

# Graduate Grading System

## Grades

When a student registers for a graduate (500- and 600-level ) course, one of the following grades will appear on the academic record. Grades are based on the level of performance and represent the extent of the student's demonstrated mastery of the material listed in the course outline and achievement of the stated course objectives. These are Mines' grade symbols and their qualitative interpretations:

Symbol	Interpretation
A	Acceptable for Graduate Credit
A-	Acceptable for Graduate Credit
B+	Acceptable for Graduate Credit
B	Acceptable for Graduate Credit
B-	May be Acceptable for Graduate Credit
C+	May be Acceptable for Graduate Credit
C	May be Acceptable for Graduate Credit
C-	May be Acceptable for Graduate Credit
D+	Not Acceptable for Graduate Credit
D	Not Acceptable for Graduate Credit
D-	Not Acceptable for Graduate Credit
F	Failed
S	Satisfactory (C- or better, used as a mid-term grade)
U	Unsatisfactory (below C-, used as a mid-term grade)
INC	Incomplete
PRG	Satisfactory Progress
PRU	Unsatisfactory Progress

Graduate students enrolled in undergraduate-level courses (400-level and below) are graded using the undergraduate grading system.

Any undergraduate taking graduate-level credit must complete the 500 level form and agree to the specific terms selected.

- Students requesting the credits as undergraduate credits or those who do not qualify to have the credits listed on the graduate transcript must register for the course as UG (undergraduate credit). The credits will be listed on the undergraduate transcript and the credits will impact the undergraduate GPA.
- Students who request the credits as graduate-level credits and meet the qualifications to have the credits listed on the graduate transcript must register for the course as GR (graduate credit). The credits will be listed on the graduate transcript and the credits will impact the graduate level GPA.
- Once registered as UG or GR, the level cannot be changed after Census Day of the semester in which the course is taken.
- Students may apply up to 6 credits of unused graduate-level coursework, while enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student, toward a Mines graduate degree. For students in a combined program, these credits are in addition to the 6 credits being counted toward both the undergraduate and graduate degrees as double

counted courses. Combined students may petition the Office of Graduate Studies for an exception to this policy.

- Financial aid may be impacted. Email [finaid@mines.edu](mailto:finaid@mines.edu) for more information on financial aid impacts.

In addition to these performance symbols, the following is a list of additional registration symbols that may appear on a Mines transcript:

Symbol	Interpretation
WI	Involuntarily Withdrawn
W	Withdrew, No Penalty
T	Transfer Credit
NC	Not for Credit
Z	Grade not yet Submitted

## Incomplete Grade

An Incomplete 'INC' is a temporary grade which may be given at the instructor's discretion to a student when illness, necessary absence, or other reasons beyond the control of the student prevent completion of course requirements by the end of the academic term. An 'INC' is restricted to cases in which the student satisfactorily completed a significant amount of the course work, including attendance and participation.

The student and the instructor should discuss the terms for the incomplete before the end of the term. The instructor may grant up to one year, but the time limit may be less, to complete outstanding coursework. Any outstanding grade of 'INC' will be converted to an 'F' grade if it has not been updated by the instructor after one year. In the event that an 'INC' grade remains on the record at the completion of the degree, the 'INC' will be converted to an 'F' and included in the final GPA.

## Satisfactory Progress Grades

A graduate student may receive a grade of Satisfactory Progress, PRG, in either one of three possible situations:

1. As a passing grade given in a course that is graded pass-fail,
2. As a grade for a course extending more than one semester or
3. As a grade indicating completion of research credit hours.

When applied to pass-fail courses, the Satisfactory Progress grade, PRG, indicates successful completion of the requirements of the course. A grade of Unsatisfactory Progress, PRU, as applied to pass-fail courses, indicates the student failed to meet the requirements for successful completion of the course. The PRG and PRU grades have no point value toward a student's GPA. As described in the Unsatisfactory Academic Performance portion of this Catalog receipt of a PRU grade indicates unsatisfactory progress toward degree completion and will trigger academic disciplinary proceedings.

