

White Mountains Community College

2008-2009 ACADEMIC POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Academic Philosophy

At White Mountains Community College, students are exposed to various methods of instruction. While some courses are lecture-based, others subscribe to a performance-based, student-directed learning philosophy. Performance-based learning is a systematic, organized approach to education and training that specifies the knowledge and skills required for graduates to perform competently and confidently in a rapidly changing economy and society. Programs and courses are structured within a competency-based framework. By defining competencies (knowledge and skills) in each course, educators and learners work together to maximize the potential of each individual in the learning process. Intellectual, interpersonal and physical-manual competencies are assessed continuously to assist learners in improving their performance. The college continually strives to provide a physical, intellectual and social environment that supports the unique learning styles, backgrounds and needs of each individual.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Associate Degree

The minimum number of credits for all Associate Degrees is 64 credits with a maximum of 68 credits. Requests for requirements beyond 68 credits should be fully justified in terms of program outcomes. Remedial and developmental work should be in addition to the collegiate level requirements of the degree program but should, whenever possible, be pursued concurrently with technical training to enhance intent and relevance.

Every Associate Degree program shall have a major consisting of a minimum of 32 credits in program specific courses.

Associate Degrees may have concentrations, which are curricula generally consisting of a minimum of 20 credits of related/sequential course work. Students may choose among two or more of such course groupings for a specialized focus.

All Associate Degrees must have a general education core. The general education core consists of courses that are drawn from the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities and other courses that prepare the student for life experiences. They are essential elements in the achievement of identified competencies and are not directed toward specialized study or specific occupational or professional objectives.

Courses fall into the areas as follows:

1. College Composition, Literature and Communication
2. Science
3. Math
4. Social Science
5. Humanities/Fine Arts/Foreign Language
6. Liberal Arts electives (from categories 1–5 above)

The following is a non-exclusive list of disciplines that define the areas of humanities, fine arts, and social science:

Humanities:	Interdisciplinary Studies; Literature; Western Civilization; Comparative Religion; Ethnic Studies; Speech; Philosophy
Fine Arts:	Culture; Visual Arts; Performing Arts; Art; Dance; Music
Social Science:	International Relations; Sociology; Psychology; Anthropology; Economics; Political Science; History; Archeology; Demography; Geography

Associate in Science Degree (A.S.)

Programs leading to this degree include courses consisting of a minimum of 32 credits of program specific education and a minimum of 24 credits in general education. Such programs provide direct entry into employment and transfer into an associated baccalaureate program.

The Associate in Science degree shall provide:

1. A minimum of 32 credits of specialized study in courses clearly identifiable with the technical skills, proficiency, and knowledge required for career competency.
2. A minimum of 24 credits in General Education. Courses fall into the areas as follows:
 - a. College Composition and Literature or Communication 6 credits
 - b. Science 3-4 credits
 - c. Math 3 credits
 - d. Social Science 3 credits
 - e. Humanities/Fine Arts/Foreign Language 3 credits
 - f. Liberal Arts electives (from categories 1–5 above) 6 credits

Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.)

Programs leading to this degree include courses consisting of a minimum of 32 credits of specialized technical-occupational education, and a minimum of 21 credits in general education. Such programs emphasize specific outcomes designed to meet competencies required for direct entry into employment and to provide a basis for transfer, at a minimum, of the general education component of the curriculum. Although A.A.S. degree programs are designed for direct entry into the workforce, they cannot be considered terminal. In addition to the necessity for lifelong learning in response to the rapidly changing technologies, students can expect to make several career changes during their lifetimes. A.A.S. programs may not have a directly-related occupational-specific curriculum upper-division component. It should be noted, however, that some Bachelor's degree institutions have developed upper-division programs to recognize this degree for transfer purposes.

The Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree programs shall provide:

1. A minimum of 32 credits of specialized study in courses clearly identifiable with the technical skills, proficiency, and knowledge required for career competency.
2. A minimum of 21 credits in General Education. Courses fall into the areas as follows:
 - a. College Composition and Literature or Communication 6 credits
 - b. Science 3-4 credits
 - c. Math 3-4 credits
 - d. Social Science 3 credits
 - e. Humanities/Fine Arts/Foreign Language 3 credits
 - f. Liberal Arts electives (from categories 1–5 above) 3 credits

Associate in Arts Degree (A.A.)

