

V. GRADING, RETENTION, AND GRADUATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In order to graduate from Louisiana Tech, students must meet all requirements set forth by the University of Louisiana System, Louisiana Tech University, individual College/Department regulations, as well as accreditation standards for accredited programs. They must also receive approval from their individual departments/colleges as evidenced by the signatures on their graduation application. An advisor must be familiar with several policies and procedures in order to guide a student through these requirements.

V-1. GRADING (GPA Calculations)

1. Grading System

Louisiana Tech uses a traditional system of grading with an AA@ representing exceptional work and an AF@ for failure. Quality points are assigned to each grade for each semester credit hour (SCH) as shown below. The quality points and SCHs attempted are used in the calculation of grade point average (GPA), as discussed in the next section.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1
F	0

Tech issues four other types of grades:

I	Incomplete (see below)
S	Satisfactory (see below)
W	Withdrew (see below)
NC	No Credit

The grade I (Incomplete) is used to denote failure to complete all assigned class work and/or exams as a result of conditions beyond the student's control. The student must initiate a request for an AI@ grade with the instructor and, if approved, the grade will be issued as an AI@ followed by the letter grade reflecting the quality of work to that point (IA, IB, etc.). A grade of "IF" cannot be issued. The instructor is required to contract with the student, in writing, specifying what has to be done to complete the course and when it must be completed. He/she must provide copies of this contract to the student and to the department head or director.

The advisor should inform the student that AI@ grades are used to calculate quality points and hours attempted. These "I" grades impact quarterly and cumulative GPAs

and thus *can* be a factor in determining academic probation or suspension, as well as in assessing financial aid eligibility. If an advisor notes an “I” grade on a student’s quarterly counseling report or on his/her online transcript, the advisor should remind students that they must make up the incomplete work no later than the Friday of the fourth week in the following quarter. The exception to this rule is the Spring quarter; students have until the Friday of the fourth week of the Fall quarter to make up the incomplete work. When the work is completed, the AI@ grade is replaced with the appropriate letter grade and hours and GPAs are recalculated on the student=s transcript. Should a student not complete the work in the allotted time, the AI@ grade is recorded as an AF@ on the student=s transcript. This rule applies regardless of the previous grade associated with the “I”. Students cannot repeat a course to clear an “I” grade but must complete the agreed-upon work.

Note: Students registered for approved research, practicum, dissertation, or thesis courses requiring multiple quarters of the same course registration may receive multiple quarters of “I” grades that will be changed to an appropriate letter grade upon approved completion of the research or practicum.

AS@ grades are used for courses when no traditional grade (A, B, C, etc.) is appropriate. AS@ grades indicate satisfactory completion but do not affect hours attempted or quality points, therefore it is not used in any GPA computation. Advisors should explain, however the failure to satisfactorily complete the requirements for such a course will result in the grade of AF@ which **is** used in GPA calculations.

AW@ grades are issued when a student drops a class after the final date for registration has passed and before the end of the first seven weeks of a quarter. This grade does appear on the student=s transcript but is not used for GPA calculations. Advisors should warn students that some employers and professional schools frown on hiring/accepting students with excessive AW@ grades as this might be indicative of a lack of perseverance. Students who do not properly drop a class or do not resign from the university will be given a grade of AF.@

ANC@ grades are used in undergraduate developmental classes (099) and on credit exams only when the student fails to perform satisfactorily. The developmental courses must be repeated before the student continues in the same area, but this grade is not used for any GPA calculations.

2. **Grade Point Average Calculations**

- (a) **Quarterly GPA** is calculated by dividing the total number of quality points earned in one quarter by the number of semester hours attempted in that quarter (excluding “W,” “S,” and “NC” grades and credits earned through credit exams and advanced placement).
- (b) **Cumulative GPA** is calculated by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the total number of hours attempted (excluding “W,” “S,” and “NC” grades and credits earned through credit exams and advanced placement). This GPA is the one used to determine undergraduate academic class standing, undergraduate academic honors,

and academic probation and suspension. The Quarterly GPA and the Cumulative GPA are recorded on the student's permanent academic record (transcript) and reported each quarter with his/her grades.

