

# Grades

All grades are determined by the instructor in charge of the course. Grades are reported as follows:

## Grading Scale

A	high honor (reserved for very distinguished work)
B	very good work of much more than average quality
C	work of good average quality
D	work of the lowest quality that will enable the student to meet the standards of McPherson College
I	work is incomplete. This mark will be given only when the reason for the incomplete has been unavoidable, as determined by the instructor and the vice president for academic affairs
F	work that does not meet the standards of McPherson College
PS	a passing grade on the pass/fail system
FL	a failing grade on the pass/fail system
CR	credit granted
NC	no credit granted
W	withdrawal from a course
IP	in progress
AU	auditing (class attendance with no credit given)
NR	not reported

## Incompletes

When an instructor gives an incomplete grade, the instructor will also submit to the registrar an alternate grade to be recorded if the student fails to complete the assigned work by midterm of the following semester.

## Pass/Fail Option

A student may take only one course per semester on a pass/fail basis. Students must declare this intention by the end of the second week of class. General education courses and courses required for the major may not be audited or taken pass/fail.

## Grade Points

Grade points are earned as follows:

A	4 grade points for each hour of credit
B	3 grade points for each hour of credit
C	2 grade points for each hour of credit
D	1 grade point for each hour of credit
F	0 grade points earned

## Grading Periods

Faculty report grades at three points in the fall and spring semesters:

- Faculty report D's and F's only at the end of the first five weeks. This is a preliminary grade intended to alert students and advisors to poor academic performance while there is time to address issues and get the student the help needed to be successful. Students making all C's or better do not receive a five-week grade report.
- All grades are reported at midterm, or half way through the semester. Midterm grades are preliminary and in no way indicate or guarantee similar grade at the end of the semester.
- Final grades are reported at the end of each term. These grades become a permanent part of a student's transcript unless a course is retaken to replace the previously earned grade. Unless the instructor miscalculates the grade or submits the wrong grade by mistake, final grades cannot be changed except through the grade appeal process explained below.

Because it is condensed into an intensive three-week period, Interterm courses do not report five-week or midterm grades.

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# Final Examinations

Most courses require final examinations. A final examination period during which no regular classes meet (usually four days) is scheduled at the end of the fall and spring semesters. Final examinations or, in some cases, an alternative learning experience or evaluation activity will be given during this period according to a final examination schedule approved by the Educational Policies Committee. Final examinations for Interterm and May Session courses are given during the last scheduled class meeting of the term.

Students who have three or more final exams scheduled on the same day of the final exam period may speak with the Vice president for academic affairs about arranging with the involved faculty an alternative time for one or more of the finals. Students should not ask faculty to take their exams at a time other than the time approved by EPC for any reason other than extraordinary, unavoidable circumstances. Faculty have no obligation to give exams at a time other than the time approved by EPC, and approval of the Vice president for academic affairs is necessary for them to do so.

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## Course Repeat Policy

With the approval of the vice president for academic affairs, students may repeat a course. The last grade earned will be the grade used to compute the grade-point average. Courses taken at other institutions may not be used to repeat courses taken at McPherson College.

Some courses, such as choir, band, music ensembles, and private lessons, may be repeated multiple times.

After completing one year of intercollegiate athletic competition, students may enroll in intercollegiate competition (PE 211-19 and PE 311-19) for 1 credit hour, but a maximum of 2 credit hours for intercollegiate competition will count toward graduation.

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## Grade Appeal Procedure

A student who receives a final course grade that he or she believes is biased, capricious, erroneous, or unfair must first discuss the evaluation personally with the instructor who assigned the grade. Unless the instructor is permanently absent or the vice president for academic affairs advises otherwise, no formal grade appeal may begin until that conversation has taken place.

If a student, after discussing the matter with the instructor, still believes the recorded grade is unfair, he or she should consult with the vice president for academic affairs, who may attempt to resolve the issue by conferring with the student and instructor separately and informally.

If no resolution is achieved through the intervention of the vice president for academic affairs, the student may, with the written permission of the VPAA, appeal to a review committee established as follows:

- A member of the faculty selected by the student,
- A member of the faculty selected by the instructor involved,
- A member of a faculty selected either by the VPAA or the president of the college. (This member of the committee may be from another institution than McPherson College.)

The committee will determine the legitimacy of the student's grievance. If the student's grievance is found to be valid, the committee will recommend an alternative grade for record. Decisions of the review committee are final and not subject to further appeal.

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## Academic Honors

### Honor Rolls

At the end of fall and spring semesters, grade-point averages for the term will be calculated and an Honor Roll and Honorable Mention Roll compiled and published. Full-time students earning a GPA of 3.55 or higher will be placed on the Honor Roll. Students earning a GPA of 3.25 to 3.54 will be placed on the Honorable Mention Roll.