Programs leading to this degree prepare students for continuous education and career mobility and full participation in community life. The Associate in Arts degree program offers the equivalent of the first two years in a four-year baccalaureate program. The program is flexible; students select courses based on the requirements of the four-year college to which they plan to transfer.

The Associate in Arts Degree program requires a minimum of 64 credits from the following distribution.

- a. College Composition 3-4 credits
- b. English Electives 3-4 credits
- c. Humanities/Fine Arts/Language 9 credits
- d. Mathematics 6-8 credits
- e. Lab Science 8 credits
- f. Social Science 9 credits
- g. Liberal Arts Electives 15 credits
- h. Open Electives 9-12 credits

Associate in General Studies Degree (A.G.S.)

The Associate in General Studies degree is an Associate in Science degree designed to accommodate students who have experiential learning portfolios; to allow students to self-design associate degrees to take particular occupational or career goals into account; and to enable students who ultimately seek to be admitted into a degree program with limited enrollment to enroll in a program of study. The degree requirements and general education requirements are the same as listed in the Associate in Science degree above.

CERTIFICATES

Professional Certificate

A Professional Certificate requires completion of a minimum of 32 semester hours of credit, with a maximum of 36 semester hours, to develop skills in an occupational field. Requests for more than 36 semester hours must be fully justified in terms of program outcomes. A Professional Certificate also consists of a minimum of 12 credits of General Education credits and is designed to facilitate transfer into an Associate Degree if the student decides to continue.

Certificate

Non-Credit

A certificate may be awarded for a variety of educational experiences including short term, seminar and/or community service programs. The awarding of certificates for non-credit courses, workshops, etc., is the responsibility of the individual institution.

Credit

Regardless of their duration or composition, certificate programs emphasize specific skills and outcomes required for employment or for career advancement. There are no specific general education requirements, except as required to meet stated competency requirements. There are four levels of certificates:

1. Certificate of attendance.
2. Certificate programs up to 12 semester hours.
3. Certificate programs of more than 12 semester hours.
4. Certificate programs requiring licensure and accreditation.

A cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher through the last semester of study must be obtained before becoming eligible for an Associate Degree, Professional Certificate or Certificate for credit.

Residence Credit

Students seeking a degree at the college must earn a minimum of 16 semester hours from Berlin courses. At least eight semester hours of the courses taken to meet the minimum residency requirements shall be advanced courses in the student's major field of study or in appropriate advanced courses in related fields. Advanced courses are associate degree program courses listed in the first and second semesters of the second year, or in the second semester of the first year of one-year programs. Students seeking a professional certificate must complete a minimum of 9 credits or 25% of the credits, whichever is larger, required for the professional certificate from Berlin courses. For a certificate, students must complete at least 6 credits or 25% of the credits, whichever is larger, required for the certificate from Berlin courses.

Directed Study

Under certain circumstances a matriculated student may take a course in a semester when the course is not offered either during the day or through the Division of Community Education. A Directed Study allows a matriculated student to pursue the published learning objectives/outcomes for a course independently under the guidance of a qualified faculty member. *A matriculated student must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to be eligible for a Directed Study.*

The student must demonstrate compelling reasons why the course could not be taken in a subsequent semester or was not taken in the semester when it was originally offered in the curriculum. Barring exceptional circumstances, a Directed Study will not be granted for a course currently being offered in the day or DCE divisions.

Independent Study

Opportunities for credit-bearing independent study are available to matriculated students who wish to explore areas of a discipline not covered in the normal curriculum but related to the student's program. *Independent study is not available to non-matriculated students. Matriculated students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to be eligible for an Independent Study.*

The intent of the independent study is to expand a student's learning experience beyond the normal program curriculum. Typically undertaken for 1-3 credits, an independent study may not be done in lieu of any course existing in the college catalog.

Distance Education

The Community College System has many courses offered through a distance education model, primarily using the Blackboard web-based delivery system. The distance education model is for independent learners.

Graduation Requirements

The college has established minimum competencies that must be attained in each program. Students will be awarded associate degrees upon completion of academic requirements and demonstration of the required competencies.

To be eligible for graduation, students must:

1. Satisfactorily complete each requirement in their academic program
2. Earn a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher
3. Meet all obligations to the college, including payment of all fees
4. File the Intent to Graduate form with the registrar no later than December 1 of the academic year in which graduation is anticipated.

