Department of Education's Program Integrity Rule, Western is required to provide all prospective and current students with the contact information of the state agency or agencies that handle complaints against post secondary education institutions offering distance learning or correspondence education within that state. Students are encouraged to utilize the institution's internal complaint or review policies and procedures through the Office of Student Affairs or Office of the Provost prior to filing a complaint with the state agency or agencies. The link below provides a list of contacts from each state in which a student may file a complaint.

<http://www.nc-sara.org/content/state-portal-entity-contacts> (<http://www.nc-sara.org/content/state-portal-entity-contacts/>)

To file a complaint against a Colorado institution of higher education, forms can be found here:

<https://cdhe.colorado.gov/filing-student-complaint> (<https://cdhe.colorado.gov/filing-student-complaint/>)

It is the objective of these procedures to provide for the prompt and fair resolution of the types of problems described herein which students may experience at Western.

Definitions

Complaint. An informal claim by an affected student that a faculty member or an academic administrator has violated, misinterpreted, or improperly exercised his/her professional duties.

Complainant. An affected student who makes a complaint.

Grievance. A written allegation by an affected student that a faculty member or an academic administrator has violated, misinterpreted, or improperly exercised his/her professional duties. The grievance should include the possibility of a remedy.

Grievant. An affected student who files a grievance.

Respondent(s). The faculty member(s) and/or academic administrator(s) identified by the affected student as causing or contributing to the complaint or grievance.

Grievance Committee. A committee composed of one faculty member selected by the grievant, one faculty member selected by the respondent, and three faculty members selected by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (or assignees).

Time Limits. When a number of days are specified herein, they shall be understood to exclude Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, University vacation days, and other days when the University is not in session and holding classes.

Academic Administrator. Professional personnel of the University, other than teaching faculty, who are in positions to make academic decisions affecting students, including but not limited to, department

chairs, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President.

Informal Complaint Procedure

The complainant shall discuss the problem with the respondent(s). If the problem is not mutually resolved at this time, the complainant shall confer with the immediate supervisor(s) of the respondent(s). This usually will be the Chair(s) of the Department(s) to which the respondent(s) is assigned.

If satisfactory resolution is still not achieved, the complainant must confer with the Vice President for Academic Affairs or selected representative.

Formal Grievance Procedure

If the complaint is not suitably resolved, the student has the right to file a grievance with the Vice President for Academic Affairs within six months of the time that the grievant could or should have known of the action which is the basis of the problem.

This written allegation shall indicate what has already been done to resolve the complaint. Preservation of relevant documents and of precise records of actions taken is advantageous.

The grievance committee shall be formed under the supervision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and a hearing shall be scheduled within 15 days after that officer receives the written grievance from the grievant.

The grievance committee shall hear testimony from the grievant, the respondent, and whomever else it deems appropriate.

Within 15 days after completion of the hearing(s), the grievance committee shall submit its findings to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for implementation as deemed appropriate by that officer. A copy of the finding of the committee and of the implementing decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be given to the grievant and the respondent.

The grievant may withdraw the grievance at any point in the proceedings by doing so in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs may grant an extension of the time limit for good cause.

If the grievance has not been resolved satisfactorily after the above procedures have been completed, the grievant is advised that he/she may appeal to the President of Western Colorado University, and ultimately, to the Board of Trustees.