

December 2018

TO: Faculty in Arts, Sciences and Engineering
FROM: Jeffrey Runner, Dean of the College
RE: Assignment of Grades and Related Matters

This memo summarizes the current regulations about the assignment of grades in the College. Please make special note of the items below. Additional information on each of these is available in the remainder of the memo.

- **The deadline for submitting grades for all students in all courses is December 26th. It is critically important that grades are submitted on time, as delays may cause administrative difficulties for students, including around financial aid.**
- The faculty's rule is that no exams of any kind may be given during the reading period. Although we discourage the practice, non-comprehensive exams may be given during regular class times in the last week of classes.
- Please review the AS&E Academic Honesty Policy as it relates to final examinations and course grades (<https://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/>). Additional information can be found in the academic honesty section below and in the attached statement on reporting guidelines.
- Please check with my office if you have any questions about the propriety of assigning any particular grade. In particular, please note the policies around withdrawal (W), incomplete (I), and non-attendance (N) grades.

Academic honesty. I ask you to make every possible effort to assure that grades are earned honestly. One substantive component of the Honesty Policy is that instructors require students to write and sign an Honor Pledge on every examination. Helpful information for instructors, including a flow chart, may be found here: <https://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/instructors.html>.

Please prepare, monitor and grade final examinations in such a way as to discourage improper conduct, including following the proctoring guidelines found here: http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/assets/files/ProctoringGuidelines_12_11_2015.pdf. You may need to pay special attention to seating and proctoring and may want to have students sign in. Instructors can assign seating for the fifteen largest lecture halls using the randomized seat assignment tool found here: <http://www.rochester.edu/college/itresources/classrooms/assigned-seats.html>.

You may ask students to write their examinations in ink, so that there is less likelihood that students will present modified examinations as evidence that their grades should be higher. Instructors can prohibit students from having cell phones, tablets, and laptops with them (e.g., on their desks or in their pockets) during exams. (The memo entitled "[Electronic Devices in Exams](#)" contains more complete information.)

Please review the attached statement describing the procedures of the Board on Academic Honesty. If you suspect a student of dishonest behavior, you must report the student to the Board on Academic Honesty. You may not punish the student by assigning a lower grade without proper communication with the Board. If you report a case of suspected dishonesty to the Board, enter an "N" on the roster for that student until the Board informs you of its findings in the case. If you have any questions, please call Professor Elaine Sia, Chair of the Board, at 275-9275, or Dean Nick Vamivakas, in the case of an incident involving a graduate student. See the Academic Honesty website at www.rochester.edu/College/honesty/ for further information.

Online grading. Instructions for grading online can be found at <http://www.rochester.edu/registrar/access.html>

Deadline for submission of grades. I urge you to plan your grading so as to make it possible for you to submit grades online as early as you can. Deadlines for submitting grades follow. **Any requests for an extension of time should be**

addressed to Alan Czaplicki (alan.czaplicki@rochester.edu) in advance. Instructions for online grading and UR ACCESS plus! can be found at <http://www.rochester.edu/registrar/access.html>.

- A. Grades for all students must be submitted **no later than Wednesday, December 26th at 4 p.m.**
- B. Supplemental grade forms or grade changes made after 4 p.m. on December 26th will not be accepted by the Registrar. They must be sent to the Dean's Office (Lattimore 317, or by email).
- C. Please do not leave town until you have submitted your grades. *College rules require that grades be submitted before leaving campus after the semester ends.*

Grades authorized for use by faculty in evaluating performance of undergraduate students. The quality of performance of each individual student is to be reflected in the assignment of a letter grade to each student. The letter grades that are available for use by the faculty are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, and E. (NOTE: The letter grades D+ and D- are not authorized in Engineering courses.) The letter grades S and F are **NOT** to be assigned by the faculty. These letter grades are assigned by the Registrar when the student has elected the S/F option.

