



University at Buffalo
The State University of New York
Office of the Provost
Vice Provost & Dean of Undergraduate Education

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 18, 2007
TO: Undergraduate Faculty
FROM: Michael E. Ryan, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education
Michael E. Ryan
SUBJECT: Undergraduate Grading Policies

I would like to take this opportunity to remind faculty about important grading policies for undergraduates. The following are policy statements taken from the University Undergraduate Catalog at <http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/index.shtml#grading>, where additional grading policies and information can be found.

Feel free to contact my office by email at vpue@buffalo.edu or by phone at 645-6003 if you have any questions or concerns. I appreciate your attention to these policies and your timely submission of final grades for our undergraduate students.

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Incomplete grades: A grade of incomplete ("I") may be given to students who have not completed all of the assigned work in a course if they have a passing average and there exists a well-defined means by which the course requirements can be completed. The grade of "I" must be removed within a period of fifteen months. Students may not re-register for a course in which they have a grade of Incomplete.

- Granting an Incomplete grade is the instructor's prerogative, and in no way should instructors feel coerced by students to give Incomplete grades. Instructors should clearly communicate their requirements for granting Incomplete grades at the beginning of the semester to all students in the class.
- Students should be given clear information that specifies the work that they must complete in order for the instructor to assign a final grade. It is highly recommended for instructors to create written contracts with students that specify the work to be completed. These written contracts could be kept on file with the student's departmental records.

- Incompletes should not be given to mask failing work in a semester, nor should they be used to afford a student additional time to improve a grade when the student has completed all assigned work. Incompletes should not be given to students who did not attend classes and did not drop the course. These students should receive F grades.
- A grade of Incomplete must be accompanied by a default grade that the student will receive if no grade change is filed by the instructor before the expiration of the grace period. A default grade should indicate what the student's final grade will be, should the student fail to do any further work on the course. It is NOT meant to indicate the student's average grade at the time of departure from the course.
- Please note that, effective with grades assigned in the Fall 2007 semester, the grace period will be changing from 15 months to 12 months. *Incomplete grades assigned in the Spring 2007 semester will default in 15 months on August 15.*

Incomplete grades assigned for (semester):	Will default in 15 months on:
Fall (2006 or earlier)	March 15
Spring (2007 or earlier)	August 15
Summer (2007 or earlier)	November 15

Incomplete grades assigned for (semester):	Will default in 12 months on:
Fall (2007 or later)	December 31
Spring (2008 or later)	May 31
Summer (2008 or later)	August 31

“J” grades: A "J" indicates a reporting error, and is automatically assigned when an instructor does not submit grades by the close of Web Grading, or a blank grade is submitted for a student. For Study Abroad courses, grades that have not yet been received also appear as “J” grades. While every effort is made to have the instructor correct this early on, a "J" may occasionally remain on the student's record into the next semester. The student should immediately contact the instructor and/or department to correct the error. Without a correction, the "J" will automatically become an "F" grade at the end of the following semester.

- As with Incompletes, blank and “J” grades should not be given to mask failing work in a semester, nor should they be used to afford a student additional time to improve a grade when the student has completed all assigned work. “J” grades should not be given to students who did not attend classes and did not drop the course. These students should receive F grades.
- Instructors can change “J” grades by submitting a Universal Grade Change Form, which can be obtained in department offices.

Posting of Grades: It is crucial that we make every effort to protect student privacy, particularly when grading information is being disclosed or publicly posted. Because there have been several instances where names and person numbers of students in courses were accidentally disclosed, it is highly recommended that all course instructors assign random number or alphanumeric identifiers to students in their classes, and instructors only publicly post grades according to these identifiers rather than by student person number. For those courses using UB Learns, a “My Grades” tool is available so that grades can be posted confidentially. (Please note that UB Learns is UB’s on-line course management software, and is not the same as Web Grading.) Guidelines for student privacy can be found on-line at: <http://src.buffalo.edu/office/officepolicies/studentprivacy.shtml>.

Repeat Policy: A student may repeat a given course only once for the purposes of affecting his or her grade point average. There is no limit to the number of different courses that a student may repeat. When a course is repeated, the credits earned count only once for purposes of satisfying degree requirements and for purposes of calculating the student's GPA. **When a course is repeated, the grade that is counted in calculating the GPA is the grade earned the second time, even if that grade is lower than the grade earned the first time.** All courses taken and all grades earned will appear on the student's UB transcript. When a course has been repeated, the first grade appears on the UB transcript with a symbol and note indicating that it has been replaced by the later grade in the computation of the UB GPA.

A course in which a student earns a passing grade during a registration beyond the second time may be used to satisfy a General Education requirement, but the grade and credit hours will not be calculated into the UB GPA. However, each academic department has the authority to decide whether or not courses may be repeated to meet program requirements. Prior to registering for a course for the second time or more, students must check with their major or minor department to determine if this is permissible. When a course is repeated more than once, **the grade that is counted in calculating the GPA is the grade earned the second time, even if that grade is lower than the grade earned for any other registration for the course.**

Courses in which the content varies from semester to semester can be coded as repeatable for credit, and the Repeat Policy does not apply, except by petition. Forms to make a course repeatable for credit or to request an exception are available at <http://src.buffalo.edu/office/officeforms/advisingforms.shtml>.