

Policy Revision Approval Date: December 19, 2006**Policy Revision Effective Date: April 1, 2007****Procedure Approval Date: July 8, 2020****Procedure Effective Date: September 1, 2020****POLICY STATEMENT**

Grades are awarded for all courses taken at Capella University. As a competency-based educational institution, Capella University expects the grade to reflect the degree to which the learner has demonstrated the specific competencies taught and assessed within a course. Matters that affect demonstration of course competencies can be factored into the grade only to the extent that they inhibit or interfere with demonstration of the published competencies.

RATIONALE

Capella University demonstrates its commitment to ethical, fair, and unbiased evaluation of learning by defining program learning in terms of course competencies and program learning outcomes.

Additionally, Capella University supports learner success by providing feedback on competency demonstrations throughout courses and programs. As such, Capella University uses a criterion-referenced grading scheme in which all grading criteria are aligned to specific course competency demonstrations.

DEFINITIONSCompetency

A competency is the knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional attributes required to successfully perform a task in a given context. At Capella University, courses are designed based on the competencies necessary to demonstrate a program's learning outcomes.

PROCEDURES**I. Matters Affecting Demonstration of Competencies for All Learners**

Capella University's grades and competency evaluations reflect the degree to which the learner has demonstrated the specific published course competencies taught and assessed within a course. Matters that affect the demonstration of those competencies may also be factored into the learner's grade or evaluation.

A. Learners are expected to submit all assignments through the courseroom as instructed.

B. Faculty are responsible for determining which matters affect demonstration of published competencies.

- C. Matters that affect demonstration of published competencies can be factored into the grade only to the extent that those matters inhibit or interfere with the demonstration of published competencies.
- D. Matters that affect demonstration of published competencies include but are not limited to the following:
 - 1. Deadlines
 - 2. Spelling
 - 3. Grammar
 - 4. Style
- E. Signature Assignments
Signature assignments, found in select doctoral courses, both fulfill competencies and affect the demonstration of other competencies specific to the completion of the doctoral capstone or dissertation. These assignments must be successfully completed for the learner to successfully complete the course. Failure on a signature assignment will result in failure of the course.

II. Letter Grades for Courses in GuidedPath Programs

Letter grades are the default grading option for most courses. When stated in Capella's *University Catalog*, learners may choose to be graded on a Satisfactory/Not Satisfactory ("S"/"NS") grading scale. Learners who elect that option must request it within the first 12 calendar days of the course start. Once the 12th calendar day deadline has passed, the grading option cannot be changed. Grading scales for each course are predetermined by the school's administration.

- **A grade of "A"** is earned for coursework that demonstrates mastery of the published competencies at a "Distinguished" level of performance and exceeds course expectations as defined in the course syllabus or course learning plan. A grade of "A" earns four (4) quality points toward the learner's grade point average (GPA).
- **A grade of "B"** is earned for coursework that demonstrates mastery of the published competencies at a "Proficient" level of performance and meets course expectations as defined in the course syllabus or course learning plan. A grade of "B" earns three (3) quality points toward the learner's GPA.
- **A grade of "C"** is earned for coursework that demonstrates published competencies at a "Basic" level of performance and minimally meets course expectations as defined in the course syllabus or course learning plan. A grade of "C" earns two (2) quality points toward the learner's GPA.
- **A grade of "D"** is earned for undergraduate coursework that demonstrates published competencies at a marginal level of performance as defined in the course syllabus or course learning plan. A grade of "D" earns one (1) quality point toward the learner's GPA. A grade of "D" is for undergraduate courses only and may not be awarded for graduate coursework.
- **A grade of "F"** is earned for coursework that demonstrates published competencies at the "Non-Performance" level and does not meet course expectations as described in the course syllabus or course learning plan. It is also used for learners who had been assigned a grade of "I" but did not meet all of the course requirements by the end of the following quarter. Learners who do not participate in their course(s) will receive a grade

of “F.” A grade of “F” earns zero (0) quality points and affects the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits but not earned credits.

