

COLUMBUS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL

GRADING AND ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Effective October 9, 2017

Procedure 5-09 (D)

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(1) GRADING SYSTEM: ACHIEVEMENT AT COLUMBUS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- (a) Letter grades based on student achievement will be assigned to students enrolled in individual degree-credit courses by the faculty member assigned responsibility for that course. The assigning of the grades shall be in accordance with the standards of expected achievement of the College and each course.

GRADING DEFINITIONS	GRADE NOTATION	GRADE POINTS per Academic Credit Hour
High Achievement	A	4.0
Good Achievement	B	3.0
Satisfactory Achievement	C	2.0
Below Satisfactory	D	1.0
Failing	E	0.0
Satisfactory	S	0.0
Unsatisfactory	U	0.0

- (b) An individual who is not enrolled in a course at the time of grade reporting is not eligible to register for the course and receive a grade after the course ends.

(2) ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT: STANDARDS OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

- (a) Satisfactory academic progress is defined as progress in credit courses taken at the College that result in the credit hour to grade point average (GPA) ratio as specified:

GPA CREDITS	CUMULATIVE GPA
1-16	1.50 OR HIGHER
17-32	1.60 OR HIGHER
33-43	1.75 OR HIGHER
44-54	1.90 OR HIGHER
55 HOURS OR MORE	2.0 OR HIGHER

- (b) Programs may have additional academic progress requirements for students which must also be followed, as outlined in student handbooks and program guidelines.

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(3) OTHER GRADE NOTATIONS

Other grade notations that may be given by an instructor or administrator include:

OTHER GRADE NOTATIONS	NOTATION	DEFINITION
Non-Traditional Credit	N	A student may receive non-traditional credit when life experiences provide knowledge of a subject equivalent to that of a required course in accordance with evaluative procedures adopted by the College. A notation of "N" will be entered on the student's academic transcript. This credit is not calculated into the student's GPA.
Proficiency Examination	X	A student may receive credit for a course by successfully completing a proficiency examination in accordance with procedures adopted by the College and the academic department in which examination credit is earned. Proficiency exams will be given when it is evident that previous study or experience warrants. A notation of "X" will be entered on the student's academic transcript. The credit for this course will not be calculated into the student's GPA.
Withdraw	W	A withdrawal before 20% of a course has elapsed is not recorded on the permanent grade transcript. A withdrawal after 20% and before 61% of the course has elapsed is recorded as a "W." Students cannot withdraw from a course if 61% or more of the course has elapsed. The credit for this course will not be calculated into the student's GPA.

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Administrative Withdrawal	AW	<p>A withdrawal that requires a petition and documents extenuating circumstances for approving the course withdrawal past the 61% deadline. The credit for this course will not be calculated into the student's GPA.</p> <p>This process may be used by dean level or higher administrators to procedurally drop a student from a course(s) due to College error or other situations.</p>
Incomplete	I	<p>When circumstances beyond the control of a student prevent the completion of course requirements, the student may make a request to the instructor for an Incomplete (I) in the course. The student must arrange with the instructor specific procedures for fulfilling the course requirements. Course work must be completed within six (6) weeks after the beginning of the next semester. If the course work has not been satisfactorily completed in the specified time, the "I" will automatically be changed to an "E."</p>
Audit	R	<p>Students must declare their preference for audit at the time of registration, and no later than the fifteenth (15) day of the semester. Some courses may be subject to College approval to audit. Students shall pay regular fees for this course. No credit may be earned or claimed, nor will proficiency credit be given. The student will understand this course is to be taken for information only. The course may be taken at a later date for credit. An "R" is not calculated as part of the GPA.</p>
Fresh Start	Z	<p>Grades that are approved to be deleted from the academic transcript for Fresh Start will receive a notation of "Z" on the transcript. Grades of "Z" will not be calculated into the student's GPA.</p>

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(4) TRANSFER GRADE NOTATIONS

