
Evaluating Students

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POLICY

Northern Lights College embraces the fair, respectful, and equitable treatment of all members of the College community and specifically affirms that students will be evaluated in a fair and equitable manner that is clearly articulated, is as transparent as possible, and complies with the current Course Outline.

The concepts of fairness and equitability are defined as behavior that would be deemed fair and/or equitable by a “reasonable person.” All students must be evaluated equitably and consistently regardless of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, or age. Further, the College will take active steps to ensure that each student registered in a course is in fact the student being evaluated. The College reserves the right to request identification for this purpose.

Evaluation criteria, assignment due dates, grading scales, policies regarding penalties and allowances (i.e. assignment due date extensions), and other relevant information will be clearly articulated to students at the beginning of a course in a Syllabus.

Specifically, each student has the right to a written (paper or electronic) Syllabus at the beginning of the course, which states:

- the objectives and the content of the course including learning outcomes of the course and material to be covered in the course
- expectations regarding attendance
- assignments and due dates and mid-term exam dates
- all methods of evaluation used
- weighting of each method used
- penalties for late work; and
- textbooks and supplies.
- Situations and activities which require verification of student identity

A Syllabus will not be altered after the first week of classes without consultation with the Program Chair.

Grading is to an institutional standard and not on a curve. Final grades will be calculated by instructors and submitted to the Registrar’s office within five (5) working days of course completion as recorded in the Registrar’s office.

PURPOSE

This policy provides the principles and procedures for evaluating students at Northern Lights College.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all transcribed programs and courses offered by Northern Lights College.

PROCEDURE

All College courses and programs use learning outcomes and/or objectives to clearly describe the material covered in the course or program. Any evaluation of students must be related to this material. Students cannot be held responsible for evaluation based on material beyond the scope of the course.

The College recognizes that students may be faced with personal issues that could take precedence over their studies, and the College makes reasonable attempts to be flexible in these situations while still maintaining the integrity of its courses and programs.

Students themselves also have responsibilities pertaining to evaluation, including:

- Punctuality with assignments,
- Attendance at classes,
- Participation in class discussions/activities, or
- Disclosure of issues that may affect their performance in advance of an assessment,
- Acknowledgement of an instructor's right to set deadlines for assignments and other forms of evaluation,
- Acknowledgement of an instructor's right to establish penalties for late work, or not accept late work.

EXAMINATIONS:

For semester-based programs and courses that have a formally defined final exam period:

- All final exams must be held within the exam period at times designated on the official exam timetable.
- Examinations or quizzes worth more than 15% will not be held within the final two weeks of classes. Laboratory exams exceeding 15% may be scheduled during the final week of classes.
- Due dates for assignments shall not extend into the formally defined final exam period.

For programs and courses that do not have a formally defined final exam period, final exams will typically be held during the last day of class.

If a student misses any form of examination or quiz, whether announced in advance or not, they are not entitled to a make-up examination. Instructors may consider a make-up exam for students when documented evidence is provided or worthiness can be shown using the supplemental exam guidelines. A penalty may or may not be applied to the make-up exam.

Students are expected to be available to write final exams at specifically designated times throughout the final exam period. In semester-based programs, final exam timetables are generally posted midway through a given semester. The College is not obliged to accommodate students who book travel arrangements that overlap with final exam periods.

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATIONS:

Unlike a make-up exam, a supplemental exam is an additional exam opportunity for a student to *re-take* a comparable exam.

Supplemental examinations are not an automatic right of students; rather, supplemental exams are a privilege determined by the instructor and by the Dean. There are instances when supplemental exams may be prohibited or otherwise regulated by external governing bodies.

A fee will be charged for each supplemental examination following the College fee schedule. This fee includes any fees for invigilation.

To request a supplemental exam:

- a. Student presents a completed Supplemental Exam Form to an instructor within five business days of exam results being posted.
- b. Instructor records a recommendation and forwards to Dean for approval.
- c. The Dean notifies the student and instructor of the final decision, and, if approved, the completed form is forwarded to Campus Services for payment collection and forwarded to Invigilation or Instructor for scheduling.
- d. Student pays supplemental exam fees; the exam may not occur prior to payment.
- e. Student attends supplemental exam. A student who does not attend the supplemental exam at the designated time forfeits his/her fees. Additional re-takes are subject to this policy.
- f. Instructor grades exam and submits final grade revision to Registrar's Office as required.

A supplemental examination may not be repeated for an individual course unless previously sanctioned by program policy.