- (c) **Earned GPA** is determined by subtracting non-repeated AF@ hours and repeated course hours from a student's total hours attempted, by subtracting quality points received for repeated classes from the total quality points, and then recalculating the average GPA by dividing the adjusted quality points by the adjusted hours. This average is maintained by academic departments only and should be included in the advisors files. It does not appear on the transcript nor are they reported with quarterly grades. The earned GPA can be used to determine eligibility for entry into upper division courses, eligibility for progress into and completion of a certification program, and eligibility for a practicum. **This GPA may also be used to determine eligibility for receiving an undergraduate degree.**
- (d) **Transfer Student GPA's** are re-computed by Louisiana Tech University utilizing Tech's policies for computing GPA. The re-computed GPA is also used to determine if a transfer student is admissible to the University. The most common differences in GPA calculations come from how different universities handle repeated course grades and "F" grades. Tech's policies are outlined on the following pages of this handbook.

3. Final Grade Appeals

Students who feel their final grade was determined unfairly may appeal for re-evaluation. This is a three step process:

- (a) Confer with the faculty member pointing out all areas of concern. If the results are unsatisfactory, a student may;
- (b) Confer with the head of the academic department in which the course was taught. If the results are unsatisfactory, a student may;
- (c) Write a letter to the Dean of the College in which the course was taught outlining the areas of concern (during the first ten class days of the following quarter). This letter will be sent by the Dean to the faculty member and the Department Head for discussion and review. At this point, the Dean has the discretion to change the grade or refer the matter to the colleges committee on standards. If the Dean makes the decision, it should be communicated to the student within ten class days. If the

matter is referred to the standards committee, the student should be notified of their ruling within twenty class days.

If a grade is assigned to a student based on academic misconduct, the faculty member will report the incident to the Department Head and the Office of Student Life. If the student chooses to appeal, the student will follow procedures contained in the Academic Honor Code (section III-9 and <http://www.latech.edu/documents/honor-code.pdf>)

4. Repeated Courses

Should a student fail a course required for graduation in a particular curriculum, the course must be repeated. Should a student choose to repeat a course that was successfully completed they must have the consent of the Department Head who administers the curriculum in which they are enrolled. Advisors should be aware that **all** attempts at repeated courses are used to calculate cumulative GPA and for courses that cannot be repeated for credit, only the last attempt is used for computing total hours earned. In all cases, the last attempt of a repeated course is recorded as the final grade (this includes the grade of “W”).

5. Auditing Courses

Students choosing to audit a course must meet the entrance requirements of the University with the exception of those wanting to audit a health and exercise science activity class (permission must be granted from the HES Department Head). Auditing students must follow the regular registration procedure and will be assessed the registration and tuition fees. Generally, the student is not required to do all of the work assigned to regularly enrolled students but must meet certain criteria (as specified by the instructor) in order to have the class appear on the transcript. During registration, Aaudit@ should be entered on the registration form and once registration closes, the audit may not be changed to credit or vice versa.

V-2. RESIGNING FROM THE UNIVERSITY

Advisors should be familiar with the resignation process. Students who leave Louisiana Tech without officially resigning from the university are given a grade of AF@ for each course in which they are registered. This could have a significant impact when and if they decide to return to any university. The resignation process involves:

- (a) Obtaining a resignation form from the Registrar's Office, having it signed by the appropriate instructors and administrators, and returning it to the Registrar.
- (b) Turning in the Student Identification card to the Tech Express Office in the

Student Center.

- (c) Verifying that the resignation card is on file in the Registrar=s Office.