Transfer	K KD	A student may receive credit for a course taken at another institution of higher education. A minimum grade of "D" must have been earned in the course in order to permit its transfer. In the case of an earned grade of "D" the letter "K" followed by the letter grade of "D" will be recorded on the student's transcript for each course in which transfer credit is awarded. "K" grades will not be calculated into the student's GPA. The student will still need to meet College prerequisites for courses.
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(5) GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

- (a) The basis for determining scholastic standing is the GPA. The GPA is computed by:
 - (i) Multiplying the grade points for the letter grade earned (A, B, C, D, E) by the number of GPA credits for the course;
 - (ii) Adding the grade points earned in all courses taken;
 - (iii) Dividing the sum of the grade points by the total number of GPA credits.
 - (iv) Grade notations of S, U, N, X, W, AW, I, R, K, KD and Z are not used to calculate the GPA.
 - (v) The grade a student earns for a developmental course will be calculated into the total GPA, but not into the graduation GPA.
- (b) All credit courses taken by the student at the College will be included as part of the student's permanent record and used to calculate the student's cumulative GPA.
- (c) Students transferring from one degree program to another shall have only those credit courses applicable to the student's new degree program considered in the calculation of the GPA or GPAs used to determine graduation eligibility.

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(6) GRADE REPORTING

- (a) Faculty will report grades in accordance with prescribed deadlines.
- (b) Once a grade is assigned to a student for achievement in a course, it can be changed (higher or lower) only when there has been an error in evaluating or entering the grade.

If it is obvious to the department chairperson or dean that a clerical or data entry error has been made, they may order the grade corrected, with the concurrence of the instructor of record, unless the instructor of record is no longer with the College and/or unavailable. Until an official grade change has been submitted to the Office of the Registrar, a grade assigned by the instructor of record shall be assumed correct and of full effect.

(7) GRADE GRIEVANCE

- (a) The purpose of the grade grievance procedure is to provide a method of recourse to students who reasonably believe that a final course grade was assigned in error.

This is intended for students who believe the instructor made an error in computing the final grade, evaluated the student using different standards than applied to others in the class, or failed to follow the grading policy as stated in the course section syllabus.

- (b) The College will maintain a Grade Grievance Committee whose purpose is to determine if a grade grievance appeal is warranted, in accordance with Procedure 5-09 (D) (7) (a), and facilitate the grade grievance hearing panel appeal process. The committee is composed of thirteen (13) members, four (4) of whom are faculty members from the Arts and Sciences Division, four (4) of whom are faculty members from the Health and Human Services Division, four (4) of whom are faculty members from the Business and Engineering Division, and one (1) of whom is a faculty representative from the Columbus State Education Association (CSEA).

Committee members are chosen by the dean of the respective division. Committee members will serve a term of three (3) years, with approximately one-third of the members rotating off the committee each year after the second year. Three (3) committee members, one (1) from each division, are appointed to serve as co-chairpersons by the division deans.

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(8) GRADE GRIEVANCE PROCESS

- (a) When a student's final grade has been posted to his/her transcript, and the student believes that an error in evaluating or recording a grade has occurred, the student must first contact the instructor no later than the end of the second week of the semester following the posting of the grade. If the instructor of record is no longer affiliated with the College, the student shall contact the department chairperson or his/her designee.

After discussion with the student, the instructor of record will determine whether or not an error in grading has been made and will communicate his/her decision to the student and department chairperson within five (5) business days of the student contact.

If the instructor agrees that an error in grading has occurred, the instructor must authorize the Office of the Registrar to change the grade on the student's transcript.

- (b) If the instructor disagrees that an error has been made the instructor has five (5) business days to notify the student. If the student remains dissatisfied with the instructor's reasoning, the student must complete and submit a Grade Grievance Form and supporting documentation to the department chairperson or designee within seven (7) calendar days of notification from the instructor. If the instructor does not respond within five (5) business days, the student has an additional seven (7) calendar days to complete and submit a Grade Grievance Form. When submitted, the form must include a written statement from the student clearly stating why the disputed grade should be changed along with documentation supporting the student's claim. After consulting with the instructor and student, the department chairperson or designee must communicate to the student and instructor his/her decision within four (4) business days.