The student has the primary responsibility for ensuring that he/she meets degree/professional certificate/certificate requirements for graduation. The student should initiate at least one meeting with his/her faculty advisor each semester to insure that all the requirements of the transcript checklist have or will be met by the intended time of graduation.

Transcripts

After the student has met all college obligations, including student loan payments, outstanding tuition, payment of fines, and athletic uniforms and library materials turned in, the student may submit a written request for a transcript (the official record of a student's academic history). The transcript is valid only with the college seal and the signature of the registrar. It is released in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (the Buckley Amendment) and will not be released to a third party, including parents and spouses, without written permission of the student. The first two transcripts are free; additional transcripts cost \$3 each. There will be a charge of \$5 per copy to FAX copies of transcripts.

Students may obtain an unofficial copy of their transcript at any time using the Student Information System link from the college website.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Honesty

Original thinking and intellectual honesty are central to a college education. Research projects require the ongoing use of existing works, but students must conduct themselves with proper regard for the rights of others and of the college, in a context of mutual respect, integrity and reason. Activities such as plagiarism and cheating are not acceptable and will not be condoned by the college. Students involved in such activities are subject to serious disciplinary action.

The following are presented as examples of academic dishonesty:

1. Misrepresenting academic work done by someone else as one's own efforts, with or without permission of the person.
2. Providing or using prohibited assistance in assignments and examinations.
3. Unauthorized communication in any manner with other students during an examination; collaboration in the preparation of reports or take-home examinations; copying, giving aid or failing to follow the faculty member's instructions.
4. Tampering with or falsifying official college records.
5. Infringing upon the right of other students to fair and equal access to college library materials and comparable academic resources.
6. Falsification of data collected for and presented as part of course requirements.
7. Presenting as one's own ideas, another person's work or words without proper acknowledgement.

There may be other instances of academic dishonesty, which will be identified by a faculty member.

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated at White Mountains Community College. There is the expectation that coursework will be done honestly, whether in lab projects, on examinations, or for term papers. The individual faculty member will make the initial response to an occurrence of academic dishonesty. The instructor should discuss the matter with the student, and should include what happened to cause the instructor to think cheating had taken place. The instructor should be specific: cheating was seen first-

hand, cheating was reported by another student, work handed in was of much higher quality than usual, etc. Judicial Procedural levels in the Student Handbook outline consequences and procedures.

Academic Honors

Students whose academic performance warrants recommendation and recognition will receive academic honors.

The President's List recognizes students enrolled in a degree or professional certificate program carrying a minimum of 12 semester hours and earning a grade point average of 3.75 or higher.

The Vice President's List recognizes students enrolled in a degree or professional certificate program carrying a minimum of 12 semester hours and earning a grade point average of 3.3 to 3.74.

At the graduation ceremony, the student with the highest cumulative grade point average in an Associate Degree program receives the President's Award. The student must complete a minimum of 64 credits at this college, exclusive of transfer credits. The President's Award plaque includes the names of all award winners. Competition for this award has traditionally been very strong, with students winning by fractions of a point.

National Honor Society

The college is affiliated with Phi Theta Kappa, the National Honor Society for two-year colleges. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5, degree matriculation status, and a minimum completion of 12 credits may be inducted into the honor society.

Determination of Grades

The college posts grades on our student web system at the end of each semester/session for each course to students who have met all financial and other college responsibilities. Grade reports include the semester grade point average, cumulative credits and the cumulative grade point average.

Grade Point Average

The grade point average determines academic standing and is computed as follows:

1. Multiply the grade points earned in each course by the number of credit hours associated with that course. For each course, this gives a value known as quality points.
2. Add the quality points from all the courses taken in the semester. Separately total the number of credits.
3. Divide the total quality points by the total number of credits. This gives the semester grade point average.

