

Academic Policies and Procedures

Academic policies are statements of regulations that the college develops for the facilitation of the teaching and learning process.

Academic policy reflects the philosophy of education at Orange County Community College. Policies can be revised as the philosophy of education at the college changes. The mechanism for effecting any change is the campus governance system.

Revisions of academic policy must relate to the whole system of existing policies. Those recommendations of the campus governance system that relate to academic policies are submitted to the President of the College for approval.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designee publishes the Academic Policy Manual for distribution.

■ Examinations and Other Performance Measures

Students have the right to periodic evaluation of their performance throughout the semester with grades or recorded written assessments. The number, type, and scheduling of performance measures in each course will be determined by individual instructors consistent with department policy.* However, there must be a minimum of one performance measure for a one credit course, two for a two-credit course and three for courses of three or more credits.

Unless mandated by department policy,* comprehensive final examinations are given at the discretion of the individual faculty member. Comprehensive final examinations may not be more than 2 ½ hours in length and must be scheduled in accordance with final exam procedures.

The performance evaluation procedure to be followed in each course must be explained completely and specifically in the course syllabus. The instructions for examinations or performance measures must be clearly indicated. The grading value of the component parts of each exam must be indicated on the exam.

Faculty who teach online courses and require students to participate in testing or other course activities in person must indicate that within the syllabi as well as include notice in the online course schedule.

At the end of each semester, a copy of the comprehensive final examination, if given, or the most significant evaluative device must be submitted to the office designated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and kept on record for a period that accords with New York State guidelines.

*These department policies must be approved by a 75% vote of all full-time department faculty members.

■ Grades

Final Grades

Final grades will be A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F, W or one of the following:

- The final grade in developmental courses and support modules will be DVP, DVF, or DVH.
- The final grade in courses taken on a pass/fail basis will be PP for pass or PF for fail.
- A grade of ZF (or ZDF for developmental courses and support modules or ZPF for pass/fail courses) will be assigned to students who stop attending before the end of the 10th week of the semester or its equivalent and do not withdraw themselves or receive an instructor withdrawal. A ZF grade is calculated as an F in the student's CQPA.

Grades must be submitted as specified by the Registrar's Office.

Change of Final Grade

Except for academic grievances, after a final grade has been submitted, the instructor can change the grade within four weeks by filling out the required form and getting the signature of the Department Chair. After four weeks, such a change also requires the signature of the Appropriate Associate Vice President. Grade changes must be processed by the end of the following semester in which the course was taken.

Incomplete

The grade of Incomplete (I) may be given at the discretion of the instructor. The instructor must submit a change of grade by the end of the next fall or spring Semester, whichever comes first. If the work is not completed, the I will become an F.

The grade of Incomplete (I) cannot be used in developmental courses.

A student desiring to graduate with one or more Incompletes may do so; however the Incomplete(s) shall count as an F for purpose of computing the CQPA.

Grade of W

A student who drops a course(s) by the end of the 12th week or its equivalent as stated in the academic calendar will receive a grade of W. A student who officially withdraws from a course between the 4th and 12th week or its equivalent will have the course appear on his/her transcript with a grade of W. After the 12th week or its equivalent a student will receive the grade that they earned in the course.

Grade of HOLD

The grade of HOLD (DVH) may be used in developmental courses only. The DVH grade indicates a degree of progress which is insufficient to make a Pass grade (DVP) appropriate, but does warrant the student's continuation in that course.

Distribution of Grades

Each student must be graded primarily on the basis of his or her achievement, as distinguished from aptitude, interest, or effort. Grades may also be significantly affected by attendance or violations of other academic policies (see Policy #3 on Attendance). No quota system of allocating grades is authorized. The meaning of letter grades is: A-, A = 90 - 100%, B-, B, B+ = 80 - 89%, C-, C, C+ = 70 - 79%, D-, D, D+ = 60 - 69%, F = 0 - 59%. Faculty whose grades are based on a different numbering system must indicate so in their course syllabi.

Mid-Semester Progress Reports

The deadline for submitting Mid-Semester Progress Report(s) is specified in the College Calendar. Such report(s) must be made on all students whose work to date is of less than C quality or otherwise unsatisfactory.

Mid-Semester Progress Report(s) are to indicate only that progress to date has been unsatisfactory.

■ Attendance

Attendance is required in all courses. Instructors must describe their attendance policies and repercussions of absences in their syllabi.