When extenuating circumstances prevent a student from appealing a grade within the required timeline, such appeals will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the co-chairpersons of the Grade Grievance Committee. Such circumstances may include extenuating personal or family emergency, active military duty, changes in work schedule that the College was unable to accommodate, or other special circumstances.

- (c) If the chairperson upholds the awarded grade, the chairperson informs the student that they may appeal the decision to the Grade Grievance Committee.

The chairperson submits the Grade Grievance Form and supporting documentation to the Grade Grievance Committee for a possible hearing.

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- (d) The Grade Grievance Committee co-chairpersons will review the documentation and determine whether or not the grievance warrants a formal hearing panel and communicate their decision to the student, instructor and chairperson.
- (e) If a hearing panel is warranted, a hearing panel will be formed to review the grievance. The hearing panel will be comprised of three (3) faculty members:

The Grade Grievance Committee co-chairpersons will select two (2) committee members from the Grade Grievance Committee, one of whom will chair the hearing panel. The third faculty member on the hearing panel will be from the department in which the grievance originated and chosen by the department chairperson.
- (f) The student may be accompanied at the hearing by a College official (faculty, administrator or full-time staff) to provide personal support in a non-speaking role.
- (g) The hearing panel shall consult with both the instructor and the student, separately, at a time agreed upon by the hearing panel, the student and the instructor, to determine the validity of the grievance. The student and instructor are encouraged to use this opportunity to provide written and verbal information regarding the grade grievance to the panel. The hearing panel will rule upon the validity of the grade grievance based on this information. If the instructor is no longer affiliated with the College, the department chairperson or designee may meet with the hearing panel in lieu of the instructor.
- (h) After consideration, the hearing panel shall inform both the student and instructor of the hearing panel's decision and submit a report of its findings to the department chairperson either confirming the student's grade remains as assigned by the instructor or asserting the grade be changed. In the latter case, the department chairperson will implement a change of grade to the Office of the Registrar.
- (i) The decision of the hearing panel is final and may not be appealed. Minor changes to this procedure which do not unreasonably prejudice the parties shall not be grounds to invalidate the process.

(9) CLASS RECORD

- (a) Class records will be maintained on file in the department. At the end of each semester or term the class record will be submitted to the department chairperson or his/her designee.

In accordance with other procedures or guidelines such as those required for accreditation or certification some departments may require attendance or other records to be submitted along with the class record.

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- (b) The class records will be maintained on file by the College while any student is actively enrolled and for six (6) years after the student has graduated or is no longer actively enrolled.

(10) COURSE WITHDRAWS

- (a) A student may process a withdrawal in person, by phone, or electronically. Appropriate information is to be supplied by the student.
- (b) The instructor's permission is not required to drop or withdraw from a course; however, the decision should be discussed with an academic or faculty advisor to determine its effect on the student's educational program, and with a financial aid advisor and/or veterans' affairs representative to determine its effect upon financial aid awards and/or further entitlement.
- (c) If a student has registered for a course and wishes to withdraw from the course without having the course appear on the permanent academic transcript with a grade of "W," the course must be dropped before 20% of the course has elapsed. A withdrawal before 20% of a course has elapsed is not recorded on the permanent grade transcript.
- (d) If a student wishes to withdraw from a course after 20% and before 61% of the course has elapsed, a grade of "W" will be given and the course will appear on the permanent academic transcript. The credit for this course will not be calculated into the student's GPA.
- (e) Students cannot withdraw from a course if 61% or more of the course has elapsed.

(11) ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWS

- (a) After the deadline for withdrawing from a course for a given semester, students who meet one or more of the following criteria can petition for administrative withdrawal from one or more courses. Those criteria must be documented and may include extenuating personal or family emergency, active military duty, changes in work schedule that the College was unable to accommodate, or other special circumstances.

Unsatisfactory performance, non-attendance, neglects to withdraw within the posted deadline, non-extenuating circumstances, or the failure to make up incompletes will be denied. If the student has already received a grade of A, B, C, or S in a course, the student is not eligible to apply for an administrative withdrawal. The instructor of record will be notified and offered the option to provide additional information regarding the request for administrative withdrawal.