The following guidelines apply to supplemental examinations:

- Students must have achieved a percentage within 5% of the passing grade in the course prior to the supplemental examination.
- Students must have written the original exam and completed all course requirements.
- Recommendations from instructors should reflect evidence of student effort as determined by attendance, performance on invigilated assessment tools, Academic Integrity, etc.
- In no case will the final grade of a course, which has been recalculated on the basis of a supplemental examination be greater than the minimum passing grade of the course.

FEEDBACK:

Feedback shall be provided in a timely manner. Additionally, students will be provided with feedback on at least one substantial assignment or examination prior to the last date for withdrawal without academic penalty. Such feedback will provide students with a reasonable opportunity to assess their ability to succeed in the course and to minimize the financial and scholastic penalties that may be associated with course failure.

The College recognizes that variation in evaluation methods will provide a more complete analysis of a student's abilities and that evaluation should not be based on a single instance. In general the College encourages instructors to use at least four separate evaluative items as the basis for final grades, and to make the final exam worth no more than 50% of a final course grade. In certain instances, outside agencies may impose certain restrictions that may limit the methods used in, and the frequency of, evaluation.

Ultimately, the number and complexity of assignments and examinations are at the discretion of the instructor, in accordance with the Syllabus and program standards.

GRADE SYSTEMS:

The final grade recorded must be selected from the grading system approved for the course by the appropriate body. Grades from different grading systems may not be interchanged for a given course.

Letter Grades

Letter grades are typically used where a grade point average is required. Academic course grades, translated to grade points, are used to determine the grade point average.

Where a minimum passing grade is established in courses that require a letter grade, an unsuccessful grade will be recorded as a grade of F.

Grade	Interpretation	Grade Points	Minimum Percentage
A+	Distinguished Achievement	4.33	90%
A	Distinguished Achievement	4.00	85%
A-	Distinguished Achievement	3.67	80%
B+	Above Average Achievement	3.33	76%
B	Above Average Achievement	3.00	72%
B-	Above Average Achievement	2.67	68%
C+	Satisfactory Achievement	2.33	65%
C	Satisfactory Achievement	2.00	60%
C-	Marginal Achievement	1.67	55%
D	Marginal Achievement	1.00	50%
F	Unsatisfactory Achievement	0.00	Below 50%

Developmental Letter Grade

This grade system is used for courses which do not have credits assigned and where a letter grade is important to indicate achievement level but a non-success grade of "F" is not considered constructive for the learner and the course. Grades do not impact GPA.

Grade	Interpretation	Minimum Percentage
A+	Distinguished Achievement	90%
A	Distinguished Achievement	85%
A-	Distinguished Achievement	80%
B+	Above Average Achievement	76%
B	Above Average Achievement	72%
B-	Above Average Achievement	68%
C+	Satisfactory Achievement	65%
C	Satisfactory Achievement	60%
C-	Marginal Achievement	55%
D	Marginal Achievement	50%
DNC	Did Not Complete	Below 50%

Percentage Grades

An integer value from 0 to 100 may be assigned to represent a final grade for percentage-based courses. Percentage grades have grade points and are included in the grade point average only when the course has credits.

Where a minimum passing grade is established in courses that require a percentage grade, an unsuccessful grade will be recorded as a grade of **FAIL** (no grade points, does not apply to GPA, is included in attempts).

Minimum Percentage	Grade Points
90%	4.33
85%	4.00
80%	3.67
76%	3.33
72%	3.00
68%	2.67
65%	2.33
60%	2.00
55%	1.67
50%	1.00
Below 50% or FAIL	0.00

Pass/Fail

For courses where outcomes are either achieved or not achieved and student performance is simply graded on a PASS/FAIL basis. Course outlines will establish the minimum requirements for a PASS. PASS/FAIL grades do not have grade points and are not included in the grade point average.

PASS Course outcomes have been satisfied.

FAIL Course is completed but outcomes have not been satisfied.

Mastery

For courses where outcomes are evaluated based on mastery of the learning outcomes. Student performance is evaluated as:

COM Complete – successfully completed indicating mastery of the learning outcomes.

PGS Progressing – indicating progress towards mastery since the beginning of the study period has been made, but mastery has not been achieved.

DNC Did Not Complete – indicating that mastery was not achieved and no progress from the beginning of the study period has been made.

Attendance

For courses where formal evaluation is limited to attendance or non-attendance. Attendance grades do not have grade points and are not included in the grade point average.