<u>Example</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
BENG211 Technical Writing	A (4)	3	4 x 3 = 12
BMAT214 Statistics	B+ (3.3)	4	3.3 x 4 = 13.2
BECO111 Principles of Macroeconomics	C (2)	3	2 x 3 = 6
BMGT216 Project Management Seminar	D (1)	<u>3</u>	<u>1 x 3 = 3</u>
TOTAL		13	34.2

A total of 34.2 quality points divided by 13 credits = 2.63 semester grade point average (GPA)

Grades are recorded as follows:

A	4.0 Points	AF – Administrative Failure
A-	3.7 Points	AU – Audit
B+	3.3 Points	CR – Credit By Exam
B	3.0 Points	CS – Continuing Study
B-	2.7 Points	I – Incomplete
C+	2.3 Points	NP – No Pass
C	2.0 Points	P – Pass
C-	1.7 Points	PP – Provisional Pass; Warning
D+	1.3 Points	* – Basic Skills
D	1.0 Points	TR – Course Transfer
D-	.7 Points	W – Withdrew
F	0 Points	WF – Withdrew Failing; Calculates in GPA as an F
		WP – Withdrew Passing; Does not affect GPA

NOTE: Grades for Basic Skills courses have an asterisk following the letter grade and are not computed in a GPA/CGPA.

When a student repeats a course (either voluntarily or because it is required to make up a failure), only the most recent grade is computed in the GPA/CGPA, but both grades will appear on the academic transcript.

Cumulative Grade Point Average

The cumulative grade point average (CGPA) reflects a student's academic standing through the most recent semester. To compute the cumulative grade point average, divide the total quality points earned in all semesters by the total credits attempted in all semesters.

Incomplete Course Grade

An Incomplete Grade (I) indicates that a student has not completed a major course assignment (usually a final exam or culminating final assessment) due to extraordinary circumstances, such as serious illness, death in the family, etc. The grade is applied only in those instances where the student has a reasonable chance of passing. *It is not used to give an extension of time for a student delinquent in meeting course responsibilities.*

The work must be completed by the student through formal arrangement with the instructor no later than:

- the end of the third week in the spring semester for a grade issued in the fall semester
- the end of the third week in the fall semester for a grade issued in the summer term
- three weeks from the earliest start date of the summer term for a grade issued in the spring semester

Should the student fail to complete the work within the designated period, the grade will automatically become an F grade. The Vice President of Academic Affairs may make exceptions to the above deadlines.

Incomplete grades will not be included in the computation of Grade Point Average. An incomplete grade may affect a student's financial aid. Students should contact the Financial Aid office on their campus for further information.

Academic Standing Review

Students must show orderly progress toward their degrees and continue to display an ability to benefit from their programs and courses.

Each semester the Academic Affairs Office and the Registrar review the academic performance of matriculated students whose: 1) cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is below 2.0; 2) semester grade point average (GPA) is below 1.0; or 3) semester grades include Incompletes and/or F grades. This review may result in a status of Warning, Probation, Mandatory Part-time or Suspension.

Academic Status Report

The instructor may issue status reports at any time during the semester/session when a student's academic performance is unsatisfactory. The status report identifies the problem and makes recommendations for corrective action. The advisor, counselor and instructor receive copies, and a copy goes in the student's file. A student may receive a failing grade without having received a course warning. Warnings may also be issued if a student's semester or cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0.

Academic Probation

A warning which indicates student may not be on track to graduate because of poor academic performance. Students may be placed on Academic Probation if they fall within one of the following categories:

- Total Hours Attempted 1-13 with a CGPA below 1.50
- Total Hours Attempted 14-27 with a CGPA below 1.70
- Total Hours Attempted 28-40 with a CGPA below 1.80
- Total Hours Attempted 41+ with a CGPA below 2.00

Students placed on Academic Probation may not participate in any extracurricular activities. They are encouraged to focus on improving their academic performance and to take advantage of the college's student assistance program.

Mandatory Part-Time

Students may be placed on mandatory part-time status if they fall within one of the following categories:

- 0-18 credit hours attempted with a CGPA of less than 1.25, **OR**
- 18+ credit hours attempted with a CGPA between 1.0 and 1.25

Students placed on mandatory part-time cannot take a full course load. After consultation with their advisor, they may register for a reduced load that allows them to continue to work toward completion of their program. If they demonstrate improved academic progress for that term, the committee may reinstate them to full-time.

Academic Suspension

The student is no longer matriculated in the program and may not re-apply for admission or take courses in the program for a minimum of one semester. Students may be suspended from the college for one or two semesters if their academic performance falls under one of the following categories:

- 1-13 Credits Accumulated: below .50 CGPA
- 14-27 Credits Accumulated: below 1.10 CGPA
- 28-40 Credits Accumulated: below 1.25 CGPA
- 41+ Credits Accumulated: below 1.50 CGPA

OR

If, after being on Academic Probation for two consecutive semesters, a student fails to meet satisfactory academic progress at the end of the third consecutive semester.