For students completing independent study or seminar courses extending over multiple terms, the progress grade has no point value. In such cases, the student receives a grade of PRG (progress). For multi-term independent study courses, upon completion of course requirements, a final letter grade is assigned in the last term in which the student enrolled in the course. In seminar courses in which continuous enrollment is required by the degree program, the PRG grade remains on all previous terms, with the option of either assigning a PRG grade or a final letter grade the last term of attendance.

When applied to research credits, the Satisfactory Progress grade, PRG, also has no point value toward a student's GPA, but indicates satisfactory progress toward completion of the research component of a student's thesis-based degree program. In this situation, a grade of PRU, Unsatisfactory Progress, may be given, and if given, indicates that a student has not made satisfactory progress toward the research component of a thesis-based degree program. In this case, receipt of a grade of PRU may trigger academic disciplinary proceedings as described in the Unsatisfactory Academic Performance portion of this Catalog.

Unless faculty submit the change of grade forms to the Registrar, grades of PRU delivered for unsatisfactory research performance, are not changed to PRG upon the successful completion of a student's degree program.

## NC Grade

For special reasons and with the instructor's permission, a student may register in a course for no credit (NC). To have the grade NC appear on the transcript, the student must enroll at registration time as an NC student in the course and comply with all conditions stipulated by the course instructor. If a student registered as NC fails to satisfy all conditions, no record of this registration in the course will be made.

## Quality Hours and Quality Points

For graduation, a student must successfully complete a certain number of required credits and must maintain grades at a satisfactory level. Numerical values assigned to each letter grade are given in the table below:

Grade	Numerical Value
A	4.000
A-	3.700
B+	3.300
B	3.000
B-	2.700
C+	2.300
C	2.000
C-	1.700
D+	1.300
D	1.000
D-	0.700
F	0.000

The number of quality points earned in any course is the number of credit hours assigned to that course multiplied by the numerical value of the grade received. The quality (or grade-point average) hours earned are the number of credit hours in which grades are awarded. To compute a grade-point average, the number of cumulative quality hours is divided into the cumulative quality points earned. Grades of W, WI, INC, PRG, PRU, or NC are not counted in quality hours.

## CREDIT Hours

The number of times a class meets during a week (for lecture, recitation, or laboratory) determines the number of credit hours assigned to that course. Class sessions are normally 50 minutes long and represent one hour of credit for each hour meeting. A minimum of three hours of laboratory work per week is equivalent to one hour of credit. For the

average student, each hour of lecture and recitation requires at least two hours of preparation.

## Grade-Point Averages

Grade-Point Averages shall be specified, recorded, reported, and used to three figures following the decimal point for any and all purposes to which said averages may apply.

All graduate degree programs require students to have a minimum overall grade point average of 3.000 in order to be eligible to receive the degree. All courses, including courses taken as a non-degree graduate student, 400 level undergraduate courses taken while a graduate student, and graduate level courses taken at the Colorado School of Mines after first enrolling in a graduate degree program are included in the calculation of the overall graduate grade point average. Grades for courses applied to a degree program as transfer credit are not included in any grade point average calculation. Specifics in calculating the overall, and other grade point averages are defined below.

## Overall Grade-Point Average

The overall graduate level grade-point average includes all attempts at courses taken at Colorado School of Mines while a graduate student, either degree seeking or non-degree graduate student, with the exception of courses completed when the repeat policy was in effect: Fall 2007 through Summer 2011.

If a course completed during the Fall 2007 term through Summer 2011 was a repeat of a course completed in any previous term and the course was not repeatable for credit, the grade and credit hours earned for the most recent occurrence of the course will count toward the student's grade-point average and the student's degree requirements. The most recent course occurrence must be an exact match to the previous course completed (subject and number). The most recent grade is applied to the overall grade-point average even if the previous grade is higher.

Courses from other institutions transferred to Colorado School of Mines are not counted in any grade-point average, and cannot be used under this repeat policy. Only courses originally completed and subsequently repeated at Colorado School of Mines during Fall 2007 through Summer 2011 with the same subject code and number apply to this repeat policy.