Students with an Incomplete reported for the term are ineligible for the honor rolls. Grade points earned by examination will not be included in the GPA to

determine whether a student is on an honor roll.

## Honor Graduates

Students who have consistently achieved a high level of scholarship during their study at McPherson College will be graduated with the following honors:

- Students earning a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.55 to 3.74 will be graduated *cum laude*.
- Students earning a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.75 to 3.89 will be graduated *magna cum laude*.
- Students earning a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.90 to 4.0 will be graduated *summa cum laude*.

Transfer students will be considered for graduation honors based on either 1) their work only at McPherson College; or 2) their combined previous work and academic record at McPherson College. The level of the honor will be determined by the lower of these grade-point averages. The only exception to this shall be for persons who have participated in a study abroad program. These grades shall not be used in the calculation of honors.

Graduation honors for persons with Incompletes and outstanding classes will not be figured until all work is completed.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards

McPherson College has established a framework for evaluating a student's progress toward a degree within an optimum period of time. This includes a qualitative measure (cumulative grade point average) and a quantitative measure (credit hours earned as a percentage of credit hours attempted).

The table below illustrates how these two measures work in tandem to define the student's academic standing at the college. Students who exceed the measures listed in Warning column for both the qualitative and the quantitative measures are considered in good academic standing.

Hours attempted	QUALITATIVE		QUANTITATIVE <i>Hrs earned as % of hrs attempted</i>	
	Warning cum GPA	Probation cum GPA	Warning	Probation
0 - 15	1.70	1.50	85%	50%
16 - 31	1.75	1.60	85%	60%
32 - 46	1.85	1.70	85%	62%
47 - 62	1.95	1.80	85%	67%
63 - 77	<=2.00	1.85	85%	67%
78 - 93	<=2.00	1.90	85%	69%
94 - 108	<=2.00	1.95	85%	71%
109 - 124	<=2.00	<=2.00	85%	74%
125 - 139	<=2.00	<=2.00	85%	77%
140 - 155	<=2.00	<=2.00	85%	83%
156 - 170	<=2.00	<=2.00	85%	83%
171 - 186	<=2.00	<=2.00	85%	83%

## Academic Warning, Probation, and Suspension Policies

Students are placed on academic warning or academic probation on the basis of the table above. Attempted hours include all postsecondary coursework attempted after completion of the high school degree. For example, this includes failed coursework, repeated coursework, and coursework graded as incomplete. The cumulative grade point average used to determine a student's academic standing includes only courses taken at McPherson College.

Determinations of satisfactory academic progress are made immediately after the conclusion of fall and spring semesters. Students who are placed on academic warning or probation or who are academically suspended will be notified within 30 days after grades are due from the faculty.

### Warning

Students placed on academic warning receive a letter notifying them of their tenuous academic situation, but academic warning imposes no particular conditions upon a student. Students on academic warning should avail themselves of the support services provided by the Center for

Academic Development.

### **Probation**

Students placed on academic probation have one semester in which to raise both quantitative and qualitative satisfactory academic progress indicators above the probationary levels identified for their respective hours attempted in the chart above. Students on academic probation will receive letters from the vice president for academic affairs informing them of their standing and stipulating conditions that must be met during the coming semester. These conditions may include mandatory enrollment in College Study Skills or appointments with a staff member of the Center for Academic Development, a limit upon the number of hours that can be attempted in the coming semester, and/or class attendance monitoring.

### **Suspension**

Students who fall below the qualitative and/or quantitative probation indicators for their respective attempted hours will be reviewed by the Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee to determine their eligibility for continued enrollment. Students who are not permitted to continue their enrollment will be placed on academic suspension for one semester or one year.

After serving their term of suspension, suspended students must reapply for admission to McPherson College. To be readmitted, the student must present evidence that he or she is prepared to better academic work. If readmitted, the student will re-enter the college on academic probation, with one semester to demonstrate an ability to make satisfactory academic progress.

### **Appealing Academic Suspension**

Students who wish to appeal a decision of academic suspension may appeal within 30 days after notification of their condition by submitting a written appeal letter to the vice president for academic affairs. The letter of appeal should clearly explain the circumstances or behaviors that have prevented the student from making satisfactory academic progress and persuasively argue that such matters will not hinder future academic achievement. The appeal should include a specific plan the student is committed to implementing in order to work his or her way back into good academic standing.

Although he or she may consult with the Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee, the vice president for academic affairs makes the final determination regarding student appeals of academic suspension. The VPAA's decision is not subject to further appeal.

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## **Graduation and Commencement**

### **Graduation Requirements**

In order to graduate, students must satisfactorily complete no fewer than 124 credit hours with a cumulative, grade-point average of 2.0 or higher, both overall and in the courses required for their major field of study. The grade-point average includes only courses taken at McPherson College and is calculated by dividing the number of grade points earned by the number of graded hours.

