

400 GRADING POLICIES: M.S.W. HANDBOOK

400 Grading Policies

Using the official school grading policy, instructors are expected to assign grades on the basis of a critical and fair assessment of the student's work. It is the right and obligation of the instructor to assign the grade they deem appropriate.

Students are responsible for attending to academic progress criteria, monitoring their own learning performance against those criteria, identifying problems in meeting course criteria, and initiating timely efforts to address them.

400.1 Grades for Coursework

All courses will be graded on a pass, marginal pass, fail basis. Any student who fails a course must repeat and pass that course in order to graduate from the program; no course may be re-taken more than once.

Grades are kept indefinitely as part of the student's permanent record (Section 900.2).

A student's performance in each course shall be assessed on the basis of the grading criteria specified in the course syllabus. Criteria often cited for evaluation include:

- mastery of course content
- ability to conceptualize
- timeliness of work
- class preparation
- critical thinking
- integration across the curriculum
- creativity and originality
- writing skills
- professional conduct in the classroom

Letter grades are assigned in accordance with the categories defined below:

- P – Pass: performance reflecting an acceptable mastery of graduate level course content.
- MP - Marginal Pass: performance of a marginal quality, falling below the mastery of graduate level course content. A marginal pass in this system should be viewed as the equivalent of the work in the "C" category in an A to F grading system.
- F – Fail: performance that fails to demonstrate creditable mastery of graduate-level course content.
- I – Incomplete: used for cases in which the student has not completed all assignments for a course but has obtained written permission, following the established procedures, for additional time to complete those assignments. The grade of Incomplete is a temporary grade designation.
- W – Withdrawal: used when a student withdraws from a course, following all established procedures (see section 300.4).

400.2 Grading

The Field Education in Social Work courses (SOCW 580 and SOCW 680) are graded on a Pass/Marginal Pass/Fail basis. Credit is granted only if the entire course is completed satisfactorily. No partial credit is granted. The grade for the course is assigned by the Director of Field Education and is based upon the written evaluations submitted by the field internship supervisor as well as feedback from the FFA, obtained from rubric-based evaluations of demonstrated competencies on assignments and in the field internship.

400.3 Grade Changes

Normally, grades may not be changed after they have been submitted by the instructor to the Registrar's Office. Under rare circumstances, an instructor may submit a written request and explanation to the Chair and Associate Dean for a change of grade.

400.4 Appeal of Grade

A student who receives a grade that they believe violates the School's stated grading policies may petition the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (ADAA) for a review of the grade. The ADAA's decision shall be final. The following procedures regarding appeals shall govern.

- The petition must be submitted to the ADAA in writing no later than seven (7) days following the publication of the grade by the Registrar's Office.
- If the ADAA determines that the School's grading policies have been followed, the student shall be so notified and the grade will stand.
- If the ADAA determines that the School's grading policies have not been followed, the ADAA, in consultation with the appropriate sequence chair, will grant to the student a remedy which may include an opportunity for re-examination, submission of another paper/assignment, or the possibility of re-taking the course.
- Should, however, the ADAA determine that the circumstances were ambiguous in regard to the School's stated grading policies, the ADAA will refer the matter to the Academic Progress Review Committee, which will consider the case and make a recommendation back to the ADAA.

400.5 Good Academic Standing

Students are expected to maintain Good Academic Standing throughout their time in the program. Students lose Good Academic Standing by:

- receiving more than 2 MPs or 1 F in required courses in any given year. A third MP or an F in a required course in any year will result in Academic Probation; see section 800.5).
- violating any personal or professional standards as outlined in Section 702.2.2A

Failure to maintain Good Academic Standing puts awarded Merit Scholarships (if any) in jeopardy; discretion to continue/discontinue a merit scholarship will be determined by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

Students are expected to receive a Pass or Marginal Pass for all courses. Any course which a student fails must be retaken; no course may be retaken more than one time. Once a course has been successfully retaken and passed, that F will no longer count against the student's being in good standing.

400.6 Failing Grades

400.6.1 Failing Grade in Field or Practice Courses

Failure in either a required practice course (SOCW 500, SOCW 501, SOCW 600 or SOCW 601) and/or field education will initiate a meeting of the student's learning progress by the practice sequence Chair and Academic Adviser or Director/Associate Director of Field Education with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. A determination will be made as to whether informal problem-solving or an Academic Progress Review is the appropriate next step.

400.6.2 Options for Making Up Failing Grades

When a student fails a course, several options exist for making-up the credits from the failed course:

A course can only be taken one more time to pass.

- Retake the failed course (mandatory for required courses)
- Retake the failed course voluntarily (for elective courses)
- Make up the credits by taking and successfully completing another elective (an option for courses failed in second summer)
- Re-do the course through an independent study, pending approval of the Chair for the sequence in which the failed course is located and of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (ADAA)
- Make-up the failed course at another institution, upon prior approval of the course by the ADAA.