

**WSU Graduate School**

**To:** Graduate Studies Committee

**From:** William Andrefsky, Jr., Dean of the Graduate School

**Date:** February 25, 2015

**Subject:** Revisions to Academic Rules 116 and 117  
Requirements for Master's and doctoral degrees, respectively

Please review the attached revisions to Rules 116 and 117. The major revisions are the addition of language already included in Rule 114 (Requirements for Baccalaureate Degrees), describing the conditions of "good standing" required for confirmation of the graduate degree. There are also minor cosmetic changes to the wording and ordering of the rules.

Detailed description of proposed rule changes:

1. The sub-sections of Rules 116 and 117 have been re-ordered for clarity. Section f is now section b. A revised section d presents a numbered list of requirements for degree completion, formerly sections b-e.
2. In the proposed section b (formerly section f) of Rules 116 and 117, the words "master's" and "doctoral" were inserted into the phrases "prior to conferral of the degree" as indicated by underline and yellow highlight.
3. Major change: for both Rules 116 and 117, a new section c was added. This addition indicates that the award of a graduate degree is conditioned upon the student being in "good standing" with the university, and defines what is meant by "good standing." This text is virtually identical to that contained in Rule 114, and a similar addition has been recently submitted for Rule 115 regarding professional degrees. These conditions of good standing, applicable to conferring of baccalaureate degrees, is equally appropriate for conferring of master's and doctoral degrees.
4. In the revised section d, item 1 (formerly section b of Rules 116 and 117), the phrase "earn not less than xx semester hours of credit" was changed to "earn no fewer than xx semester hours of credit..."

Sincerely,



William Andrefsky, Jr., PhD, RPA  
Edward R. Meyer Distinguished Professor and  
Dean of the Graduate School

## 116. Requirements for Master's Degrees

### 116. Requirements for Master's Degrees

- a. The Graduate School has no residency requirement.
- b. ~~f.~~ All outstanding incomplete work (including grades of I, X, and no/blank grade) must be completed and posted to the official transcript prior to the conferral of the **master's** degree. Once a degree is conferred and posted to the official transcript, no changes will be allowed on the academic record that predates the degree.
- c. The award of a master's degree and/or diploma is **conditioned upon requires** the student's good standing in the university and satisfaction of all University graduation requirements. "Good standing" means the student has resolved any acts of academic or behavioral misconduct, and complied with all sanctions imposed as a result of the misconduct. The University shall have the sole authority in determining whether to withhold the degree and/or diploma in cases where the student is not in good standing due to acts of misconduct, has not resolved any acts of academic or behavior misconduct, or has not complied with all sanctions imposed as a result of misconduct. The University shall deny the award of a degree if the student is dismissed from the University based on his or her misconduct. Neither diplomas nor transcripts will be sent until students have resolved any unpaid fees and resolved any acts of academic or behavioral misconduct and complied with all sanctions imposed as a result of misconduct. (See Rule 45 and the Standards of Conduct for Students.)
- d. To complete a master's degree, a student shall:
  - ~~b.~~ 1. Earn **no fewer** less-than 30 semester hours of credit with a minimum of 21 semester hours of course work for a thesis degree program or 26 semester hours of course work for a nonthesis degree program.
  - ~~c.~~ 2. Earn a minimum grade point average of 3.00 on a graduate program in all upper-division and graduate course work completed for the master's degree.

d- 3. Earn a minimum grade point average of 3.00 for all course work taken as a graduate student.

e- 4. Successfully complete graduate examinations.

### 117. Requirements for Doctoral Degrees

a. The Graduate School has no residency requirement.

b. f. All outstanding incomplete work (including grades of I, X, and no/blank grade) must be completed and posted to the official transcript prior to the conferral of the **doctoral** degree. Once a degree is conferred and posted to the official transcript, no changes will be allowed on the academic record that predates the degree.

c. The award of a doctoral degree and/or diploma is **conditioned upon** **requires** the student's good standing in the university and satisfaction of all University graduation requirements. "Good standing" means the student has resolved any acts of academic or behavioral misconduct, and complied with all sanctions imposed as a result of the misconduct. The University shall have the sole authority in determining whether to withhold the degree and/or diploma in cases where the student is not in good standing due to acts of misconduct, has not resolved any acts of academic or behavior misconduct, or has not complied with all sanctions imposed as a result of misconduct. The University shall deny the award of a degree if the student is dismissed from the University based on his or her misconduct. Neither diplomas nor transcripts will be sent until students have resolved any unpaid fees and resolved any acts of academic or behavioral misconduct and complied with all sanctions imposed as a result of misconduct. (See Rule 45 and the Standards of Conduct for Students.)

d. To complete a doctoral degree, a student shall:

b- 1. Earn **no fewer** less-than 72 semester credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree to include the minimum requirements as listed in the Graduate School's Policies and Procedures and as established by the academic program.

~~c.~~ 2. Earn a minimum grade point average of 3.00 on a graduate program and in all 300–400–level and graduate course work completed for the doctoral ~~doctor's~~ degree.

~~d.~~ 3. Earn a minimum grade point average of 3.00 for all course work taken as a graduate student.