- **A grade of “I” (Incomplete)** may be granted by the course instructor. Final work must be completed by the end of the following quarter or earlier, if so directed by the course instructor. A grade of “I” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits but not earned credits. When the learner completes the final necessary coursework prior to the stated deadline, the learner will receive the appropriate grade and will earn the corresponding quality points. If the final coursework is not completed prior to the stated deadline, the learner will receive a failing grade for the course. A grade of “I” may also be granted in cases of military leave of absence and national emergency leave of absence.
- **A grade of “S” (Satisfactory)** is earned for coursework that demonstrates mastery of the published competencies in a manner that meets course expectations as defined in the course syllabus or course learning plan for those courses in which the learner has received approval to be graded on the “S”/“NS” scale. A grade of “S” is equivalent to a grade of “B” or better at the graduate level and “C” or better at the undergraduate level. It does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits and earned credits.
- **A grade of “NS” (Not Satisfactory)** is earned for coursework that does not demonstrate mastery of the published competencies or does not meet course expectations as defined in the course syllabus or course learning plan for those courses in which the learner has received approval to be graded on the “S”/“NS” scale. It is also used for learners who have received a grade of “IS” but did not meet all of the course requirements by the end of the following quarter. A grade of “NS” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits but not earned credits.
- **A grade of “IS” (Incomplete—“S”/“NS” scale)** may be granted for those courses in which the learner has received approval to be graded on the “S”/“NS” scale. Final work must be completed by the end of the following quarter or earlier if so directed by the course instructor. A grade of “IS” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits but not earned credits. When the learner satisfactorily completes the final necessary coursework by the stated deadline, the learner will receive a final grade of “S.” If the final coursework is not completed by the stated deadline, the learner will receive a final grade of “NS.” A grade of “IS” may also be granted in cases of military leave of absence and national emergency leave of absence.
- **A grade of “IP” (In Progress)** is assigned for select courses in which a learner is currently registered and actively participating. A grade of “IP” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits but not earned credits. When a learner completes, or fails to complete, all course requirements, the learner will receive a final grade of “S,” “NS,” or the appropriate grade.
- **A grade of “R” (Required)** indicates that a course is required. A grade of “R” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits and earned credits.
- **A grade of “NG” (No Grade)** is assigned for select internship and practicum courses for all continuing course registrations (subsequent to the initial course registration) or to course registrations for which the Admissions & Records Operations department has determined that, due to university curricular changes, “NG” is the appropriate final grade.

A grade of “NG” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits but not earned credits.

- **A grade of “W” (Withdrawal)** is assigned when a learner drops a course prior to the final date learners may drop courses without academic consequences as defined in university policy 2.02.02 *Course Registration*. A grade of “W” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits but not earned credits.
- **A grade of “MW” (Military Withdrawal)** is assigned when a military learner drops a course after census but prior to the final date learners may drop courses without academic consequences. A grade of “MW” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It does not count toward attempted credits or earned credits.
- **A grade of “PC” (Petition for Credit)** is assigned when a learner earns credit by prior learning assessment and competencies gained through previous work or educational experience. A grade of “PC” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits and earned credits.
- **A grade of “CC” (Credential Credit)** is assigned for credit awarded through a prior learning assessment of select, externally recognized credentials. An externally recognized credential reflects learning and competencies gained by previous work or educational experience that has been evaluated by a Capella faculty subject matter expert. A grade of “CC” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted and earned credits.
- **A grade of “T” (Transfer)** is assigned for courses that are taken at another institution and are accepted for credit at Capella University. A grade of “T” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It does not count toward attempted credits or earned credits and only affects the earned credits on the transcript.
- **A grade of “NR” (No Grade Report Received)** is assigned for courses for which Capella University has not received a grade report from the course instructor. A grade of “NR” does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It counts toward attempted credits but not earned credits.

Retired grades: The grades “NC” (No Credit) and “NP” (Non-Participation) were assigned to courses prior to April 1, 2003. “NC” and “NP” grades do not earn quality points and are not included in the learner’s GPA. They count toward attempted credits but not earned credits. The grade “VR” was assigned to residency courses for which learners met attendance requirements prior to October 1, 2006. A “VR” grade does not earn quality points and is not included in the learner’s GPA. It does not count toward attempted credits or earned credits. The grades “HM” and “HD” were assigned to courses prior to January 1, 2008. “HM” and “HD” grades do not earn quality points and are not included in the learner’s GPA. They do not count toward attempted credits or earned credits.