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- (b) Administrative withdrawal petitions can be submitted to the Office of the Registrar for up to 24 months from the end date of the term for which administrative withdrawal is being sought. Administrative withdrawal petitions submitted after this time will not be considered.
- (c) The Administrative Withdrawal Review Committee considers petitions for administrative withdrawal submitted by students. The committee will be composed of one (1) faculty member, one (1) staff member, and one (1) academic administrator. The committee will render a decision approving or denying the petition. Approved petitions will be notated on the student transcript with an “AW” and may not subsequently be reversed.
- (d) Approved petitions for administrative withdrawal do not resolve students of the responsibility to pay fees in accordance with the procedures of the College. Other College department petitions may also be pursued, but are independent of this process.
- (e) Approved petitions for administrative withdrawal do not absolve students from following specific program requirements.
- (f) Petitions denied upon initial review may be appealed in cases where additional information or documentation can be provided by the student. Administrative withdrawal appeals must be received in the Office of the Registrar before the deadline indicated in the administrative withdrawal denial letter.
- (g) An Administrative Withdrawal Appeal Committee reviews appeals submitted by students that are denied in the administrative withdrawal request process. Administrative Withdrawal Appeal Committee membership is separate from membership on the Administrative Withdrawal Review Committee. The Appeal Committee will be composed of one (1) faculty member, one (1) staff member, who is a member of Counseling Services, and one (1) academic administrator. Decisions made by the Administrative Withdrawal Appeal Committee are final.
- (h) This process may be used by dean level or higher administrators to procedurally drop a student from a course(s) due to college error or other situations.
- (i) Applications for and documentation supporting administrative withdrawal petitions will become and remain a part of the student’s permanent academic record.

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(12) ACADEMIC STANDING

A student's academic standing is determined by his/her progress in credit courses taken at the College that meet the College Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (see Procedure 5-09 (D) (2) (a)).

(a) Academic Warning

A student whose term GPA is less than 2.000 will be placed on academic warning.

(b) Academic Probation

A student who is beyond his/her first semester and whose cumulative GPA is below that designated by the College Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress will be placed on academic probation. The student will have 24 additional credit hours (over two or more semesters) to raise his/her cumulative GPA to that designated by the College Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress. The student will be restricted from registration activity including adding or dropping classes until he/she meets with an academic advisor.

Alternatives to meeting with an academic advisor may be available for students based on an individual student's needs as determined by the advisor.

(c) Academic Dismissal

A student will be academically dismissed from the College if after being placed on academic probation and registering for 24 additional credit hours (over two or more semesters), the student's cumulative GPA remains below the designated College Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress.

A student who is academically dismissed from the College will not be permitted to enroll the following semester. If the student has already registered for the next semester, his/her courses will be dropped and the student will not be permitted to attend.

The student may petition for readmission according to College procedures.

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(d) Readmission (1st Dismissal)

A student petitioning for readmission must submit a Petition for Academic Readmission Form, prior to the semester for which the student seeks readmission. At least two (2) College reviewers will determine conditions under which the student may return. One (1) reviewer must be an academic advisor; the second must be the student's academic department chairperson or designee.

For undeclared, transient, transfer, and pre-health students, the second reviewer will be an academic advisor, administrator of Advising Services, or their designee.

If a student is readmitted to the College, the student then is able to schedule classes and pay fees. The student must make satisfactory progress in accordance with the College Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress and meet the conditions as specified on the Petition for Academic Readmission Form.

The entire readmission process (including all needed signatures) must be completed prior to the semester for which the student seeks readmission. Readmission dates are published in the College catalog. The readmitted student must make satisfactory progress in accordance with the College Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress and meet the conditions as specified on the Petition for Academic Readmission Form.

(e) Academic Review (2nd Dismissal)

A student will be placed on academic review if after being dismissed from the College, both the student's term and cumulative GPA fall below the designated requirement. A student placed on academic review will not be permitted to enroll the following two (2) semesters. If the student has already registered for the next semester, his/her courses will be dropped and the student will not be permitted to attend. The student may petition for academic review according to College procedures.