Students resigning before the close of registration will not have any courses recorded on their transcript, however their permanent record will indicate resignation. Students resigning during the first eight weeks of the quarter (first seven weeks of classes) will receive a AW@ grade for all courses in which they are registered. Advisors should be aware that if a student resigns **after** the first eight weeks of the quarter, the grade of AF= is recorded for courses not completed; however these students should still be advised to officially resign because failure to do so could affect repayment of certain types of financial aid.

If a student must resign from the university after the eighth week of the quarter for a reason that he/she can document, the student may appeal to the appropriate academic dean. With the dean’s approval, a grade of “W” will be assigned for all courses. Examples of cases eligible for appeal are illness or injury to student, death in student’s immediate family, natural disaster, or military duty. Dissatisfaction with an anticipated grade, a belated decision to change a major, or failure to follow University policy cannot be used to justify the appeal.

V-3. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students should be advised that Louisiana Tech adheres to the attendance policy set forth by the University of Louisiana System. Failure to conform to this policy can jeopardize scholastic standing or lead to suspension from the university. This policy mandates that:

1. Faculty are required to state in writing and explain to students their expectations regarding attendance prior to the close of the drop and add period each quarter. Each instructor is required to keep permanent attendance records that are subject to inspection by appropriate officials.

Note: Instructors generally feel that students should be responsible for attending class. Students should understand that their failure to attend can have a serious impact on their final grade. However, the failure to attend class can also have serious financial effects. The Financial Aid Office, because of U.S. government policy, requires students to repay federal student aid funds if certain attendance requirements are not met during the quarter. Thus, the Financial Aid Office asks that each faculty member submit attendance information for students in each class who receive a grade of “I”, “W”, or “F” so that his financial aid determination can be made.

2. Students must submit excuses for all absences within three class days to be excused from an absence.

3. Excessive absences for freshmen and sophomore students are defined as ten percent of the total class meetings and if a student exceeds this number, the faculty member may recommend the student be dropped from the roles and given the appropriate grade.

V-4. UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

1. Associate of General Studies or Associate of Science

- (a) The candidate must complete one of the two-year programs with 60 or more specified hours.
- (b) Students (resident and transfer) must have a 2.00 average GPA on hours earned and at least 25% of the hours required for graduation must be earned in college residence. No more than six hours of correspondence work will count toward the degree.
- (c) Transfer students must have at least 24 weeks in residence at Tech during which at least 25% of the hours required in the curriculum are earned with a minimum 2.0 GPA. Additionally, transfer students must make a 2.0 average on all hours earned at Tech.
- (d) If a student is more than 6 quality points below that needed for a 2.0 hours-earned GPA at the beginning of his/her final quarter, the student will not be allowed to register for graduation.
- (e) The last two quarters must be completed while in residence unless 24 weeks of residence have been accumulated; if this is the case, six of the last 18 hours may be earned out of residence.
- (f) Students must be registered at Tech during the quarter of anticipated graduation and report their candidacy to the Dean of the appropriate academic area and to the Registrar within the first three weeks of that quarter.
- (g) Students wishing to add an associate degree as a second degree in another academic area must complete at least 15 hours in addition to the hours required for their initial degree.
- (h) Students who complete the requirements for an associate degree in the process of earning a baccalaureate degree do not need to earn additional credits as long as the requirements for both degrees are met.

2. Baccalaureate Degree

- (a) The candidate must complete a curriculum in one of the five colleges.
- (b) All students (resident and transfer) must have a 2.00 GPA on hours earned and at least 75% of the hours required for graduation must be earned in college residence. No more than six hours of correspondence work may be applied toward the degree.
- (c) Transfer students must have at least 36 weeks in residence at Tech during which at least 25% of the hours in the curriculum are earned with a minimum 2.0 GPA.
- (d) If a student is more than 9 quality points below that needed for a 2.0 hours-earned GPA at the beginning of his/her final quarter, the student will not be allowed to register for graduation.
- (e) The senior year must be completed while in residence unless 36 weeks of residence have been accumulated; if this is the case, 9 of the last 36 hours may be earned out of residence.
- (f) Students must be registered at Tech during the quarter of anticipated graduation and report their candidacy to the Dean of the appropriate academic college and to the Registrar within the first three weeks of that quarter.