Financial aid may be in jeopardy if a student fails to achieve satisfactory academic progress as defined above.

Appeal of Academic Standing Decisions

The student may appeal in writing all decisions to the Academic Standing Committee. The student must submit a letter clearly defining the basis for the appeal to the Academic Standing Committee within seven (7) college days following the date of the Vice President of Academic Affairs' letter to the student. The student may have a hearing before the Academic Standing Committee as soon as possible after receipt of the appeal letter. The student may have a representative at the meeting, and is encouraged to meet with the college counselor or the academic advisor for assistance in presenting his/her case.

If the student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal, he/she has the option to appeal directly to the President of the college within five (5) days of the outcome of the appeal. The appeal to the President must be in writing, and must clearly define the basis for appealing the Committee's decision.

Each student must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 to graduate. NOTE: Co-op students must have a 2.0 or permission of their advisor to be eligible to participate in a co-op work experience.

Academic Amnesty

All grades earned during a student's previous attendance at the college will no longer be used to calculate the student's new cumulative GPA. Grades of C- and above taken during that time will be used to meet course requirements, subject to the approval of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. All previous grades will remain on the student's transcript.

In order to be eligible for Academic Amnesty, a student must meet all of the following conditions:

1. The student has not taken any courses at original college of enrollment for a period of at least 3 years from the last semester of attendance.
2. The student applies for Academic Amnesty at the time of admission.
3. The student has never before received Academic Amnesty.
4. The student achieved a cumulative GPA below 1.7 during previous attendance.

Academic Advising

All students have an academic advisor who serves as a critical contact/mentor for the students during their time at the college. The academic advisor helps students register for courses and must approve all registration decisions, including course add/drop changes and withdrawals. The advisor assists students in identifying academic and personal resources on campus, conducts graduation audits, and helps students select and choose various program options. Advisors help students with decisions about career goals or further education. The more clearly students define and communicate their own goals, the more productive the student/advisor relationship will be.

Each semester, the academic advisor will conduct degree audits with the students. The purpose of the audit is to identify student progress towards the completion of the program, and to offer early intervention in making necessary schedule changes when the student fails a course, or when the student takes a course out of the normal sequence. The student bears the ultimate responsibility for making sure that he/she completes the required coursework for his/her program.

Academic Environment

The learning environment at the college encourages free discussion, inquiry and expression. Student performance is evaluated only on the basis of performance in class or lab, not on the basis of their individual views.

Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study, but in so doing have the right to take exception to the views presented in class.

Students shall maintain academic standards and are accountable for the honest and timely completion of assigned work, consistent participation in all class, shop, laboratory or clinical activities, and for conducting themselves in an appropriate manner.

At the beginning of each semester the instructor will provide students with an outline or syllabus that contains a description of the course, its objectives, grading procedures, special academic requirements, prerequisites and specific class participation and attendance standards. The course outline will include a schedule indicating (on a weekly basis if possible) when various course topics will be covered. Copies of course outlines are also available from the Academic Affairs Office.

Attendance

Successful college students attend class regularly. Most failures, dropped courses and poor grades result from poor attendance. The college has designed a schedule of classes for each course that meets the Carnegie unit definition of class time necessary for the average college student to complete the course. This time at the college, under the supervision of a professional educator, contributes to academic success. Students who elect not to attend all scheduled classes or laboratory hours should notify and consult with the instructor of the course for special instructions. Students should in all cases notify and consult with their instructor on all absences. Absence for any portion of scheduled class time may constitute an absence. In some cases students must keep their own attendance records because a financial sponsor requires this for use in advising and recommending students to employers. The instructors will make every effort to accept advance notices of absences due to college events and/or emergencies. It is, however, ultimately the student's responsibility to make arrangements for missed assignments, tests, lectures, deadlines and other academic activities associated with the lack of attendance.