For a complete list of graduation requirements, see Requirements for the Bachelor's Degree in the Degree Programs section and the Course Repeat Policy earlier in this section of the catalog.

### **Junior Check and Senior Check**

Students are highly encouraged to schedule two meetings with the registrar to confirm they are on track to graduate. The first should be a junior check performed some time during the spring semester of the sophomore year or first semester of the junior year. The second meeting is a senior graduation check and should be scheduled for the spring semester before the senior year.

### **Candidacy for the Degree**

In the fall, members of the senior class apply for candidacy for the degree to which their courses apply. Application is made through the Registrar's Office. Only those members of the senior class that have been accepted as candidates for a degree may participate in Commencement events. Seniors not filing this application risk being overlooked for a diploma and inclusion in the Commencement program.

### **Senior Audit**

The Registrar's Office conducts a review each fall for each senior who has applied to graduate. Seniors who will not meet the requirements stated for participation in Commencement are notified that they have been removed from the list of graduating seniors. All students should be cautious about changing registration during the year. Any change that brings a senior below the stated requirements for participation in Commencement results in the student not being able to participate.

## Participation in Commencement

Commencement exercises are held each May for graduating seniors who are members of that class and who have successfully completed the graduation requirements, including applying for graduation and a positive senior audit.

Only students who have successfully completed 118 credits out of the required 124 credits with a minimum 2.00 grade point average (both overall residential and in the major as figured by tentative senior grade due date) and do not have a balance with the college are eligible to be included in the Commencement program and participate in Commencement and its related activities without receiving a diploma. Students who participate in Commencement without actually graduating are referred to as "participators." The diploma is conferred and a complete transcript issued following completion of all requirements.

Neither senior status, number of courses attempted, time spent in college, delays in submitting off-campus or transfer work, nor other circumstances or miscommunication eliminate the 118 credit requirement for participation in Commencement. The responsibility for understanding and meeting graduation requirements rests entirely with the student. *Please note:* Elementary education majors cannot participate in graduation until after student teaching has been successfully completed.

## Diplomas

A diploma is issued to each member of the graduating class at Commencement under the following conditions:

1. All requirements for the Baccalaureate degree have been successfully completed. A diploma is not issued to participators.
2. The recipient has no outstanding financial obligations to the college.

The fee for replacing a diploma is \$25 (domestic) or \$35 (international).

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## Other Academic Policies

### Student Responsibility for Academic Progress

Although McPherson College provides a thorough advising program, the ultimate responsibility for fulfilling requirements for satisfactory academic progress and graduation belongs with the student. A student must satisfy the requirements of the catalog in effect at the time that the student is admitted and begins course work in a degree program; or the student may, with the consent of his/her advisor, graduate under a subsequent catalog, provided the student complies with all requirements of the later catalog.

Students are expected to be familiar with the information presented in their applicable catalog, and to know and observe all regulations and procedures relating to their program of study. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because a student pleads ignorance of, or contends that he/she was not informed of, the regulations or procedures. Students planning to graduate should be familiar with the deadline for application for graduation and other pertinent deadlines.

Students should schedule an official junior check with the registrar's office during the first semester of their junior year. A final check with the registrar's office is required during the first term of the senior year to assure that the student will meet all graduation requirements. Part-time students should complete the senior check during the term prior to the term in which they expect to graduate.

### Academic Integrity

Strict honesty is fundamental to education. The college expects that both students and teachers will be honest in all their academic dealings. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating on tests, turning in others' work as your own (plagiarism), and submitting false reports about required activities.

A student who is guilty of academic dishonesty can be failed on the project or failed in the course, at the instructor's discretion. Faculty are encouraged to report every incident of academic dishonesty to the office of the vice president for academic affairs. If a pattern of dishonesty emerges, a student can be suspended from the college.

### Class Attendance

Every professor has the autonomy to establish his or her own class attendance policy, which is explained in the course syllabus. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with each professor's policy. Instructors may lower final grades or fail students who do not comply with the attendance policy set forth in the syllabus. The vice president for academic affairs may withdraw chronically absent students one or all their courses.

Unless the instructor's attendance policy specifies otherwise, students should notify instructors of necessary absences well in advance and arrange alternative means for completing class activities, if appropriate. When prior notification for absences is not possible, the student should explain each

absence to the instructor at the next class meeting. The instructor will determine whether make-up work is allowable.

## **Classroom Conduct**

Faculty members have the responsibility to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning in their classrooms and labs. Therefore, when, in the judgment of the instructor, a student's behavior undermines the learning atmosphere, the instructor may remove that student from the classroom for the remainder of the class period.

Students who repeatedly undermine the learning environment, or whose disruptive behavior includes violence, threats, or harassment, may be subject to permanent ejection from a course. Unless the instructor specifies otherwise, ejected students fail the course. Students have the right to appeal an instructor's request for permanent removal from a course to the vice president for academic affairs.