

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE  
SAN JOSE, CA 95192**

**S09-7, Policy Recommendation, Grading Symbols, Drop and Withdrawal; Retroactive Drop and Retroactive Withdrawal; Assignment of Grades and Grade Appeals; Change of Grade; and Integrity of the Academic Record**

**Legislative History: Rescinds S73-14, S73-15, S73-16, S73-28 and Amends S07-6**

At its meeting of May 11, 2009, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Sivertsen for the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee.

**Action by University President:** Approved by President Jon Whitmore on May 27, 2009.

**Policy Recommendation**

**Grading Symbols, Drop and Withdrawal; Retroactive Drop and Retroactive Withdrawal; Assignment of Grades and Grade Appeals; Change of Grade; and Integrity of the Academic Record**

- Whereas Sections of existing University Policies S73-14, S73-15, S73-16, and S73-28, are inconsistent with or superseded by some provisions of CSU Executive Order 1037 (issued 8 September 2008) as clarified by CSU Coded Memorandum AA-2009-4 (issued 4 February 2009); and
- Whereas CSU Executive Order 1037 supersedes CSU Executive Order 792; therefore be it
- Resolved That University Policy S07-6 be amended to replace all references to Executive Order 792 with Executive Order 1037; and be it further
- Resolved That existing University Policies S73-14, S73-15, S73-16, and S73-28 be replaced by this policy; and be it further
- Resolved That those sections of existing University Policies S73-14, S73-15, S73-16, and S73-28 that are not inconsistent with CSU Executive Orders or more recent University Policies shall be incorporated within this policy as follows:

## I. Administrative Grading Symbols

EO-1037 requires that “The administrative grading symbols AU, I, IC, RD, RP, W, and WU along with the definitions, rules, and procedures governing their application shall be utilized as circumstances require on all California State University campuses.”

- A. AU (Audit). The following catalog statement reflects the minimum requirements for enrollment as an auditor. A student may not change from credit to audit later than the census date for the term for which he or she is enrolled in the course for which such grades are to be awarded. The following statement shall appear in the campus catalog:

*An auditor must be officially enrolled in the course. Enrollment as an auditor is subject to permission of the instructor provided that enrollment in a course as an auditor shall be permitted only after students otherwise eligible to enroll on a credit basis have had an opportunity to do so. Auditors are subject to the same fee structure as credit students and regular class attendance is expected. Once enrolled as an auditor, a student may not change to credit status unless such a change is requested no later than the last day to add classes in that term. A student who is enrolled for credit may not change to audit after the last day to add classes in that term.*

- B. I (Incomplete Authorized). The “I” symbol shall be used only when the faculty member concludes that a clearly identifiable portion of course requirements cannot be met within the academic term for unforeseen reasons. An Incomplete shall not be assigned when it is necessary for the student to attend a major portion of the class when it is next offered. An Incomplete is also prohibited where the normal practice requires extension of course requirements beyond the close of a term, e.g., thesis or project type courses. In such cases, use of the “RP” symbol is required. The conditions for removal of the Incomplete shall be specified in writing by the instructor and given to the student with a copy placed on file with the Registrar until the Incomplete is removed or the time limit for removal has passed. Clearing an incomplete grade does not permit retaking previously completed portions of the course, nor does it permit assignment of additional graded work (e.g., extra credit) that was not available to other students in the class.

A student may not re-enroll in a course for which he or she has received an “I” until that “I” has been converted to a grade other than “I”; e.g., A-F, IC, or NC.

An Incomplete shall be converted to the appropriate grade or symbol within one year following the end of the term during which it was assigned provided, however, an extension of the one-year time limit may be granted by petition for contingencies such as intervening military service and serious health or personal problems. A faculty member may submit a letter grade to be assigned in the event the Incomplete is not made up within one year. If the Incomplete is not converted to a credit-bearing grade within the prescribed time limit, or any extension thereof, it shall be counted as a

failing grade in calculating grade point average and progress points unless the faculty member has assigned another grade in accordance with campus policy.