The college encourages attendance in class for several reasons:

1. There is a strong correlation between attending classes and academic success.
2. Material may be available in class that is not in the textbook.
3. Class time has been assigned to each student and that is their time to receive instructor assistance, which is important to the successful completion of the course requirements.
4. Much learning takes place between faculty and students during class. This time is also a chance for students to think, question and clarify ideas and information.
5. Each individual is expected to make satisfactory progress in classes. Attendance is important so the faculty can assist the student in making satisfactory progress.
6. Students who are not making satisfactory progress should, with the consensus of instructor and advisor, drop the course during the drop period.

After three consecutive absences, or an absence rate that reasonably precludes making up missed coursework, barring mitigating factors such as major illness, accident or family emergency, faculty will process an administrative withdrawal.

Student Medical Leave Policy

A matriculated student who, due to a **serious medical condition** that requires extended in-patient treatment in a medical facility and/or ongoing outpatient medical treatment, becomes unable to complete his/her academic requirements and/or who becomes unable to meet the program's technical standards and/or the requirements of the Student Code of Conduct may apply for a formal **Medical Leave of Absence** for up to two consecutive semesters.

Students considering a Medical Leave of Absence should be aware that **granting of such leave does not relieve a student from financial responsibility to the college**. A student who is seeking a Medical Leave of Absence who is also a financial aid recipient should contact the Financial Aid Office to discuss the leave and any potential implications for changes in financial aid eligibility. Students who have concerns about continuing health insurance coverage may also wish to consult <http://www.michelleslaw.com> for important information.

Students requesting Medical Leave of Absence must:

- 1) Provide a letter to the Vice President of Academic Affairs identifying their program of study, the medical reason for the request, the proposed date on which the leave would begin, and the proposed date of readmission; and
- 2) Provide the Vice President of Academic Affairs documentation of the medical condition from a licensed health care professional *directly involved in the treatment* of the student's particular condition that is sufficiently comprehensive to facilitate the decision-making process.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs (or designee) will make a determination regarding the appropriateness of the leave request and notify the student in writing whether the request for Medical Leave of Absence was granted and what conditions for readmission may apply. Students whose Medical Leave requests are granted will be required to reapply for admission at the end of the leave period provided that all conditions for readmission have been met.

Conditions for readmission may include, but are not limited to, submission of documentation from a licensed health care professional *directly involved in the treatment* of the student's particular condition that is sufficiently comprehensive to provide reasonable assurance that the returning student will be able to meet all college and program academic, technical, and behavioral requirements. Other conditions for readmission may include a required in-person meeting with the Vice President of Academic Affairs and/or the student's program department head; compliance with any new admission criteria implemented in the student's absence; and/or repeating courses and/or clinical experiences to ensure clinical competence following an extended absence.

Students who choose to seek Medical Leave under the provisions of this policy should be aware that information they voluntarily disclose during the application and readmission processes will be handled under the confidentiality guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and disclosed only to those persons with a direct academic need to know.

Course Failure

The student must make up a course for which a grade of F was received, either by retaking the course at White Mountains Community College or by taking a comparable course at another institution. Courses transferred from other institutions count towards credits only; the F remains as part of the CGPA. The student should consult the advisor and department chairperson to determine if a course will transfer. Course failures cannot be made up by taking a credit by examination. See policy on Credit by Examination.

Grade for a Repeated Course

All grades are entered on the grade report and academic record, and are used in figuring semester and cumulative grade point averages.

Students may retake a course, whether to replace an F or to improve their prior grade. The latest of the two grades is used to determine the cumulative average. When a student retakes a course at this college, the course and credit hours appear on the semester's grade report and academic record with the letter grade entered. The course grade and hours are included in the semester and the cumulative grade point average computation. The original grade and credit hours will not be figured in the cumulative grade point average, but will appear on the student's academic record.

Appeal of a Grade

Any appeal of a grade must be initiated by the student with the instructor before an ensuing semester has elapsed. Students should be advised that in most instances a grade may be changed only by the instructor. Only in a case of obvious computational error or blatant abuse of the grading prerogative, can the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the only other individual on campus empowered to change a grade, alter a student's grade.