~~e.~~ 4. Successfully complete graduate examinations.

**WSU Graduate School**

**To:** Graduate Studies Committee  
**From:** William Andrefsky, Jr., Dean of the Graduate School  
**Date:** March 9, 2015  
**Subject:** Revisions of Academic Rules proposed by the Registrar

The Registrar has submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee a packet of suggested revisions to several Academic Rules. Some of these revisions will affect graduate students. The Graduate School leadership has reviewed the proposed revisions and new rules, and recommends their acceptance.

The relevant information from the documentation compiled by Julia Pomerenk for the Academic Affairs Committee is attached. In the revisions, Deleted text is indicated by ~~strike through~~. Added text is indicated by underline. The revised rules to be considered are:

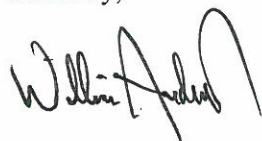
**Rule 90, Grades and Grade Points.**  
**Rule 104, Academic Complaint Procedures**  
**Rule 105, Administrative Changes to Final Grades**

A memo from the Graduate School for revisions to the following rules specific to graduate students was submitted recently (dated February 25, 2015). That memo and associated revisions are included.

**Rule 116, Requirements for Master's Degrees**  
**Rule 117, Requirements for Doctoral Degrees**

Subsequently, two additional small changes to the rules were suggested by the Registrar. These changes are in Rule 116.b. and 117.b., changing the wording from "conditioned upon..." to "requires..."

Sincerely,



William Andrefsky, Jr., PhD, RPA  
Edward R. Meyer Distinguished Professor and  
Dean of the Graduate School

**Revision to Rule 90**

**WSU Student Financial Services**

**WSU Registrar's Office**

**To:** Academic Affairs Committee  
Graduate Studies Committee

**From:** Brian Dixon, Assistant Vice President, Student Financial Services  
Julia Pomerenk, University Registrar

**Date:** February 23, 2015

**Subject:** Establish a new internal grade: Z  
(failure due to discontinued attendance without withdrawal)

Please review the attached revision to Rule 90, Grades and Grade Points. To support the federal reporting needs related to federal financial aid and related to federal veterans benefits, we propose establishing a new internal grade: Z, effective fall 2015.

**Summary Proposal:**

1. Establish a new internal grade, effective fall 2015: Z, to identify students who have failed due to discontinued attendance without withdrawal.
2. The Z grade would still appear as an F on the transcript and would act as an F in grade calculations.
3. Instructors must enter last dates of attendance for each Z grade. (The date for a last assignment submitted or for a last exam taken may substitute for a last date of attendance.)
4. Establishing a Z grade coincides with the ability in zzzsis and in Blackboard Learn to enter last dates of attendance during submission of final grades.
5. With the establishment of a Z grade and entering last dates of attendance, WSU will be better able to comply with regulations for financial aid and for veterans benefits.
6. Federal regulations for financial aid require that institutions monitor unofficial withdrawals of federal aid recipients and perform R2T4 calculations (refund calculation).
7. At the end of Fall 2014, 284 financial aid students were impacted; \$1,113,465.00 had to be returned to the federal government and billed to students.
8. At the end of Fall 2014, 67 veteran benefits students were impacted.
9. Our current policies and procedures make compliance difficult to administer.
10. Non-compliance could be very costly to the institution.

11. The U.S. Department of Education is monitoring non-compliance of this process Best case scenario would be to deal with these students during the semester through taking attendance; however that does not seem realistic at this time.

<b>Rule 90, Grades</b>
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Revised 2-19-2015

## 90. GRADES AND GRADE POINTS.

Washington State University uses letter grades and the four (4) point maximum grading scale. The grade A is the highest possible grade, and grades below D are considered failing. Plus (+) or minus (-) symbols are used to indicate grades that fall above or below the letter grades, but grades of A+ and D- are not used. For purposes of calculating grade points and averages, the plus (+) is equal to .3 and minus (-) equals .7 (e.g., a grade B+ is equivalent to 3.3 and A- is 3.7). A student's work is normally rated in accordance with the following definitions:

90a. **A.** Student work demonstrates consistently excellent scholastic performance; thorough comprehension; ability to correlate the material with other ideas, to communicate and to deal effectively with course concepts and new material; reliability in attendance and attention to assignments.

90b. **B.** Student work demonstrates superior scholastic performance overall, reliability in attendance, and attention to assignments; may demonstrate excellence but be less consistent than the work of an A student.

90c. **C.** Student work demonstrates satisfactory performance overall, as well as reliability in attendance, and attention to assignments.

90d. **D.** Student work demonstrates minimal, barely passing performance overall; limited knowledge of subject matter.

90e. **F.** Student work demonstrates unsatisfactory performance and comprehension or unfulfilled requirements. The grade is failing.

90f. **S.** (Satisfactory.) Grade given upon satisfactory completion of courses numbered 499, 600, 700, 702, 800, special examinations (Rule 15) and other courses duly authorized for S, F grading by the Faculty Senate. (Courses approved for S, F grading are footnoted in the Schedules of Classes.) Courses approved for S, F grading may also be graded S at midsemester indicating satisfactory progress.