All occurrences of every course taken at Colorado School of Mines will appear on the official transcript along with the associated grade. Courses from other institutions transferred to Colorado School of Mines are not counted in any grade-point average.

## Course and Research Grades

All candidates for graduate degrees must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in all courses taken at Mines and listed on the graduate transcript. This includes both graduate and undergraduate courses. Any grade lower than "C-" is not acceptable for credit toward graduate degree requirements.

For research credits, students receive either an "In Progress-Satisfactory" or an "In Progress-Unsatisfactory" grade based on their faculty advisor's evaluation of their work. Research grades do not enter into the calculation of the student's grade point average.

Students who fail to maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0, or who receive an In Progress-Unsatisfactory research grade are placed on academic probation by the Graduate Dean and may be subject to

dismissal as defined by the Unsatisfactory Academic Performance section of this Catalog.

## GRADE CHANGES

After the completion of final grading for a term, only corrections to errors in grading may be processed and they must be for grade improvements only. Corrections to errors in grading for all students will be accepted one year from the original grade entry. With the exception of punitive disciplinary actions, diminution of a grade is not allowed without approval of the Provost.

## GRADE APPEAL PROCESS

Mines faculty have the responsibility, and sole authority for, assigning grades. As instructors, this responsibility includes clearly stating the instructional objectives of a course, defining how grades will be assigned in a way that is consistent with these objectives, and then assigning grades. It is the student's responsibility to understand the grading criteria and then maintain the standards of academic performance established for each course in which he or she is enrolled.

If a student believes he or she has been unfairly graded, the student may appeal this decision first to the instructor of the course, and if the appeal is denied, to the Academic Standards Committee of the Faculty Senate. The Academic Standards Committee is the faculty body authorized to review and modify course grades, in appropriate circumstances. Any decision made by the Academic Standards Committee is final. In evaluating a grade appeal, the Academic Standards Committee will place the burden of proof on the student. For a grade to be revised by the Academic Standards Committee, the student must demonstrate that the grading decision was unfair by documenting that one or more of the following conditions applied:

1. The grading decision was based on something other than course performance, unless the grade was a result of penalty for academic dishonesty.
2. The grading decision was based on standards that were unreasonably different from those applied to other students in the same section of that course.
3. The grading decision was based on standards that differed substantially and unreasonably from those previously articulated by the instructor.

To appeal a grade, the student should proceed as follows:

1. The student should prepare an appeal of the grade received in the course. This appeal must define the basis for the appeal and must present all relevant evidence supporting the student's case.
2. After preparing the appeal, the student should deliver this appeal to the course instructor and attempt to resolve the issue directly with the instructor. Written grade appeals must be delivered to the instructor no later than 10 business days after the start of the regular (fall or spring) semester immediately following the semester in which the contested grade was received. In the event that the course instructor is unavailable because of leave, illness, sabbatical, retirement, or resignation from the university, the course coordinator (first) or the Department Head/Program Director (second) shall represent the instructor.
3. If after discussion with the instructor, the student is still dissatisfied, he or she can proceed with the appeal by emailing a copy of the appeal and a copy of a summary of the instructor/student meetings held in connection with the previous step to the Academic Standards

Committee. All information must be submitted to the committee no later than 25 business days after the start of the semester immediately following the semester in which the contested grade was received.

4. On the basis of all information deemed pertinent to the grade appeal, the Academic Standards Committee will determine whether the grade should be revised. The decision rendered will be either:
  - a. the original grading decision is upheld, or
  - b. sufficient evidence exists to indicate a grade has been assigned unfairly.

In the latter case, the Academic Standards Committee will assign the student a new grade for the course. The Committee's decision is final. The decision and supporting documentation will be delivered to the Faculty Senate, the office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the student, the instructor, and the instructor's Department Head/Program Director no later than 25 business days following the Faculty Senate's receipt of the grade appeal.

The schedule, but not the process, outlined above may be modified upon mutual agreement of the student, the course instructor, and the Academic Standards Committee.