Students who believe they have a valid ground for a grade appeal will use the following process to resolve the issue:

1. Meet with the instructor
The student shall contact the faculty member and schedule a meeting to discuss the grade appeal and attempt to resolve the conflict. The faculty member and student shall meet within the next five work days.
2. Meet with the Program Director/Department Chairperson
If the issue was not resolved in Step 1 above, the student has three work days from the date of the faculty member's decision to file a written appeal with the faculty member's program director or department chairperson, or with the Vice President of Academic Affairs if the faculty member is also the department chairperson or program director. Within three work days the department chairperson (VPAA) will mediate the dispute either through discussion with the instructor, or with the student in the company of the faculty member. If no resolution is reached, proceed to Step 3 below.
3. Meet with the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)
If the issue is not resolved in Step 2 above, the student has three work days to file a written appeal with the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The VPAA will meet with all parties concerned within the next three work days to attempt to resolve the dispute. The VPAA will have three work days from the last meeting to render a decision on the grade appeal. The decision of the VPAA is final.

Note: During the summer, when faculty is not on campus, students may begin the grade appeal process with the office of Academic Affairs. Every attempt will be made to have the faculty member contact and meet with the student within the specified time. On occasion, however, these times may need to be adjusted.

Registration

The registrar, the financial aid office, the business office and the academic department coordinate the registration process, which includes the selection of courses, completion of forms and payment of college fees. Advance registration takes place mid-semester for second and later term students. The advising process helps students decide which courses to take; accordingly, matriculated students must have advisor approval before registering for any course. Non-matriculated students may register during the open registration period before the start of each term, pending available space and the meeting of prerequisites or instructor approval. Registration is complete when the student satisfies all financial obligations to the college.

Students should understand that by registering for courses at WMCC, they are financially obligated for **ALL** costs related to the registered course(s). Upon a drop or withdrawal, it is understood they will be responsible for all charges as noted in the student catalog and handbook. If they do not make payment in full, it is understood that their account may be reported to the credit bureau and/or turned over to an outside collection agency. It is also understood they will be responsible for the costs of the outside collection agency and/or any legal fees (which may add a significant cost to their existing account balance).

Adding a Course

Students may add a course to their class schedule during the first eight calendar days of a semester, or at the discretion of the instructor. The student must obtain approval of the instructor, faculty advisor and academic officer. Add/Drop forms are available through the academic affairs office and in the registrar's office.

Dropping a Course

The student should discuss the decision to drop a course(s) with his/her advisor. Add/Drop forms are available through the academic affairs office and in the registrar's office.

Students may drop a course anytime during the first 60% of the semester. This may, however, result in a change in student status for financial aid, veteran's benefits, insurance discounts, etc. Courses officially dropped through filing the add/drop form with the registrar's office prior to the first meeting of the class on the eighth calendar day of the semester, or other prorated enrollment periods, will be refunded 100%.

Students who formally drop a course by filing the add/drop form in a timely manner will have information entered on their academic record as follows:

1. No courses or grades are recorded for students who register but do not attend classes.

2. No courses or grades are recorded for students who withdraw from course(s) during the first week of classes.
3. A grade of W is awarded to students who drop a course(s) after the second week of classes but during the first 60% of the semester.
4. After the 60% mark of the semester, the student will receive a “WP” or “WF” grade as assigned by the instructor.

Student-initiated withdrawal from a course at any time prior to completion of the drop deadline (60% of the course) does not affect GPA. Students who fail to file an official add/drop form to drop a course will receive an F for such courses on their transcripts. Withdrawal can be initiated by the instructor if the student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to initiate the process (e.g., catastrophic illness or injury, job transfer to another state).

Withdrawal from Courses

A student withdrawing from a course(s) up until the 60% mark of the semester will receive the following grades. An **AF** (Administrative Failure) is given any time for reasons other than poor grade performance, e.g., walk-a-ways, poor conduct, disruptive behavior, violation of student code of conduct, violation of faculty’s attendance policy, etc. This calculates in the GPA as an F. **W** (Student Withdrawal) is initiated by the student to drop a course up to the 60% mark.

After the 60% mark of the semester, the following grades are awarded. **WP** (Withdraw Passing) is initiated by student or faculty when the student is passing at time of the drop and does not affect GPA. **WF** (Withdraw Fail) is initiated by student or faculty when the student is not passing at time of the drop and calculates in the GPA as an F. An **AF** (Administrative Failure) is given any time for reasons other than poor grade performance, e.g., walk-a-ways, poor conduct, disruptive behavior, violation of student code of conduct, violation of faculty’s attendance policy, etc. This calculates in the GPA as an F.