The following statement shall appear in the campus catalog:

*The symbol "I" (Incomplete Authorized) indicates that a portion of required course work has not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period due to unforeseen, but fully justified, reasons and that there is still a possibility of earning credit. The student cannot reenroll in the course. It is the responsibility of the student to bring pertinent information to the attention of the instructor (regarding the unforeseen reason(s) for requesting an Incomplete) and to determine from the instructor the remaining course requirements that must be satisfied to remove the Incomplete. A final grade is assigned when the work agreed upon has been completed and evaluated. Clearing an incomplete grade does not permit retaking previously completed portions of the course, nor does it permit assignment of additional graded work (e.g., extra credit) that was not available to other students in the class.*

*An "I" must normally be made up within one calendar year immediately following the end of the term during which it was assigned.*

*This limitation prevails whether or not the student maintains continuous enrollment. Failure to complete the assigned work will result in an "I" being converted to an "IC" symbol, or an "NC" for non-traditionally graded courses, unless the faculty member assigns a specific letter grade at the time the Incomplete is assigned, which would replace the "I" in the student's record after the calendar year deadline.*

- C. IC (Incomplete Charged). The "IC" symbol may be used when a student who received an authorized incomplete "I" has not completed the required course work within the allowed time limit. The "IC" replaces the "I" and is counted as a failing grade for grade point average and progress point computation.
- D. RD (Report Delayed). The "RD" symbol may be used where a delay in the reporting of a grade is due to circumstances beyond the control of the student. The symbol may be assigned by the registrar only and, if assigned, shall be replaced by a substantive grading symbol as soon as possible. An "RD" shall not be used in calculating grade point average or progress points. Although no catalog statement is required, whenever the symbol is employed, an explanatory note shall be included in the transcript legend. The registrar shall notify both the instructor of record and the department chair within two weeks of the assignment of RD grades. If the instructor is unable or unwilling to submit a final grade, the department chair may intervene to determine and submit a grade. The chair should act within one year.
- E. RP (Report in Progress). The "RP" symbol shall be used in connection with thesis, project, and similar courses in which assigned work frequently extends beyond a single academic term and may include enrollment in more than one term. The "RP" symbol shall be replaced with the appropriate final grade within one year of its assignment except for master's thesis enrollment, in which case the time limit shall be

established by the appropriate campus authority. The president or designee may authorize extension of established time limits.

The following statement shall appear in the campus catalog:

*The “RP” symbol is used in connection with courses that typically extend beyond one academic term. It indicates that work is in progress but that assignment of a final grade must await completion of additional work. Work is to be completed within one year except for graduate degree projects and theses (supervised courses, e.g., 298 & 299 courses), which have a two-year time limit. Failure to complete the assigned work for an “RP” grade will result in an automatic grade change to an “NC” grade unless a request for an extension has been made and approved.*

*A final grade will be assigned to all segments of the course on the basis of overall quality. Any extension of this time period must receive prior authorization by the instructor and department chair or school director.*

- F. W (Withdrawal). Withdrawal from a course (or courses) may be permitted, without restriction or penalty, through the drop deadline for the term. No symbol will be recorded in such instances.

In connection with all other approved withdrawals, the “W” symbol shall be used on the official transcript. As described below, the grading symbols “WA” (withdrawals granted only during the first 80% of the term for serious and compelling reasons) and “WB” (withdrawals granted anytime during the term, or retroactively after the term, for serious and compelling reasons due to circumstances clearly beyond the student’s control) shall appear on the unofficial transcript. “WA” and “WB” grades will revert to “W” grades on the official transcript. On the unofficial transcript they will permit the tabulation of accumulated units in each grading category and will therefore assist students and advisors in understanding when the limits on the total number of withdrawals is being approached.

1. Limits on the use of WA Withdrawals: Undergraduate students may withdraw (WA) from no more than 18 units. Postbaccalaureate students may withdraw (WA) from no more than 12 units. Graduate students may withdraw (WA) from no more than 9 units.
2. These limits apply only to units attempted at SJSU.
3. Withdrawals (WA) after the drop deadline and prior to the last twenty percent of instruction may be assigned only for serious and compelling reasons. Permission to withdraw during this time shall be granted by a campus administrator designated by the President. This permission shall be informed by the recommendations (to approve or deny) of the instructor and the department chair, or by the appropriate dean or designee in cases where it is difficult, impossible, or a breach of required confidentiality to obtain recommendations of both the instructor and the chair. Instructors, chairs, and

deans shall be provided the opportunity to include optional comments along with their recommendations to approve or deny the request for withdrawal. All requests to withdraw under these circumstances and all approvals shall be documented. The requests and approvals shall state the reasons for the withdrawal. Records of such approvals shall be maintained in accordance with the campus record retention policy.