Instructors shall not penalize students for absences for religious observance or jury duty, and provided the instructor's permission is given in advance, for participation in college-sponsored events.

It is the student's responsibility to contact each instructor regarding absences.

■ Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is regarded by the College as an intolerable breach of academic ethics and deserves immediate penalty. The consequences of academic dishonesty may include academic penalties, disciplinary action, or even legal action. The primary responsibility for dealing with academic dishonesty rests with the faculty member.

The definition of academic dishonesty in the College's "Code of Student Conduct" includes, but is not limited to: (a) cheating; (b) fabrication; (c) facilitating academic dishonesty; (d) plagiarism; (e) forgery; (f) bribery; or (g) multiple submissions (submitting the same assignment to more than one instructor without the permission of the instructors).

Depending on the specific circumstances, academic penalties could range from a verbal reprimand to separation from the College. For some acts of academic dishonesty, the student may also be accountable to legal authorities.

When plagiarism, cheating or some other act of academic dishonesty has occurred, the faculty member shall advise the student of the action to be taken. In addition, any instance of academic dishonesty may result in the referral to the Vice President for Student Services for appropriate disciplinary action pursuant to the College's Code of Student Conduct.

■ Degree Requirements

Each of the degrees must meet the minimum requirements of and be approved by the State University of New York (SUNY) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED). College-prescribed portions of the degree requirements, are binding upon the Registrar, who must certify each candidate's eligibility for the Associate Degree. A course requirement in a particular degree may be waived with the approval of: (1) the chair of the department which offers the course; (2) the chair which sponsors the degree; and (3) the appropriate Associate Vice President.

No college credit is granted for successful performance on a high school equivalency test.

Courses used to meet the General Education requirements for the A.A.S. degree cannot also be used to meet the major-field requirement of 20 credits.

■ Multiple Associate Degrees

The Registrar will award multiple degrees when students complete a minimum of fifteen credit hours at the College that were not required or applied to the first degree and satisfy all other requirements for awarding of a degree.

A student may earn multiple AS degrees, or multiple AAS degrees, or an AA and an AS. Only one AA degree may be awarded with the following exception. Because of its distinct and separate nature from other programs, the AA in International Studies may be awarded as a second AA degree. (5/14/97)

All grades earned in courses taken at this College applied to an additional degree will be included in the CQPA for the additional degree.

■ Graduation Participation

Participation in the College's Commencement ceremony is limited to the following students and criteria: those who met the requirements of a program, registered by the New York State Education Department and the State University of New York; and potential August graduates who have no more than 6 credits remaining or

2 courses which do not exceed 8 credits left to finish over the subsequent Summer Semesters. Students must meet all other requirements for their degrees, have at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA at the end of the Spring semester, and apply for May commencement by the due date. No degree shall be conferred until all requirements for graduation have been met.

■ Academic Recognitions/Designations upon Graduation

Students who have completed at least 30 credits of work at the college and have a CQPA of 4.00 in the courses taken here will receive the President's Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement upon graduation.

Upon graduation those students with a CQPA of 3.20-3.49 will be designated as Cum Laude graduates, 3.50-3.74 as Magna Cum Laude graduates, and 3.75-4.00 as Summa Cum Laude graduates.

■ Repeating a Course

A student who is eligible to register may repeat any credit bearing course (for developmental courses see Policy #27.). The grade received on the final attempt automatically becomes the official grade. It replaces, in computation of CQPA, any previous grade in the same course.

Some academic courses may be repeated for credit only once with Curriculum Committee review and approval. Department Chairs, with the approval of the appropriate Associate Vice President, may waive this policy, and appeals for denials will be processed using the Academic Grievance Process.

Students who fail to achieve the minimum grade required for progression or graduation and may no longer repeat that course are thereby removed from the program/curriculum, but not necessarily separated from the College.

■ Transfer Credits

Credit courses successfully completed at a United States Department of Education approved college, with a grade of C or better, may be accepted to fulfill graduation requirements. Such courses, if accepted, do not affect the CQPA at this College. Students may appeal any decision of the College not to accept a credit course for transfer credit using the appropriate processes.

■ Advanced Placement

The College may grant credit for high school advance placement courses in which the student earns a grade of 3.0 or higher on the final examination. Additional departmental criteria may apply.

■ New York State Regents College Examination Program (formerly the New York State College Proficiency Examination Program)

The College may accept for credit college courses which the student has successfully passed in the New York State Regents College Examination Program.