(f) Dismissal after Academic Review (3rd Dismissal)

Failure to satisfy the requirements of the Academic Review Board will result in a third (3rd) academic dismissal. A student dismissed for the third time may apply for readmission after they are separated from the College long enough to meet the required time of non-attendance condition of the Fresh Start Rule.

Upon a second or any subsequent dismissal, students must appeal to the Academic Review Board for readmission. Students must submit a Petition for Academic Review Form to the Dean of Enrollment Services or his/her designee.

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The Dean of Enrollment Services or his/her designee will chair and convene an Academic Review Board. The Academic Review Board will be a standing committee which meets as needed at least once per semester. The Academic Review Board will review student petitions (explaining the situation leading to the additional dismissal), as well as supporting documentation and students' verbal explanations. Following its review and consideration of the information, the board will determine whether another readmission is warranted. Four (4) members present shall constitute a quorum. The decision of the Academic Review Board will be final.

The entire readmission process (including all needed signatures) must be completed prior to the semester for which students seek readmission. Readmission dates are published in the College catalog.

(g) Notification of Academic Status

Students will be sent an email notifying them of the status of academic warning, probation, or dismissal, with the explanations of available support services.

(13) HONORS

- (a) To recognize outstanding scholastic achievement, a Dean's List is compiled each semester. To qualify for the Dean's List, a student must complete a minimum of six (6) credit hours and earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher in that semester. Only courses providing College credit will be included in the calculation of the GPA. No student is eligible for the Dean's List who has a grade notation of "I."
- (b) All students completing their degree program with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above will graduate with honors, which will be noted in the graduation program and on each graduate's diploma.
- (c) The honors graduates are divided into three (3) groups. Cum Laude graduates earn a 3.500 – 3.799 cumulative GPA; Magna Cum Laude graduates have attained a 3.800 – 3.949 GPA; Summa Cum Laude graduates have achieved a 3.950 – 4.000 GPA.
- (d) In each graduating class, a class valedictorian and salutatorian are awarded special honors. The class valedictorian is the student with the highest GPA who has completed the greatest number of credit hours at Columbus State Community College. The class salutatorian is the student with the next highest GPA who has completed the greatest number of credit hours at the College.

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(14) FRESH START RULE

The Fresh Start Rule is intended to help a student who was unsuccessful in his/her previous academic attempts. A student who earned below-average or failing grades at Columbus State who leaves and later returns to the College may petition under the Fresh Start Rule to have selected courses in which he/she earned a D, E, or U, removed from his/her Columbus State academic record. The following conditions must apply:

- (a) The student must not have attended the College for a minimum twenty-four (24) consecutive months prior to returning to the College for additional coursework.
- (b) Since his/her return, the student must have completed a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours earning grades of “C” or better, or “S” (satisfactory). The number of credit hours reflecting withdrawals (W or AW) may not exceed the number of credit hours completed at the time the petition is filed. Transfer credit may not be used in meeting the minimum credit hour requirement.
- (c) At the time the petition is filed, all grades earned since returning to the College must be “C” or better, audit (R) and/or “S.”
- (d) Credit earned at another institution may not be applied to the requirements of application of this procedure.
- (e) This procedure may not be applied retroactively upon completion of a certificate program with more than twelve (12) credit hours or an associate degree at the College.
- (f) Deletion of the grade of “D” from the transcript will result in the deletion of credit earned for the course. The student is required to satisfactorily complete the course(s) for which the “D” grade(s) and credit was deleted in order to reestablish credit for the course(s). At the time the student requests application for this procedure, he/she may choose to exempt specific course(s) for which a grade of “D” was received.
- (g) Non-traditional credit (N) or proficiency credit (X) may not be subsequently granted for courses deleted from the transcript through this procedure.
- (h) This procedure may be applied only one (1) time for each student.
- (i) This procedure applies only to students who remain actively enrolled in the courses petitioned for deletion through the end of the semester. Students whose failing grades were the result of suspending attendance without officially withdrawing, and who have had extenuating circumstances, may pursue the administrative withdrawal procedure.