4. Withdrawals (WB) shall not be permitted during the final twenty percent of instruction except in cases, such as accident or serious illness, where the cause of withdrawal is due to circumstances clearly beyond the student's control and the assignment of an Incomplete is not practicable. Withdrawals of this sort may involve total withdrawal from the campus or may involve only one course, except that course grade and credit or an Incomplete may be assigned for courses in which sufficient work has been completed to permit an evaluation to be made. Requests for permission to withdraw under these circumstances shall be handled and filed as indicated in the preceding paragraph. Such withdrawals will not count against maximums provided for in F.1.
5. A "W" shall not be used in calculating grade point average or progress points. The same is true for "WA" and "WB" grades.

The following statement shall appear in the campus catalog:

*The symbol "W" on the official transcript (or "WA" or "WB" on the unofficial transcript) indicates that the student was permitted to withdraw from the course after the drop deadline for the term with the approval of the appropriate campus administrator. It carries no connotation of quality of student performance and is not used in calculating grade point average or progress points.*

In addition to this statement, the campus catalog shall include a description of the procedures to be followed in withdrawing from a class or from the campus.

6. Open University students are subject to the same criteria and limits as regularly enrolled students.
- G. WU (Withdrawal Unauthorized). The symbol "WU" shall be used where a student, who is enrolled on the census date, does not officially withdraw from a course but fails to complete it. Its most common use is in those instances where a student has not completed sufficient course assignments or participated in sufficient course activity to make it possible, in the opinion of the instructor, to report satisfactory or unsatisfactory completion of the class by use of the letter grade (A-F). The instructor shall report the last known date of attendance by the student. The symbol "WU" shall be identified as a failing grade in the transcript legend and shall be counted as units attempted but not passed in computing the grade point average. In courses which are graded Credit/No Credit or in cases where the student has elected Credit/No Credit evaluation, use of the symbol "WU" is inappropriate and "NC" shall be used instead.

The following statement shall appear in the campus catalog:

*The symbol “WU” indicates that an enrolled student did not withdraw from the course and also failed to complete course requirements. It is used when, in the opinion of the instructor, completed assignments or course activities or both were insufficient to make normal evaluation of academic performance possible. For purposes of grade point average and progress point computation this symbol is equivalent to an “F.”*

## II. **Retroactive Drop and Retroactive Withdrawal**

The approval (leading to a grade of “WB”) or denial of Retroactive Drop and Retroactive Withdrawal petitions shall reside with the Associate Vice Presidents for Undergraduate Studies or Graduate Studies and Research as appropriate. The standards that shall apply will be the same as those required for a grade of “WB” during the term. Additionally, the student must have an extenuating circumstance explaining why the ordinary late drop petition or late withdraw petition could not have been filed during the term.

## III. **Assignment of Grades (Sections A, B, C, D.1) and Grade Appeals (Sections D.2, E, F)**

The following principles support the minimum standards governing the assignment of grades and provisions for appeals (per EO 1037):

- A. Faculty have the sole right and responsibility to provide careful evaluation and timely assignment of appropriate grades.
- B. There is a presumption that grades assigned are correct. It is the responsibility of anyone appealing an assigned grade to demonstrate otherwise.
- C. In the absence of compelling reasons, such as instructor or clerical error, prejudice or capriciousness, the grade assigned by the instructor of record is to be considered final.
- D.
  - 1. Students who believe that an appropriate grade has not been assigned should first seek to resolve the matter informally with the instructor of record (per Section IV).
  - 2. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the student may pursue a grade appeal and present his or her case to the Student Fairness Committee (according to University Policy S07-6, Student Fairness Dispute Resolution), have it reviewed and, where justified, receive a grade correction.
- E. If the instructor of record does not assign a grade, or if he or she does not change an assigned grade when the necessity to do so has been established by appropriate campus procedures, it is the responsibility of other qualified faculty as determined by the appropriate campus entity. “Qualified faculty” means one or more persons with academic training comparable to the instructor of record who are presently on the faculty at that campus.

- F. SJSU shall maintain and implement existing policy and procedures covering the assignment of grades and grade appeals that include the following provisions:
1. The time and manner of reporting course grades including provisions for assuring that such grades have been assigned by the instructor of record.
  2. Circumstances under which the instructor of record may change a grade once assigned, and procedures for making such changes.
  3. A means for preliminary review of potential appeals that may resolve differences before initiation of formal proceedings.
  4. Grounds for which a grade appeal is permitted.
  5. One or more committees for hearing grade appeals that shall provide safeguards to assure due process for both student and instructor. Such committees shall include student membership. Student members shall not participate in assignment of grades.
  6. Procedures whereby grades are assigned by other qualified faculty in circumstances where the instructor of record does not do so, including those instances where a grade change is recommended by a grade appeals committee and the instructor of record does not carry out that recommendation.
  7. Specification of time limits for completion of various steps in the appeal process and of the time period during which an appeal may be brought.
  8. Description of the extent of the authority of appeal committee(s), including provisions that clearly limit grade changes to instances where there is a finding that the grade was improperly assigned.
  9. Limitation of committee authority to actions that are consistent with other campus and system policy.
  10. A statement that there is a presumption that grades assigned are correct. Thus, the burden of proof rests with the individual who is appealing.
  11. Procedures for dealing with allegations of improper procedure.
  12. Assignment of authority to revise policies and procedures for grade appeals to the campus faculty senate. The campus president is responsible for ensuring that such revisions conform to the principles and provisions of this executive order.
  13. Provision for annual reporting to the President and Academic Senate on the number and disposition of cases heard.