3. Second Baccalaureate Degree

Students wishing to earn a second baccalaureate degree in another field of study must earn an additional 30 hours in addition to the number required for the primary degree as well as fulfill any specific requirements necessary for the second degree. The 30 hours can be completed before the primary degree is awarded but the total hours must be the number required for the initial degree plus 30 more.

4. Double Major

Students may acquire a double major under a single baccalaureate degree by

completing the total hours required for one degree and the total hours required in the **subject courses** for the second major.

5. **Minors**

Minors are offered by various academic areas at Tech and advisors should check the University Catalog for specific requirements. Generally, minors consist of 15% or more of the total hours required in the undergraduate curriculum with a minimum of 40 to 60 percent of these hours at the 300 or 400 level. Advisors should work closely with faculty in departments where a student is seeking a minor to coordinate the progression of the primary degree requirements with those of the minor. Minor declaration should be determined no later than the junior year, and the plan should be documented. Approval and certification of minors are the responsibility of the student's **major** college. **Students are required to earn a minimum grade of "C" in all courses that count toward the minor.** Minors will be indicated on a student's transcript. Students may complete more than one minor.

V-5. **EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR ALL TECH GRADUATES**

A list of expected outcomes for all Louisiana Tech University baccalaureate graduates was developed by the Curriculum Effectiveness. Constructed from broad-based constituency input and validated by teaching faculty, the University adopted the following expected outcomes:

1. **Critical Thinking**

- Analyzes, synthesizes, and evaluates from a wide variety of information sources
- Uses logic
- Recognizes patterns & forms conclusions based on those patterns
- Adapts textbook information to the real world
- Utilizes planning and organization skills
- Differentiates fact from opinion
- Transfers concepts within and among disciplines

2. **Creative Thinking**

- Is open-minded, flexible and adapts to new ideas
- Devises new ideas, work, or solutions
- Recognizes and evaluates alternatives

3. **Communication Skills**

- Uses standard English grammar in oral & written forms
- Applies listening skills appropriate to situation

Reads with comprehension
Communicates effectively in oral and written forms, including presentations

4. Ethical Thinking

Demonstrates professional conduct & ethical responsibility
Has awareness and acceptance of cultural differences
Demonstrates knowledge and application of moral & philosophical concepts
Recognizes and evaluates assumptions, theses, and support of ethical arguments
Recognizes ethical dilemmas and is aware of diverse answers to ethical problems

5. Research Skills

Applies scientific methods to problem solving
Utilizes basic statistical analysis
Synthesizes information into coherent whole

6. Marketplace Skills

Demonstrates ability to adapt to diverse organizational cultures
Demonstrates awareness of workplace cultures and expectations
Applies effective interpersonal skills
Demonstrates ability to work effectively in individual and team situations
Self-evaluates learning and performance

7. Technological Skills

Demonstrates knowledge and use of current technology for problem solving
including: word processing, Internet, and discipline-specific applications
Demonstrates knowledge of state-of-the-art and emerging technologies related to the
discipline

These outcomes may be found in Appendix A of [Louisiana Tech University Policy 2224, Academic Program Review](#). This document is set up in survey form and can be used in classes to help assess how effectively these outcomes are being met.

V-6. SUSPENSION – READMISSION AFTER

In the case of readmission for students who were previously suspended, an appeal for reinstatement should be made to the student's academic Dean or to the Director of Admissions, Basic and Career Studies if the student did not have a declared major. If the student is seeking readmission after one or more quarters (excepting summer) of non-attendance, they must also submit an application for admission to the Admissions Office.