ATT Attended – minimum attendance requirement is met

DNA Did Not Attend

ADDITIONAL LETTER GRADES FOR TRANSCRIPTS

In addition to the grades noted in each Grade System, the following grades may be recorded by the Registrar and noted on the transcript.

- AG** **Annotated Grade** – A student on a modified regular program due to a disability may be awarded an Annotated Grade (AG) to indicate successful completion. (Not included in grade point average)
- AUD** **Audit** – An Audit student attends class but is not evaluated. No credit is granted. (Not included in grade point average)
- EC** **External Credit** – the College has recorded completion of a learning activity as documented by an external agency.
- ENR** **Enrolled** – The 'ENR' has no value for calculation of Grade Point Average (GPA). Rather, it indicates a student is enrolled in the course and no grade has been received by the Registrar's Office.
- FD** **Failed due to academic discipline** – A 'FD' is assigned as a result of academic discipline.
- INC** **Incomplete** – An 'Incomplete' (INC) grade may be assigned where, due to unforeseen but fully justified reasons, a student was unable to complete the course requirements and needs additional time. A Student Contract outlining the conditions for removal of the 'INC' is written by the instructor and signed by the student. A final grade is assigned when the work agreed upon has been completed and evaluated. The Student Contract must be completed within one semester, following the end of the semester in which it is assigned. Failure to meet the requirements of the Student Contract will result in the 'INC' grade reverting to the default grade noted on the Student Contract.
- NGR** **No Grade Submitted** – No grade was recorded and this is a final status.
- RW** **Required to Withdraw** – A 'Required to Withdraw' (RW) grade is issued when a student must withdraw from a course/program for non-academic and/or academic progression issues. A Required to Withdraw is considered an attempt.
- T** **Transfer Credit** – The College has granted credit for academic course work completed at another institution.
- W** **Withdrawal** – For the grade to be recognized as an official 'Withdrawal', a student must withdraw within the time frame specified in the Course Change/Withdrawal section. A Withdraw is not considered an attempt.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) CALCULATION:

A student's GPA is calculated by dividing the total grade points earned by the total number of credit hours attempted. Total grade points earned are equal to the number of course credits multiplied by the grade point value assigned to that grade. The calculation only applies to those courses where credit hours are used as part of the course description, e.g. the course SOCI 101 – 3 is Sociology at the 100 level (first year) and has three credits (credit hours).

If a course is repeated to replace a failed or other grade, the higher grade will always be used to calculate GPA or to determine standing.

COURSE REPEATS:

To maintain program integrity, students have a limited number of attempts to be successful in a course, or closed set of electives in a program. Unless specified otherwise by the official NLC course outline, students have a maximum of two attempts to be successful. A third attempt may only occur with the permission of the student's Chair or Dean. Subsequent attempts may occur a minimum of three years after the last attempt with approval from the student's Chair or Dean. Transfer credit for the attempted course during this period is not permitted.

NO SHOW:

Unless prior arrangement has been made with the instructor, students are required to attend a course before the end of the first week of classes; similarly, online students must sign in to courses within seven calendar days. Non-semester based students must attend by the second meeting of the course/program. Students that do not may be dropped from their course without notice. Faculty will inform the Registrar’s Office prior to the end of the add/drop period of a ‘no show’ student, or assign a final grade at the end of the course. If dropped, no record will appear on the student’s transcript.

DEFINITIONS

Syllabus: The document provided to students at the beginning of a course that provide details about the class schedule, instructor contact information, textbooks, etc.

Course Outline: The official document approved by Education Council indicating the general requirements, outcomes, and evaluation methods used by all instructors of this course.

Invigilated: To supervise students (as at an examination).

Authenticated Identity: Proof beyond a reasonable doubt that the individual is who they claim they are, typically by provision of NLC student ID or government-issued identification.

STAKEHOLDERS

Northern Lights College Board of Governors
 Northern Lights College Executive
 Northern Lights College Faculty and Staff
 Northern Lights College Students

RELATED POLICIES AND REFERENCES

Academic Appeal
 Academic Monitoring
 Course Challenge
 Academic Integrity
 Provincial Letter Grades Order
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/legislation-policy/legislation/schoollaw/e/m192_94.pdf)
 Student Absenteeism
 Student Appeals
 Student Rights and Responsibilities
 Supplemental Exams
 Withdrawal

HISTORY

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Education Council	November 2010		Education Council
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Next Scheduled Review Date

March 2024