

Studying, Grades, and Credit

Studying

The academic learning of students is their most significant responsibility. Students should expect to spend at least 30 hours per week outside of class on class prep and activities (i.e., at least six hours per three credit course). Faculty design their courses with this expectation in mind but evaluate students on the basis of their achievement.

Grades

The semester grade, which is indicated on the student's transcript, is a combination of grades given for class work, tests, assigned papers or projects, laboratory performance, and the final examination.

When students wish to review their grades with a faculty member, the instructor is responsible for making available all relevant examinations, papers, and other items. Student work must be either returned directly to the student or retained by the professor for a minimum of one calendar year.

Faculty should retain their records indefinitely and follow all other grading procedures as outlined in the Faculty Responsibilities Code. Faculty must submit their grades according to the deadlines established by the University Registrar. Incidences of delinquency will be reported to the Departmental Chair and appropriate academic Dean.

Adjunct or visiting faculty who leave the University must leave any unreturned papers and exams with the Department Chair upon departure.

Students may access their grades online in GU Experience anytime except during final exam periods. Final grades for any given semester are posted in GU Experience promptly after the final exam period has concluded.

Quality Grades and Grade Point Average

Effective Fall of 1993, grades are as follows:

Grade Description Points	Quality Points	Label
A	4.00	Excellent
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	
B	3.00	Good
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	
C	2.00	Adequate
C-	1.67	
D+	1.33	
D	1.00	Minimum Passing
F	0.00	
		Failure

Table 1: Grade Description Points and Quality Points

The quality points are obtained by multiplying the number of credits attempted by the value assigned to the grade earned.

The Quality Point Index (QPI), also called the Grade Point Average (GPA), is obtained by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the total number of credits attempted, truncated to the third decimal place without rounding.

The grades S (satisfactory) and U (unsatisfactory) are applicable to courses taken for credit but not for quality points. S is equivalent to grade C or better. U, for which no credit is given, is equivalent to C-, D+, D or F.

Students may not repeat a course for which they have previously earned credit. If a course is repeated, both grades will appear on the student's transcript, and only the first passing grade earned will be computed in the student's grade point average. If a failed course is repeated and passed, both the F and the passing grade are computed in the average. The student will receive credit only once for the course.

Credits from other institutions, e.g. transfer credit, study abroad and consortium credit, will not be computed in the student's cumulative Quality Point Index. This is the case for most study abroad programs; note, however, that grades earned on Georgetown administered summer programs abroad, or at either the Villa Le Balze or GU-Qatar, are computed in the student's cumulative Quality Point Index (see more information on courses taken abroad and the QPI).

Pass/Fail Option

With the exception of first-year students, students may opt to take one elective course or equivalent¹ each semester on a pass/fail basis, up to a maximum of six courses or 24 credits over the course of the degree.

¹ ***For purposes of the pass/fail policy, a course is considered three or more credits. Students may opt to take multiple one- or two-credit elective courses on a pass/fail basis in the same semester, up to a maximum of four credits.***

The procedure for selecting the pass/fail grade option is as follows:

Students choose an elective course to be graded on a pass/fail basis by initiating a pass/fail course request online in GU Experience. The request is sent to the student's advising dean for approval, and the instructor receives notification after the pass/fail request has been approved and processed.

The pass/fail option is restricted to free electives and must be exercised only for courses within the normal course load for a given semester. A department or program may, for valid reasons, designate certain of its courses as unavailable to the pass/fail option and will notify the Dean's Office. Language classes at the language-learning level and studio art courses may not be taken pass/fail.

Pass/fail courses will be marked S (Satisfactory), equivalent to letter grades of C or better, or U (Unsatisfactory), equivalent to letter grades below C. Neither the S nor the U will affect the student's QPI, but only courses marked as "S" receive credit.

Once a student has elected to take a course on a pass/fail basis, it is not possible, under any circumstances, to record a letter grade for that course.

The last day to request the pass/fail option is the last day to withdraw from the course in the semester. Courses on different modular dates will have the option to request a pass/fail up to the last day to withdraw in that module. See the Academic Calendar (<https://registrar.georgetown.edu/academic-calendar/maincampus/>) for dates.

Audit Policy

Students may wish to audit a course for which they will not receive credit or a grade. Students who audit a course pay the standard per credit hour tuition. Refer to the Expenses and Finances (<http://coursecatalog.georgetown.edu/undergraduate/expenses-financial-aid/tuition-other-expenses/>) section of this Bulletin for the per credit hour tuition amount. **GU-Q, College of Arts & Sciences, and School of Health students are not permitted to audit courses.** Language courses (at the expository writing level and below) and Consortium courses may not be audited.

The procedure for auditing a course is as follows:

If a student wishes to change status from credit to audit, the student must obtain formal approval from their advising dean during the add/drop period. Changes to audit are not allowed beyond the add/drop period.

Once a student registers for an audit, it is not possible, under any circumstances, to record a letter grade for that course.

The last day to request to audit a course is the last day to add a course for that semester. See the Academic Calendar (<https://registrar.georgetown.edu/academic-calendar/maincampus/>) for dates.

Students who audit a course, including Senior Auditors, will not be included in the course evaluation process.

Advisory Grades

Advisory grades are made available by the Registrar through GU Experience (<https://guexperience.georgetown.edu/>) after mid-term examinations in the fall and spring semester. These grades are not part of the permanent academic record of the student; they are designed to help students evaluate academic achievement. The grades used are Satisfactory (SM), Marginal (MM), Unsatisfactory (UM).