A, S, or F grades only are used to report physical education activity grades.

S, M (marginally satisfactory), or F grades only are used to report grades for designated courses within the College of Veterinary Medicine.

H (honors), S, or F grades only are used to report grades for designated courses within the College of Pharmacy.

90g. **P.** (Passing.) A satisfactory grade for a course taken under the pass, fail Grading Option. Instructors will turn in regular letter grades for all students enrolled in courses under the pass, fail option but grades will appear on the student's permanent record as P (Passing) or F (Failure).

90h. **I.** (Incomplete.) An incomplete is the term used to indicate that a grade has been deferred. It is for students who for reasons beyond their control are unable to complete their work on time. All outstanding incomplete work (including grades of I, X, and blank/no grade) must be completed and posted to the official transcript prior to the conferral of the degree. It is strongly recommended that students who are granted an Incomplete limit their total number of credits to 18 credits (including credits for the Incomplete course and any new courses) during the semester when they are finishing an Incomplete. Students who receive an I grade have up to the end of the ensuing year to complete the course, unless a shorter interval is specified by the instructor. If the incomplete is not made up during the specified time or the student repeats the course, the I is changed to an F. (See Rule 34.) Faculty are required to submit an Incomplete Grade Report (IGR) to the departmental office with every I given. The IGR must specify conditions and requirements for completing the incomplete, as well as any time limitations less than one year.

90i. **W.** This is the term to be used if the student has filed, in the Registrar's Office, official notice of a withdrawal from the course prior to the end of the ninth week, or withdrew passing in accordance with Rule 68, or withdrew from the university in accordance with Rule 70.

90j. **X.** Denotes continuing progress toward completion of special problems, research, thesis, doctoral dissertation (i.e., 499, 600, 700, 702, 800), or flexible enrollment courses; X grades are converted to S or to a letter grade upon satisfactory completion. All outstanding incomplete work (including grades of I, X, and blank/no grade) must be completed and posted to the official transcript prior to the conferral of the degree. An X grade may also be used when no final grade is reported due to instructor's illness or absence.

90k. **U.** (Unsatisfactory.) Student work demonstrates unsatisfactory performance, failed examination, or unfulfilled requirements in courses numbered 700, 702, and 800.

90l. **Z.** (Failure due to discontinued attendance without withdrawal) The grade is failing. Instructors must submit a last date of attendance for each Z grade. (The date for a last assignment submitted or a last exam taken may substitute for a last date of attendance.) The Z grade is an internal grade. The Z grade appears on the transcript as an F grade and acts as an F grade.



**Rule 104. Academic Complaint Procedures**

Students having complaints about instruction or grading should refer them first to the instructor. If the complaint is not resolved, then the student may refer the complaint in writing to the chairperson of the department in which the course is offered by the end of the last day of the following semester (excluding summer term). The chair's decision shall be rendered within 20 business days. After the chair's decision, the student or the instructor may appeal to the Dean's Office. Complaints must be presented in writing to the dean within 20 business days of the chair's decision. The written statement should describe the complaint, indicate how it affects the individual or unit, and include the remedy sought from the dean. The decision of the dean is the final step and shall be made within 20 business days. The University Ombudsman is available at any stage for advice or assistance in resolving academic complaints. At the urban branch campuses, the procedure is identical except that the academic area coordinator shall substitute for the department chair and the campus chancellor dean shall substitute for the college dean. Note: Though chairs and deans (and academic area coordinators and campus chancellors) may resolve complaints about instruction and grading, they may not change a final grade without the consent of the instructor. Only the University Grade Appeals Board may change a final grade without instructor consent. See Rule 105(a).

**Rule 105. Administrative Changes to Final Grades**

a.) ~~b.)~~ University Grade Appeals Board. If a chair, dean, Graduate School Dean, Academic Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or designee, or ombudsman finds that a change of a final grade is warranted for any reason other than academic dishonesty, any one of them may refer the case to the University Grade Appeals Board for review within one semester of the posting of the grade (excluding summer term). Students may not take a grade appeal directly to the Board. (Students follow the academic complaint procedures, as presented in Rule 104.) In the case of graduate students, the Dean of the Graduate School may refer a case to the board upon completion of the Graduate School appeal process, ~~as published in the Graduate School Bulletin.~~ The University Grade Appeals Board shall have jurisdiction over decisions of any faculty member and/or administrator on matters of University course grading appeals. The decision of the board is final and not subject to further appeal.

b.) In the extraordinary circumstances when an instructor has failed to respond within 20 business days according to Rule 104, then the chairperson of the department may change a final grade.

c.) a-) University Academic Integrity Hearing Board. If an allegation of academic dishonesty is not resolved between the instructor and the student, then the case is referred to the University Academic Integrity Hearing Board. The case must be referred to the board within one semester (excluding summer term). The University Academic Integrity Hearing Board shall have jurisdiction over decisions of any faculty member on matters of grading related to academic dishonesty cases. The decision of the board is final and not subject to further appeal.

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