■ Credit by Examination

The discipline areas or departments will determine those courses for which credit by examination is available. The college maintains a list of College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests that are accepted for credit. In addition, department chairs may create course specific examinations.

Departments offering course specific exams for credit must develop procedures for student application.

The grading of departmental examinations is pass/fail and a grade of P will be recorded on the transcript of a student who is successful in passing an examination. Students who successfully pass CLEP examinations will be awarded appropriate transfer credit. Credits earned by taking an examination cannot be applied toward the fulfillment of the 30 credit hour residency requirement for an Associate's Degree.

■ Expiration of Earned College Credits

While the College wants to honor all credit courses successfully completed at the College and most credits do not expire, some exceptions exist and these are maintained at the Office of the Registrar.

■ Course Prerequisites

Students are required to complete all pre-requisite courses. Department Chairs, or their designee, are authorized to waive the prerequisites for a course.

■ Academic Freedom

The Faculty Contract guarantees academic freedom to the faculty. It is described as follows:

The teacher is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject, but may not claim as a right, the privilege of discussing controversial matter that has no relation to the subject.

The teacher is entitled to full freedom, within the law, of inquiry and research and in the publication of the results, but not at the expense of adequate performance of other academic duties.

The college teacher is a citizen, a member of a learned profession and representative of an educational institution. When speaking, writing, or acting, within the law as a citizen, the teacher shall be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but our unique

position in the community imposes special obligations. As persons of learning and as representatives of an educational institution, we should remember that the public might judge our profession and our institution by our utterances and our actions. Hence, we must at all times be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinion of others, and indicate that we are not speaking for our institution.

Other policies also describe expectations relating to professional ethics for College employees.

■ Office Hours

Full-time members of the faculty are required to maintain the number of office hours specified in the Agreement with the Faculty Association. Office hours should be chosen in such a way as to maximize the opportunity for advisees and others to make appointments.

■ Course Outlines/Syllabi

Course Outlines/Syllabi are to be distributed to students and appropriate department chairs at the beginning of each semester. Each syllabus must contain the elements identified in the course syllabus template distributed by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This template will be reviewed and revised annually in collaboration with the Academic Policy Committee.

Additional departmental policies may also appear on course syllabi.

■ Eligibility for Dean's List

All full-time students not on probation who earned a QPA of at least 3.33 the previous semester are placed on the Dean's list.

Part-time students who achieve a CQPA of 3.33 or higher for each full - time equivalent semester of study completed shall be placed on the Dean's list. A full - time equivalent semester is defined as the completion of twelve credit hours of study.

■ Independent Study

Independent study will be assigned to faculty on a voluntary basis at the recommendation of the Department Chair and approval by the AVP of the appropriate division and VPAA. Such study is defined as a one faculty member to one student educational experience. Independent study may be authorized when:

- A. the student needs credit for graduation, and
- B. the student is unable to take a course when usually offered due to extenuating circumstances.

■ Deadline for Class Registration

The deadline for students to register for a full semester class is five business days after the beginning of the semester or its equivalent for part of term courses. Thereafter, registration requires the course Instructor and appropriate Department Chair approval.

■ Change of Major

To change majors, students must follow the procedures outlined in the College Catalog under Change of Program.

■ Academic Separation and Probation

Good Academic Standing

Students who have achieved a CQPA of 2.0 or higher at the College are designated in good academic standing.

Academic Probation

Students who have achieved less than a 2.0 CQPA at the College are placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation may continue study, however, they may not enroll in more than 14 credits in fall/spring semester or 6 credits in a summer session.

Academic Separation

Students who have attempted 30 credits or more at the College, who have a CQPA of less than 1.5, and a QPA (semester quality point average) of less than 2.0 are separated for a period of one year. However, students who have attained a QPA of 2.0 or higher are placed on academic probation. Those students who are separated may not enroll in any credit course offered in the day, evening, weekend, or summer of any semester or session offered by the College, at any site, during this period. The above policies governing academic separation and probation apply to all students except developmental students (see Academic Policy 27.). Grades of W, I, or M are not counted as credits attempted. Pass or fail grades earned in developmental courses are not counted as units/credits attempted.

Academic Appeal Procedure

Students who are separated from the College may appeal the decision to the College Appeals Board, an academic review body convened by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Those students who are placed on academic probation and who desire to enroll in more than the maximum number of credits allowed may request permission from the College Appeals Board. The decision of the College Appeals Board may be appealed for final disposition to the President or his designee.

