

# Policy on Academic Standards

**CATEGORY:** Student – Academic

**ISSUE DATE:** July 27, 2018

**LAST REVISION DATE:** October 13, 2018

**REVIEW REQUIREMENTS:** Every two (2) years

**APPROVED BY:** President

## Policy Purpose & Summary

This policy, entitled “*Policy on Academic Standards*”, has been created to formalize the academic standards set by the College to ensure a productive and fair learning environment for all students.

It is the policy of the College to formalize the regulations surrounding **academic achievement, assessment practices, assignment submission deadlines, and examination deferrals** as outlined below.

## Scope

This policy applies to all individuals enrolled as a student at the College, all individuals employed by the College, and any other individuals acting as representatives, or hold a titular position, of the College.

## Policy

### 1. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

- 1.1. Students who enroll at the College must achieve at least minimum standards to pass a Course and/or Program, as outlined in this policy.
- 1.2. To be granted successful completion of a College Program, all Courses must be Completed with a minimum passing grade of **sixty-five percent (65%)** unless otherwise indicated on the Program Outline.
- 1.3. Those students who achieve a cumulative grade average of **ninety percent (90%) or greater** will graduate with an Honours Diploma or Certificate.
- 1.4. **Grading System:**
  - 1.4.1. The following grading system shall be used by the College unless otherwise applicable, as per Section 1.5.

NUMERIC GRADE (%)	LETTER GRADE	DESCRIPTION
90-100	A+	EXCELLENT
85-89	A	
80-84	A-	
77-79	B+	ABOVE AVERAGE
73-76	B	
70-72	B-	
67-69	C+	AVERAGE
65-66	C	
0-64	F	FAIL

## 1.5. Non-Grade Symbols

SYMBOLS	DESCRIPTION
CR (PLA)	<b>Prior Learning Assessment:</b> Course requirements have been met through Prior Learning Assessment.
CR (TR)	<b>Transfer Credit:</b> Course requirements have been met through transfer of credit from another academic institution.
CR	<b>Course Credit:</b> Course requirements have been met through previous Coursework taken at the College.
I	<b>Incomplete:</b> Course requirements have failed to be Completed successfully.
NG	<b>No Grade Reported:</b> Grades have not been submitted to Student Services.
AU	<b>Student Audited Course</b>
WD	<b>Withdrawal</b>

1.6. All passing grades a student receives must count towards their overall average.

## 2. ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

## 2.1. Student Assessment Methodologies

2.1.1. Student assessments must utilize methodologies that are transparent to all students and Faculty Members.

2.1.2. Assessments are used as a tool to determine the current level of proficiency in a student's Course and to provide a student with recognition of his or her accomplishments against the specified criteria.

2.1.3. A variety of evaluation methodologies may be used to assess a student's performance. These include but are not limited to:

- ❖ Assignments;
- ❖ Quizzes;
- ❖ Essays;
- ❖ Field practice reports;
- ❖ Practicum reports;
- ❖ For online Courses: Course discussion groups, online journals or self-assessments;
- ❖ Collaborative assignments such as group projects, presentations, case studies/scenarios, essays, and blogs;
- ❖ Final Examinations.

## 2.2. Purpose and Functions of Assessment

2.2.1. The assessment methodologies mentioned above can be used for a variety of different purposes:

2.2.1.1. For diagnostic purposes: to assist in determining the academic standing and academic progression of an admitted student.

2.2.1.2. For formative purposes: to give enrolled students the opportunity to develop and expand their knowledge and skills by enhancing the learning process;

2.2.1.3. For summative purposes: to aid in the decisions and judgments of students' advancement or Course completion.

2.2.2. It is important that both Faculty Members and students understand the purpose of the assessment format used and its impact on the learner and Course or Program.

## 2.3. Course Outlines/Syllabi

2.3.1. Course outlines or syllabi must be provided to students on, or before, the first day of class.

2.3.2. Course outlines or syllabi are developed by the College, and all Faculty Members are required to adhere to the outline and its contents.