#### **IV. Change of Grade (Not Resulting from a Grade Appeal as specified in Section III)**

- A. The basic principle underlying changes of grade is that all students be treated fairly and be given equal opportunities to demonstrate their academic learning and earn course grades representing that learning. Application of this criterion precludes the assignment of extra credit unless such assignments were made known and available to all students in the class. It further precludes rejudgment, afterthought, or reconsideration of an individual's graded work unless such opportunity for change of grade is made equally available to all students in the class.
- B. Unless a rejudgment, afterthought, or reconsideration is applied fairly and equally for all students in a class, a change of grade request may be submitted only when there is an error in grading an assignment or course component, or in the case of a clerical, computational, transcriptional, or other administrative error. The specific nature of the error shall be recorded on the form requesting the change of grade. Once approved, the original grade will be removed from the transcript and the new (changed) grade will replace it.
- C. A change of grade request must be submitted by the department office directly to the Office of the Registrar in a timely fashion. Normally, such requests must be received by the drop deadline of the following Spring or Fall semester and will require the signatures of the instructor and the department chair. Further extension of this deadline will be considered only when there is documentation of the student's attempt(s) to contact both the instructor and the department chair, and the late submission of the change of grade form is clearly beyond the student's control.
- D. A change of grade request received after the drop deadline of the following Spring or Fall semester and within one calendar year after the posting of the grade requires the signature of the appropriate college Associate Dean in addition to those of the instructor and the department chair.
- E. A change of grade request received more than one year after the posting of the grade will require, additionally, the approval of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies or Graduate Studies and Research, as appropriate.
- F. If a request for a change of grade is approved by the instructor but denied at a subsequent level of review, a written explanation for the denial shall be provided to the student, the faculty member, and the department chair.

#### **V. Integrity of the Academic Record**

- A. All grades reported at the end of each semester are final, unless changes have been made according to the provisions given above, or those of University Policy F08-2. Students are responsible for reviewing their grades for accuracy before the beginning of the subsequent term. They are also responsible for verifying their transcripts for changes, e.g., from grade forgiveness, withdrawals, clearance of Incomplete grades, or clearance of Report Delayed (RD) grades.

- B. A student who believes he or she has received a grade in error should contact the instructor to verify and, if appropriate, correct the grade. If an instructor is unavailable or absent during the subsequent semester, the student should promptly consult with the department chair about the grade in question. If the department chair is unable to contact the instructor, he or she shall notify the Associate Dean of the College in writing, requesting that an extension of the grade correction deadline be granted. The Associate Dean will then contact the Office of the Registrar if the request for an extension is deemed valid.
- C. After a degree has been posted, no further adjustments can be made on the record except under extraordinary circumstances as determined by Graduate or Undergraduate Studies.

**VI. Terminology in this Policy**

- A. In this policy, all references to department chairs are understood to mean school directors when that is the appropriate academic unit.
- B. The CSU may eventually define new grading symbols for the two types of “W” grades described above. The grading symbols WA and WB used in this policy are intended for use at SJSU, but also serve as placeholders and shall be replaced by the appropriate CSU grading symbols if/when such new grading symbols are specified.
- C. “Grade Appeal” refers to the official petition process with the Student Fairness Committee (Section III.D.2).

Approved: April 13, 2009 with revisions approved May 4, 2009  
 Present: Branz, Brown, Cavu-Litman, Fee, Gleixner, Han, Langdon, Lee, Levy, Linder, Sivertsen (chair), Stiglitz, Sofish, Whitney  
 Absent: Campsey, Castillo, Hilliard, Kelley, Palumbo  
 Vote: 14-0-0  
 Financial Impact: Uncertain, but no long-term impact is anticipated  
 Workload Impact: Short-term impacts primarily on staff (training and implementation); long-term impact on workload should not be significant