Incompletes

Students are expected to complete all work in a course by the deadline(s) determined by the instructor, and no later than the end of the final exam period. In the event that a student is unable to meet the standard deadlines due to illness or an emergency at the end of the term, the student may request a provisional grade of N ("incomplete"). All requests for N grades must be approved by both the instructor of record for the course and the student's advising dean. No provisional grade except N may be given, and absent approval from both the instructor and the student's dean, the student will be assigned an administrative failure or a letter grade (A through F) on the basis of all work completed by the regular deadline.

Please note that N grades will only be granted in cases where the student is deemed to be in good standing in the course by the instructor (i.e., the student has participated actively, has completed the majority of the course requirements in a timely fashion, etc.) and is in good academic standing in general. Students on academic probation are not eligible for incompletes. When an N grade is granted, the

course must be completed by the new deadlines agreed upon by the student, instructor, and dean, and the final grade submitted by the instructor no later than

1. March 30 for the fall semester;
2. September 30 for the spring semester; or
3. November 30 for the summer sessions.

If the student has not completed the outstanding work by the new deadline(s), faculty will be required to submit a letter grade (A through F) on the basis of all work completed previously.

Grade Reports

The Registrar will make semester grades available through GU Experience (<https://guexperience.georgetown.edu/>) at the end of the examination period each semester. Students may view their grades and unofficial transcript on GU Experience or request an official transcript of their academic record through Parchment.

Grade Changes

When a professor determines a grade change is justified (e.g., due to an error in recording or calculation), the professor will submit a grade change request, including the reasons for such a change, to the student's Dean for approval.

As a matter of equity, professors cannot change final grades on the basis of additional work from an individual student after grades have been submitted. This includes, but is not limited to, revision of papers, retakes of tests, or submission of supplemental work. Professors who are asked to reassess work by individual students should be prepared to reassess work of all other students in the class.

A final grade may not be changed on the basis of documentation received after the grade has been posted. Students are expected to provide documentation of absences, etc. within the term and consistent with the professor's policies regarding documentation.

The Academic Standards Committee of each school is responsible for upholding the following deadlines: a grade for a fall semester course may be changed by the professor until the end of the spring semester; a spring semester course until the end of September; a summer course until the end of November.

Grade Appeals

When a student thinks that a given course grade is not justified, the student must first discuss the grade on an informal basis with the professor of the course. Within the first 21 calendar days of the next semester, the student and professor should discuss the grade. (Faculty may be unavailable between semesters. For spring and summer classes, the next semester is the fall semester.) After having discussed the grade with the faculty member, the student may consider a formal appeal of the grade.

Grounds for Appeal

An error in grading procedures or inequity in the application of policies stated in the course syllabus are grounds for an appeal. A disagreement with the professional judgment of the professor should not be the basis of an appeal or any resulting change of grade. The appeal process involves a thorough review which could result in the

decision that the grade was too low, or, if such an error or inequity was found to have benefitted the student, that the grade was too high.

Initiating an Appeal

If the student believes that there is reason for an appeal of the professor's assigned grade, the student may make a formal written appeal to the Chair of the faculty member's department with a copy of the appeal letter sent to the student's advising Dean. In the appeal letter, the student must state the grounds for the appeal and document any claims of grading error or inequities in as much detail as possible. The Chair must then notify the faculty member of the appeal and provide a copy of the formal request. Such an appeal must be filed within the first thirty calendar days of the semester after that in which the grade was assigned. (If the faculty member is in the School of Foreign Service, the appeal would go to the Faculty Chair; and if the faculty member is in the McDonough School of Business (MSB), the appeal would go to the Senior Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs Office. In the event that changes in titles or responsibilities make these designations inappropriate, the Dean of each School will have the authority to make a new designation.)

Informal Resolution of the Appeal

The Chair/Dean may try to resolve the appeal informally, but has no authority to change the grade assigned by the faculty member.

Resolution by a Faculty Committee

If the Chair/Dean does not resolve the appeal informally or if the chair is the faculty member who assigned the original grade, he or she shall ask a committee of three impartial faculty members to review the complaint and decide the issue. (In MSB, a faculty member designated by the Vice Dean convenes the Appeals Committee to review the complaint. In SOH, the appeal goes to the Chair of the Board of Appeals who will convene the Committee to address the grade change). The Chair may choose an impartial faculty member from another department or program if necessary to assure fairness. After hearing from the faculty member and the student (or determining that they are unavailable), and taking whatever other steps it deems necessary, the appeals committee shall decide whether to sustain the original grade, raise it, or lower it. The committee's decision is final. The Chair (or faculty member designated by the Vice Dean in the MSB) must report to the student, the faculty member, and the Dean of the student's school how the appeal has been concluded no later than sixty days after the beginning of the next semester.

Default Resolution by the Dean

If the student's Dean does not receive a report from the Chair within the second thirty-day period, the Dean shall notify the chair that the report has not been received and that unless a report is received within 14 calendar days, the Dean will settle the appeal. If a report is not received within that period, the Dean shall either resolve the appeal informally or, soliciting whatever advice is necessary, decide whether to sustain the original grade, raise it, or lower it. The Dean's decision in that case is final. The Dean shall notify the student, the faculty member, and the Chair of the decision reached in the case. The matter must be settled by the end of the semester following the one in which the course was given and the grade awarded.