#### 2.4. Assessment Expectations

- 2.4.1. If the instructional time of the Program is equal to or greater than forty (40) hours, a Faculty Member must ensure that students receive a written evaluation (e.g. quiz, assignment, essay, etc.) on a regular basis and at least once before thirty percent (30%) of the hours of instruction of the Program have been provided.
- 2.4.2. All Faculty Members are required to communicate to their students at the beginning of each Course about the assessment process to be administered, including the timeline of the assessment process. The number and frequency of examinations must be detailed in the Course outline and syllabus.
- 2.4.3. Faculty Members are required to employ equitable, consistent, and fair grading practices.
- 2.4.4. Faculty Members must develop their own assessments activities and instruments including Final Examinations in cases where they do not have access to a test bank provider.
- 2.4.5. Faculty Members must provide a description and grading criteria for all evaluative tasks and activities, not including Final Examinations, before or at the time they are assigned and provide reasons for each grade given back to students.
- 2.4.6. Students are responsible for using the results of the assessments to reflect on the skills and knowledge learned from their Program or Course and to gain insight from the Faculty Member feedback.
- 2.4.7. Assessment practices must be continuously improved to ensure that students are gaining necessary skills and knowledge in an effective manner.
- 2.4.8. Assessments of students' academic progress must be based on the learning objectives described in the Course outline that is provided to students at the beginning of their Course or Program.

#### 2.5. Student Participation

- 2.5.1. Attendance points must not be awarded.
- 2.5.2. Participation is awarded at the Faculty Member's discretion.
- 2.5.3. Participation is accumulated throughout the duration of a Course and awarded at the end of the Course.

#### 2.6. In-Class & Online End-of-Course Evaluations

- 2.6.1. End-of-Course student evaluations provide valuable feedback and are one of the ways that the College maintains and improves the quality of its Programs and Courses.
- 2.6.2. Course evaluations must be used for the following purposes:
  - ❖ To help Faculty Members improve the delivery of future Courses;
  - ❖ To help College administrators ensure that the College continues to offer a high standard of education.
- 2.6.3. Results from Course evaluations will also be used for Faculty Member performance reviews and must be included in the Faculty Member's personnel file as evidence of their teaching effectiveness.

#### 2.7. Course Evaluation Content

- 2.7.1. The Survey for In-Class Course Evaluation must evaluate the following aspects of a student's experience while taking a Course at the College:
  - ❖ Support services;
  - ❖ Facility standards;
  - ❖ Course content;
  - ❖ Faculty Member effectiveness.
- 2.7.2. The survey for online Course evaluation must evaluate the following aspects of a student's experience while taking an online Course at the College:
  - ❖ Course content;
  - ❖ Course delivery method;
  - ❖ Faculty Member effectiveness;
  - ❖ Support Services.

#### 2.8. Online & In-Class Performance Observations

- 2.8.1. At the discretion of the Senior Educational Administrator, Faculty Members will be subject to performance monitoring.
- 2.8.2. During the performance observation, the Performance Observation Checklist must be used to document the Faculty Member's performance.
- 2.8.3. The Performance Monitoring Checklist must evaluate the following items:

- ❖ The Faculty Member's mastery over the Course content;
- ❖ The Faculty Member's adherence to the Course outline;
- ❖ The Faculty Member's assessment activities;
- ❖ The Faculty Member's interaction with his/her students.

2.8.4. After the performance observation has been completed, a feedback report must be compiled and provided to the Faculty Member.

2.8.5. The Completed Performance Observation Checklist is kept in the Faculty Member's file for future reference.

### 2.9. Anonymity and Confidentiality

2.9.1. All Course evaluation results must be anonymous.

2.9.2. Written evaluations in the form of comments will be considered confidential to the Faculty Member and the College.

## 3. ASSESSMENT DEADLINES AND EXPECTATIONS

### 3.1. Due Date Expectations

3.1.1. All Faculty Members are expected to provide due dates for all graded assessments on the first day of any Course they are teaching.

3.1.2. Students are expected to submit all graded assessments by the stipulated deadline to avoid any potential mark deduction penalty and to receive complete feedback.

3.1.3. A student may submit an assessment up to one (1) week after the deadline with no additional mark deduction penalty, but he or she will not receive feedback on their assessment.

3.1.4. Assessments submitted more than one (1) week after the deadline will receive a five percent (5%) deduction per business day late and will not receive feedback on their assessment.

3.1.5. All Coursework must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time (PST) on the last day of the Course.

3.1.6. No assessments will be accepted after the Course end date.

### 3.2. Assessment Expectations

3.2.1. Special consideration may be granted for students requiring an extension on a deadline due to extenuating circumstance(s) or emergency.

3.2.2. All assessment extension requests, except Final Examinations and assessments made in lieu of Final Examinations, must be made to the Faculty Member only.

