

# Grading System, Grade-Point Average (GPA), and Grade Appeals

## Undergraduate grading system

### Grades

When a student registers in a course, one of the following grades will appear on his/her academic record. If a student registered as NC (audit) fails to satisfy all conditions, no record of his registration in the course will be made. The assignment of the grade symbol is based on the level of performance, and represents the extent of the student's demonstrated mastery of the material listed in the course outline and achievement of the stated course objectives.

Symbol	Interpretation
A	Excellent
A-	
B+	
B	Good
B-	
C+	
C	Satisfactory
C-	
D+	
D	
D-	Poor (lowest passing)
F	Failed
S	Satisfactory, C or better, used at mid-term
U	Unsatisfactory, below C, used at mid-term
PRG	Satisfactory Progress
PRU	Unsatisfactory Progress

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

Symbol	Interpretation
WI	Involuntary Withdrawal
W	Withdrew, no penalty
T	Transfer Credit
INC	Incomplete
NC	Not for Credit (Audit)
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.

### NC Grade (Not for Credit or Audit)

A student may, for special reasons and with the instructor's permission, register in a course on the basis of NC (Not for Credit). To have the grade NC appear on his/her transcript, the student must enroll at registration time as a NC student in the course and comply with all conditions stipulated by the course instructor, except that if a student registered as NC fails to satisfy all conditions, no record of this registration in the course will be made. The Registration Action Form is used to request that a course be recorded as an audit. The form is available in the Registrar's Office.

### Transfer Credit

Transfer credit earned at another institution will have a T grade assigned but no grade points will be recorded on the student's permanent record. Calculation of the grade-point average will be made only from the courses completed at Colorado School of Mines.

### GPA 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. The system for expressing the quality of a student's work is based on quality points and GPA hours. The numerical value associated with the specific grades are:

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 credits assigned to that course multiplied by the numerical value of the grade received. To compute an overall or major grade-point average, the number of cumulative GPA hours is divided into the cumulative quality points received. Grades of W, WI, INC, PRG, PRU, or NC are not counted in quality hours.

### Midterm Grading

Midterm grading is conducted using Satisfactory (S) and Unsatisfactory (U) grades. Certain foundational courses are required to be graded between the 6th and 8th weeks of the term to provide students an early warning with time to recover. If the midterm grade is blank in these

specific courses, the grade for the student is Satisfactory (S) by default, or C- or better. Faculty will enter Unsatisfactory (U) grades for those students currently earning grades of D+ or lower.

Courses include: All Core Curriculum and Distributed Science Elective courses with the exception of CAS Mid-Level Cluster and 400-Level. Additionally, the following courses will also be included: CEEN241 (Statics), CEEN311 (Mechanics of Materials), MEGN361 (Thermodynamics 1), CSCI261 (Programming Concepts), CHGN209 (Chemical Thermodynamics), and CBEN210 (Intro to Thermodynamics) as they are key pre-requisite courses for many students.

## credits

The number of times a class meets during a week (for lecture, recitation, or laboratory) determines the number of credits 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 are equivalent to 1-semester hour of credit. For the average student, each hour of lecture and recitation requires at least two hours of preparation. No full-time undergraduate student may enroll for more than 19 credits in one semester. Physical education, advanced ROTC and Honors Program in Public Affairs courses are excepted. However, upon written recommendation of the faculty advisor, the better students may be given permission by the Registrar on behalf of Academic Affairs to take additional hours.

## 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.

## Overall Grade-Point Average

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 credits 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.

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.

### Option (Major) Grade-Point Average

The grade-point average calculated for the option (major) is calculated in the same manner as the overall grade-point average. Starting Fall 2011 the repeat policy is no longer in effect and all attempts at major courses completed in the major department are included. However, the major grade point average includes only the most recent attempt of a repeated course if the most recent attempt of that course occurs from Fall 2007 through Summer 2011.

The major grade point average includes up to 5 ranges of courses within the department (e.g. SUBJ200-499) but not necessarily all courses (i.e. SUBJ 100-599Z), plus up to 10 single courses with different subject codes from outside of the department.

The minimum major grade-point average required to earn a Mines undergraduate degree is a 2.000. For specifics concerning major GPA, reference the department specific section of the catalog. Courses that comprise the major GPA are listed at the end of the degree requirement tables.

## GPA Recovery Policy

All attempts at every Mines course will count in the overall grade-point average unless the student qualifies for GPA recovery. GPA recovery will only be possible if the most recent course grade was a "D" or an "F" (including plus and/or minus). As grades C or better are satisfactory from a degree attainment perspective, such grades do not qualify for GPA replacement. No classes taken before Fall 2020 qualify for GPA Recovery.

If the student takes the course for a second time or third time, the most recent grade will be the only grade used to calculate the grade-point average (even if the previous grade(s) was higher). There will be no option to repeat for GPA recovery beyond a third attempt (i.e., third and/or greater attempts all count toward the GPA). All records of grades earned, including those excluded from GPA calculations as well as attempts (i.e. "W's"), will be recorded on the student's transcript. All withdrawals are still subject to the maximum withdrawal policy.

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.

## 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 (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 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.

## **Class Rank**

Colorado School of Mines does not calculate class rank. The Registrar's Office will provide a letter stating this fact upon request if necessary for the submission of scholarship applications.