Audit Policy

Under the Audit Policy, students may enroll in courses which provide an opportunity to learn more about the challenges of college work, explore a discipline of interest, refresh prior learning, or supplement existing knowledge. Typically, a student attends lectures, seminars and/or labs but does not complete graded assignments. When enrolled as an audit, the student will not be given a final grade, nor will credit towards graduation be given for the course (the academic transcript will reflect an AU for the course). *Student must pay the full tuition for the course.* Federal financial aid does not cover costs for an audited course.

Not all courses can be taken for audit, and entry into a course as an auditing student is by permission of the instructor. A student must complete a registration as an audit during the first week of classes. Once admitted as an audit, the student may not change to credit status after the designated add period; likewise, a student registered for credit may not change to audit status after the designated add period.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs may make exceptions to the above.

Prerequisites

Students must successfully complete a prerequisite course before enrolling in the next course. The course description section of the college catalog notes prerequisites. A failing grade in a prerequisite will prevent a student from taking the next course. Students may use courses from other colleges to meet prerequisites. The department chair or academic vice president determines transfer credit. See the section on Transfer Credit for further information.

Withdrawing from the College

Withdrawing from the college is a serious step, and students should discuss this process with instructors, the academic advisor and the college counselor. To withdraw from the college, a student must complete the withdrawal form and an exit interview with the college counselor and financial aid director. Failure to attend classes does not constitute withdrawal from the college. However, students may receive a grade of administrative failure due to excessive absences.

Students may withdraw from the college up to one week before the end of the semester. The date of withdrawal is noted on the students’ academic college records, which also reflect the most recent date of class attendance, as needed, for students receiving scholarships, veteran’s benefits, or for recipients of Title IV financial aid or other awards with special attendance requirements. Academic records will be treated in accordance with the standards used for dropping individual courses.

A student who has withdrawn from the college or who has been suspended may apply for readmission through the Admissions Office.

Student Status

A *matriculated* student is one who has been admitted to a program (degree, professional certificate or certificate) at the college. Matriculated students are entitled to participate in the Title IV Federal Financial Aid Program and have priority when registering for classes with limited enrollment. To remain matriculated, a student must register for, and enroll in, at least one course during the academic year (not to exceed a 12-month period). A student who does not register for at least one course per academic year will lose matriculated status. A student who chooses to resume matriculated status must reapply for admission to a program. A student who begins a second program at the college may have to satisfy different program requirements.

A *non-matriculated* student is one who has not been admitted to a program at the college, and may register on a first-come, first-served basis for any course, providing the student has met prerequisites and that there is space available. *Non-matriculated* students should matriculate before the completion of 9 semester hours and begin pursuing graduation requirements. An advisor will help students make these decisions.

A matriculated student may request a *leave of absence* in writing through the Academic Affairs Office if the student will not be taking courses within one academic year (not to exceed a 12-month period) but wishes to remain on matriculated status. After a leave of one academic year, the student must either register for at least one course or lose matriculated status, thus requiring reapplication and admission.

Enrollment status is defined according to the number of credits a student takes during a semester and is used to determine financial aid awards. Credits awarded for transfer, work experience, audits and challenge exams do not count toward determination of full-time status. It is important to know that full-time status is the equivalent of 12 or more credit hours.

Full-time	12 or more credits
Three-quarter time	9-11 credits
One-half time	6-8 credits

A student must register for 12 or more credit hours to qualify for *full-time status* for financial aid, veteran's benefits, insurance discounts, etc.

Privacy of Records

The college maintains an academic folder for all matriculated students. The folder includes permanent academic records, application for admission, correspondence to and from the college, transcripts of all previous academic records, recommendations, standardized test results, armed forces papers, social security papers, medical records and miscellaneous information.

The college does not provide access to, or release of, any personally identifiable records or files to any individual, agency or organization without prior written consent of the student except as follows. The President, Vice Presidents and registrar shall have unlimited access, without permission, to all student records. They may release information without prior written authorization of the student in the following circumstances:

- 1.To officials and teachers within the college who are directly involved in a legitimate, educational matter with the student.
- 2.To authorized Federal and State offices as identified in Section 438(b)(3) of Public Law 93-380.
- 3.To appropriate persons in connection with an emergency if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of any person. If students wish their parent(s) or anyone else to be given information about any aspects of their progress at the college, they must sign a Waiver of Confidentiality form, which can be obtained from the admissions office.