3.2.3. Students who request an extension on an assessment due to extenuating circumstance(s) or emergency must submit their request in writing via e-mail directly to their Faculty Member at least twenty four (24) business hours before the assessment due date.

3.2.4. If a student requests a due date extension on, or after, the due date has passed, the Faculty Member may potentially issue a grade penalty to the student, following the due date expectations in Section 3.1 of this policy.

3.2.5. Extensions requests will not be considered on or after the last day of the Course.

## 4. FINAL EXAMINATION DEFERRALS

### 4.1. Examination Schedule

4.1.1. The College provides an examination schedule at the commencement of a Program or Course, to provide sufficient time for the College, Faculty Member and students to prepare for upcoming examinations.

4.1.2. Students are required to adhere to Program and Course timelines and ensure that examinations are Completed as scheduled.

### 4.2. Student Examination Accommodation

4.2.1. The College must accommodate, where possible, extraordinary circumstances that may affect a student's ability to write an examination.

4.2.2. Extraordinary circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Illness (doctor's note required);
- ❖ Death of a family member (proof of death to be presented);

- ❖ Injury or accident (police report or proof of medical attention required).

4.2.3. Extraordinary circumstances do not include personal or professional scheduling conflicts such as vacations or business trips.

#### 4.3. Examination Accommodation Procedure

4.3.1. Should an extraordinary circumstance that prevents a student from writing an examination occur (as described in Section 4.2), the student must contact Student Services no more than seven (7) calendar days in advance of the examination sitting to make alternate arrangements. The request must be made in writing and submitted directly to Student Services. Once received, the request must be reviewed by Student Services.

4.3.2. In the event of an extraordinary circumstance occurring immediately prior to an examination sitting, Student Services must be notified not more than seventy-two (72) hours following the scheduled examination time.

4.3.3. Notification must be made in writing and be accompanied by appropriate documentation (as listed in Section 4.2.2). Student Services must review the notification and decide.

4.3.4. The length of examination deferral must be determined on a case-by-case basis by Student Services, whose decision is final and binding.

4.3.5. The decision must be made within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of all required supporting documents, and the student must be notified of this decision by email.

4.4. All appeals regarding decisions applied in respect to Final Examination deferrals and accommodations should be made to the Campus Director.

## 5. COURSE FAILURE

### 5.1. Course Failure and Repeated Attempt:

5.1.1. If a student achieves a final grade of less than **sixty-five percent (65%)**, or the minimum standard indicated on the Program Outline, the student is required to retake the Course.

5.1.2. In limited circumstances, where specified, a student who is retaking a Course may take a maximum of one (1) calendar year after their official Program end date to retake the failed Course(s). If the required Course is not offered by the College within this timeframe, the student must enroll in the next available offering of this Course.

5.1.3. In other circumstances, where specified, a student must successfully complete all pre-requisite modules of a Program before completing any subsequent modules to satisfy the requirements of their Program. These requirements must be fulfilled prior to the official Program end date.

5.1.3.1. E.g. if a student is in a Program with 10 modules, and modules 1-9 are prerequisites for module 10, then the student must ensure that he or she has successfully Completed modules 1-9 before being permitted to join module 10.

5.1.4. A student who is retaking a Course will be required to pay full Course fees.

5.1.5. If a student must retake a Course which has since undergone a change in title, the student may take an equivalent Course to fulfill their Program requirements.

5.1.6. A student may repeat the same Course a maximum of two (2) times, if necessary. A withdrawal is considered an attempt.

5.1.7. All passing grades a student receives must count towards his or her overall average.

5.1.8. A student cannot replace a grade by repeating a Course. A failed Course attempt remains on the student record even if the Course has been repeated successfully.

5.1.9. A student who fails a Course after the third attempt will be required to withdraw from the College and repeat the applicable Program.

## Policy Notes

This policy consolidates the measures included in, and replaces, the following archived policies of the College:

- Policy #1004 – Academic Achievement Policy
- Policy #1031 – Assessment Practices Policy
- Policy #1026 – Late Assignment Policy
- Policy #1014 – Examination Deferral Policy

**ACCOMPANYING POLICIES:** This policy is a part of a suite of academic oriented policies under the Student Policies category. As such, accompanying policies that may be applied or referenced along with this policy include **Policy # ST-002 – Policy on Attendance and Lateness** and **Policy # ST-003 – Policy on Grade Appeals**.