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- (j) To utilize this procedure, the student must have met all financial obligations to the College.

Fresh Start petition forms shall be available from the Office of the Registrar. Completed petitions are to be submitted by the student to the Office of the Registrar for review by the Registrar.

Petitions and documentation supporting application of this procedure will become and remain part of the student's permanent academic file. Approved application of this procedure will result in the failing (E), unsatisfactory (U), and non-exempted below-average (D) grades being deleted from the academic transcript.

A notation of (Z) shall appear on the transcript indicating application of this procedure. The student's grade point average will be recalculated accordingly.

Academic status will be determined according to the standards in effect at the time of application of this procedure.

- (k) In those instances in which the student's petition is denied by the Registrar, the student may appeal the decision by requesting, in writing, a review by an appeals committee. The request must be submitted to the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Marketing Communications. The Vice President will chair and convene an appeals committee. The appeals committee will review the petition, its supporting documentation, and consult with the Registrar. The student may also make a verbal presentation to the committee. Following its review and consideration of this information, the appeals committee will make a decision either sustaining or overruling the Registrar's decision. The decision of the appeals committee will be final.
- (l) Issues relative to the refunding of fees, effects upon financial aid status, and other related considerations are to be resolved through respective procedures which exist for the purpose of such policy resolution.
- (m) In the event the application of this procedure is subsequently discovered to have been based upon erroneous, inaccurate, or untruthful information supplied by the student, the deleted grades will be reinstated and the academic status will revert to the original on the transcript. Corrected transcripts will be issued by the College to known recipients, and program and degree completions certified as an outcome of the application of this procedure will be revoked. The student will also be subject to disciplinary action by the College.

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(15) REPEATING COURSES

- (a) Only the most recent course grade will be considered in the GPA. The repeated course grade, as well as the initial course grade, will be maintained as part of the student's permanent record.
- (b) A student must repeat a failed course to earn a passing grade to satisfy graduation requirements. Once issued, the repeated course grade will replace the previous failing grade in computing the student's GPA. The initial grade will continue to appear on the student's transcript.
- (c) If a student has failed or withdrawn (E or W as a course grade) a course twice, the academic dean or his/her designee may require additional restrictions upon third and subsequent attempts to repeat the course. The dean may also require academic or faculty advisor intervention for the student. The student will be blocked from registration into the course until meeting with the academic or program advisor to develop a plan for success. The advisor may or may not lift the block based on evaluation of the student's academic success plan.
- (d) If the student is permitted to enroll in the course a third time and fails or withdraws (E or W as course grade), the student will not be permitted to repeat the course at Columbus State.

(16) REPORTING GRADES

Grades earned by students for their achievement in individual degree-credit, general studies, and non-credit courses, as well as credits earned by transfer, examination, or non-traditional credit, will be made available to students each semester.

(17) TRANSCRIPTS

- (a) Official transcripts of grades will be made available to students and graduates upon request in accordance with procedures adopted by the College and in accordance with College policy and federal and state statutes and regulations.
- (b) Official transcripts may be requested by the student electronically through the approved third-party vendor.
- (c) The student's accounts must be paid in full and any record holds resolved before transcripts are released.

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- (d) Official transcripts will be sent to the student or any third party designated by the student.

(18) PLACEMENT TESTING - READING

- (a) A student who places into reading must register for the appropriate level course in the first term of enrollment.
- (b) A student who places into the intermediate reading course must earn an “A” to be exempt from taking the advanced reading course.
- (c) A student who earns a “B” or “C” in the intermediate reading course must enroll in the advanced reading course in the subsequent semester of enrollment.
- (d) A student who earns a “D” or “E” in either intermediate or advanced reading course must repeat the course in the subsequent semester of enrollment.

Last Effective Date(s): August 31, 2015; August 29, 2012; October 15, 2011; September 22, 2010; September 24, 2008

**July 30, 2019: Administrative changes made reflect title and process changes.*

**December 20, 2019: Administrative changes made to reflect academic status notification process.*