III. Course Values Summary for GuidedPath Programs

Grade	Quality Points	Attempted Credits	Earned Credits	GPA	Defaults To
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A	4	Y	Y	Y	
B	3	Y	Y	Y	
C	2	Y	Y	Y	
D	1	Y	Y	Y	
F	0	Y	N	Y	
I		Y	N	N	F
S		Y	Y	N	
NS		Y	N	N	
IS		Y	N	N	NS
IP		Y	N	N	
R		Y	Y	N	
NG		Y	N	N	
W		Y	N	N	
MW		N	N	N	
PC		Y	Y	N	
CC		Y	Y	N	
T		N	N	N	
NR		Y	N	N	

IV. Requesting Satisfactory/Not Satisfactory (“S”/“NS”) Grading for Courses in Credit-Based (GuidedPath) Programs

- A. In order to be graded on the “S”/“NS” scale for a course in which such grading is permitted, learners must request that option by selecting “Edit a Course” in the Student Center on Campus.
- B. The “S”/“NS” grading scale must be requested no later than the 12th calendar day of the course. After the 12th calendar day has passed, the grading scale cannot be modified.

V. Final Grade Submission for Guided Path Programs

- A. Grades are submitted by the faculty within nine calendar days after the final day of the course.
- B. Grades are scheduled for posting to Campus 10 calendar days after the final day of the course.
- C. Learners access their grades through the Student Center on Campus.
- D. Inquiries about grades that have not been posted to Campus within the 10-calendar-day time frame should be directed to the course instructor.
- E. Learners may only appeal a grade through university policy *3.04.09 Appealing a Grade*.
- F. All grades are final after two calendar years.

VI. Course Evaluation for FlexPath Programs

- A. Learners enrolled in FlexPath programs receive competency evaluations in lieu of traditional letter grades. Competency evaluation performance is reflected on the learner’s official transcript.
- B. FlexPath learners may request a transcript which translates their evaluation into traditional letter grades and quarter credits.
- C. FlexPath Course Evaluation Process
 1. To complete a course prior to the course end date, all assessments must be completed and evaluated by the instructor.
 2. After all assessments are evaluated, the learner must check the box stating they have completed all assessments and click the “Complete this Course” button in order to receive a final course evaluation.
 3. When the course end date has been reached, all assessments will be evaluated and calculated into the final evaluation of the course as of 11:59 p.m. Central Time. Final evaluations are posted within five business days after completion of the course.
- D. All course evaluations are final after two calendar years.
- E. Course Evaluations and Change of Program Requests
Learners requesting a change to their academic program must complete any active course(s) by clicking the “Complete this Course” button before the change is processed to ensure the course(s) is completed and evaluated before moving into the new program. The change process is described in university policy *2.02.07 Changing Academic Program*.

VII. Course Values Summary for FlexPath Programs

Competency Evaluation	Attempted	Earned	Defaults To
Distinguished	Y	Y	
Proficient	Y	Y	
Basic	Y	Y	
Non-Performance	Y	N	
Incomplete	Y	N	Non-Performance

MW	N	N	
W	Y	N	

POLICY OWNERS

Academic Owner: Deans

Operations Owner: Admissions & Records Operations

RELATED DOCUMENTS

University policy 3.01.01 Academic Integrity and Honesty

University policy 3.01.04 Academic Standing

University policy 3.01.05 Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress

University policy 3.04.01 Academic Readiness

University policy 3.04.06 Access to Learning Resources

University policy 3.04.08 Incomplete Grades

University policy 3.04.09 Appealing a Grade

University policy 3.04.11 Transfer Credit and Prior Learning Assessment

University policy 4.02.01 Learner Disability Accommodations

University policy 4.02.04 Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault

REVISION HISTORY

Original Policy Approval Date: March 15, 2004

Revision Dates: 5-24-05; 9-11-07; 7-9-08; 6-21-12; 10-8-12; 11-8-12; 6-6-13; 10-31-13; 3-23-14; 8-11-16; 10-31-17; 10-15-18; 8-30-19; 7-8-20

Administrative edits as result of ongoing review: 5-1-09; 7-11-09; 4-20-10; 4-17-12; 11-22-13; 4-1-18; 3-26-21