Developmental Students

The following policy applies to students who have placed in and have not yet completed two or more developmental courses:

1. Students are in good academic standing if they pass all of their developmental courses with a grade of DVP and attain a CQPA of 2.0 or higher in their credit courses.
2. Developmental students who are placed on academic probation (less than 2.0 CQPA) or receive a DVF, W, or DVH in a developmental course will receive a letter stating that the student's records will be reviewed by the Developmental Review Board. This review board may then limit the number of credits that the student may take or stipulate specific course(s) that the student must take.

■ Fresh Start Policy

Students will only be awarded ONE Fresh Start, ONE time during their academic career at SUNY Orange.

Separation Fresh Start Policy

This policy is intended to provide a “fresh start” for students with unsatisfactory grades that have been away from the College for at least one year.

An eligible student will have his or her CQPA re-computed by excluding final grades earned in courses taken that are not explicitly required in the student's intended degree or certificate program. The student must apply for this fresh start opportunity at the beginning of his/her returning semester. If the application is denied by the Registrar or his/her designee, a written appeal may be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Application of the fresh start policy means:

- A. Courses and grades will be omitted from the recalculation of a CQPA until the CQPA is 2.00 or the smallest possible number above 2.0.
- B. Courses and grades omitted from the re-calculation will be identified on the transcript.

To be eligible for a Separation Fresh Start, a student must meet all of the following criteria:

She or he must:

1. Be matriculated in a registered degree or certificate program at the College
2. Have been out of the College for at least one calendar year
3. Have a CQPA lower than 2.0 at the time of the request
4. Acknowledge in writing the restrictions of this policy via student signature on the Fresh Start Application

Change of Program (Major) Fresh Start Policy

This policy is intended to provide a “fresh start” for students who have changed to a new program (major) and earned unsatisfactory grades in courses that were taken under the previous program (major).

An eligible student will have his or her CQPA re-computed by excluding final grades earned in courses taken that are required by the original degree but not for

his/her new program (major). The student must apply for a change of program (major) fresh start within the first three weeks of his/her second semester in the new program (major). If the application is denied by the Registrar or his/her designee, a written appeal may be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Application of the fresh start policy means:

- A. Courses and grades will be omitted from the recalculation of a CQPA until the CQPA is 2.00 or the smallest possible number above 2.0
- B. Courses and grades omitted from the re-calculation will be identified on the transcript.

To be eligible for a Change of Program Fresh Start, a student must meet all of the following criteria:

She or he must:

1. Be matriculated in a registered degree or certificate program at the College
2. Be currently enrolled in classes
3. Have completed at least one semester in their current program (major)
4. Have a CQPA lower than 2.0 at the time of the request
5. Acknowledge in writing the restrictions of this policy via student signature on the Fresh Start Application
6. Successfully complete 2 courses applicable to the new program (major) with a “C” or better for the change of program (major) fresh start to be applied

■ Official Withdrawals

Official Withdrawal from the College

A student may withdraw from the College by withdrawing from all courses in which he or she is currently enrolled, including developmental courses, if he or she does so by the end of the twelfth (12th) week or its equivalent (see Academic Calendar).

The Student must complete the Official Withdrawal-from-College Form and the Drop/Add Form with the appropriate signatures by the end of the twelfth (12th) week of class or its equivalent (see Academic Calendar). The student initiates the withdrawal process with Student Services Central and must follow appropriate procedures with the Advising and Financial Aid staff.

Official Withdrawal from Course(s)

When a student finds it necessary to withdraw from a course(s), he or she must complete and file the Drop/Add Form with Student Services Central by the withdrawal deadline stipulated in the Academic Calendar. A student who officially withdraws from a course(s) by the end of the twelfth (12th) week or its equivalent, will receive a grade of W.

After the twelfth (12th) week or its equivalent, the student will receive the grade that he or she earned in the course.

Official Withdrawal from a Course(s) because of a Medical Condition

When students must withdraw from the College or course(s) due to their personal medical condition, they must obtain written verification from the physician and include all other required withdrawal forms.

All such information given to the College is treated as confidential and privileged, as allowable by law.

The student's request for a medical withdrawal should be submitted to the Registrar before the end of the semester in which the condition occurs. The Registrar will make a decision on the request for a medical withdrawal. The student has the right to appeal this decision to the VPAA using the academic grievance procedure.

Note that withdrawals approved for medical reasons do not generate an automatic refund of tuition, waiver of the physical education requirement, or waiver of financial aid requirements. If approved for a medical withdrawal, the student must still fill out a Tuition Credit Application.

Medical Leave

Students may be granted a medical leave if appropriate medical documentation that contains an anticipated return date is provided to the Registrar.

■ Audit of a Course

Students may change to/from audit status in accordance with the Academic calendar.

■ Developmental Courses

- A. Completion of developmental courses and/or sequences into which a student has been placed by assessment to the College is required.
- B. Students must have completed all developmental courses and/or sequences into which they have been placed prior to applying for graduation.
- C. Students placed in developmental writing and reading and study courses must be enrolled in these courses during every semester of attendance until they receive a grade of DVP in these courses.
- D. Students placed in developmental math courses must complete these courses, even though there may not be a specific math requirement in their curriculum. If a student has not successfully completed these courses (MAT 010 and MAT 020 sequence) by the time they have attempted 24 non-developmental credits, the student must enroll in these courses every semester until they receive a grade of "DVP". Grades of "DVP" must be received in these courses prior to applying for graduation.
- E. Students will be permitted to re-take an assessment test with the approval of the appropriate Department Chair or his/her designee (i.e., the Chair of English

Department for Reading and Writing and the Chair of the Math Department for Math), or AVP of Enrollment Management, only prior to attendance in classes.

- F. The appropriate Department Chairs or his/her designee (i.e., English and Math) may waive placement. (Academic Policy #15 permits Department Chairs to waive prerequisites.)
- G. Developmental courses may be prerequisites for certain college credit courses (i.e., WRT 040 Basic Writing II is a prerequisite for ENG 101 Freshman English I and MAT 020 Developmental Algebra is a prerequisite for MAT 101 Elementary Algebra).
- H. Students who place into any developmental reading and/or writing courses must successfully complete all of their developmental reading and writing coursework before registering for distance learning/hybrid courses.
- I. This Policy applies to all students regardless of the number of developmental courses they are required to take. Students who receive a grade of "DVH" or "DVF" in a particular developmental course will be allowed to repeat that developmental course only two additional times for a total of three attempts. "Attempts" include those made in summer sessions. After a second attempt, students who do not pass a developmental course must meet with one of the Associate Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs. If students do not successfully complete a particular developmental course on the third attempt, they will be separated from the College for one year. Students may not appeal separation except if they met with an Academic AVP after the second unsuccessful attempt and provided documented extenuating circumstances. Upon return to the College following a separation, students will be granted one attempt to successfully repeat the course(s). A grade of "DVH" or "DVF" in this attempt will result in another year's separation with no option to appeal.

If a student appeals separation from the College, a Developmental Review Board is convened by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and is composed of a chair and four faculty members with at least one representative from the English Department and one representative from the Math Department. The chair of the board is the Coordinator of Learning Assistance Services or a designee. The board is assembled by the chair who selects from a list of faculty volunteers who request to serve on the Board.

■ Academic Calendar

The academic calendar shall be such that it protects the integrity of the credit offerings, complies with contractual obligations, and accounts for state and federal mandates.

■ Students' Rights

The professor in the classroom and in conference should encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression. Student performance should be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards.

Protection of Freedom of Expression

Students should be free to take reasoned exceptions to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.

Protection Against Improper Academic Evaluation

Students should have protection through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation. At the same time, they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.

Protection Against Improper Disclosure

Information about student views, beliefs, and political associations which professors acquire in the course of their work as instructors, advisors, and counselors should be considered confidential. Protection against improper disclosure is a serious professional obligation and governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Judgments of ability and character may be provided under appropriate circumstances, with the written consent of the student.

■ Cancellation of Classes due to Inclement Weather

Only the President and the Vice President for Administration and Finance are authorized to cancel classes for the day, the evening, or both.

■ Reports on Educational Travel and Field Trips

Procedures have been developed to support academic travel and field trips. Faculty and students are expected to adhere to the procedures for obtaining approval for academic travel and field trips. Procedures can be found through the Office of the VPAA.

■ Individual Exceptions to Academic Policies

The Vice President for Academic Affairs is authorized to waive the application of any College academic policy in a particular case.

■ Official Academic Email Policy

For Degree-Seeking and Non-Degree Seeking students, the College issued email account (@sunyorange.edu) is designated as the student's official email address as it is validated by an authentication process. This will be used as the method of communication when administrative offices, academic departments and faculty need to communicate with students. Electronic communication through the use of the college's learning management system (e.g. Angel or Blackboard) remains at the discretion of the instructor and should be communicated to the student in the course syllabus.

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