Instructors have an obligation to assign a range of grades to reflect accurately the quality and amount of work completed by the students. Students should know the basis on which grades are assigned. Grades are best assigned on an absolute basis in accord with the objectives of the course and expected standards of performance, rather than on a relative basis, using some "curve" or predetermined distribution. Instructors have an obligation to make a careful evaluation of assignments and examinations.

Students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities who require an extension of the time limit for taking an examination should have contacted the Office of Disability Resources in Dewey 1-154 during the semester to verify their eligibility for accommodations. If Disability Resources determines that the student is eligible for an extension of the time limit for taking an examination under the Americans with Disabilities Act, then instructors will be informed of this need for an accommodation and they are obligated to comply. Instructors may at their discretion extend the time limit for other students when circumstances warrant.

Grades assigned for administrative purposes with undergraduate students.

- A. The use of "W". A student who has officially withdrawn from a course will be assigned a letter grade of "W" by the Registrar. Please do not enter a "W" on the online roster. If you think the student has withdrawn, and therefore you cannot assign a grade, enter an "N".
- B. When to use an "N."
 - If the student *never appeared in your class.*
 - If the *student attended but did not complete the course and did not arrange for an "Incomplete"* with you. (When a student's work is not complete, do NOT award a final grade, "E" or otherwise.) If you later decide to award a grade, the Dean's Office will assign an "I" to indicate, on the student's advising record, that the work was completed late. Students who do not make satisfactory arrangements with you for completion of the course will, after appropriate warning, be given the failing grade of "E."
 - When instructed by the Board on Academic Honesty. (For questions, contact the Secretary of the Board at college.honesty@UR.rochester.edu.)
- C. The use of "I". The letter grade "I" *should be given only when there are circumstances beyond the student's control*, such as illness or personal emergency that prevented the student from finishing the course work on time. Faculty regulations require that an agreement, signed by the instructor and student, be submitted to the College Center for Advising Services in Lattimore Hall for each grade of "I." Forms for this purpose are available in the Center for Advising Services. If a form is not submitted, the student will be informed that the "I" grade will convert to an "E" unless a signed agreement is forthcoming. The advising record will show both an "I" and the earned grade whenever students fail to complete all requirements by the end of the semester in which the course is taken. Only the final earned grade (but not the "I") will appear on the official transcript.

- D. Writing Deficiency. Please check, in the “WD” column on the final roster, the names of students whose writing you regard as deficient. Students will be notified of this assessment and encouraged to use the services of the Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program.

Grades assignable to graduate students. The grades available for graduate students are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, E, I, and W. The letter grade S may be used in a graduate course, providing that all students are assigned grades on the basis of S or E. The letter grade of F is not used at all with graduate students.

Posting grades. Posting of grades is strongly discouraged. Students are able to see their grades online at the close of the grading period, December 27th. Students who complete evaluations for all courses taken will be able to see their grades as early as December 12th. However, if you decide to post your grades, make certain that code numbers are used (not Social Security numbers or University ID numbers). Instructors who post grades via computer printouts may want to produce the list in numeric rather than alphabetic order. Additional information related to confidentiality of graded material may be found at: <http://www.rochester.edu/registrar/grading/>.

Changes in grades.

No grade change may be made after your grades are submitted to the Registrar without the explicit approval of the Dean’s Office. **Proposed grade changes are sent in every instance to Alan Czaplicki (alan.czaplicki@rochester.edu); they are approved only if the instructor affirms in writing that an error (in computation or otherwise) has occurred.** The purpose of this policy is to reduce student demands on individual faculty members to change their evaluation of the quality of that student’s work. You should inform students of this policy when students ask you to change a grade or to reread an examination. If you agree to reconsider a grade or reread an examination, you should get a written statement from the student explaining the exact nature of his or her request and the basis for the request.

ACADEMIC HONESTY REPORTING GUIDELINES

As members of an academic community, students and faculty assume certain responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is to engage in honest communication. Academic dishonesty is a serious violation of the trust upon which an academic community depends. Incoming undergraduate and graduate students are informed of the existence of the Policy prior to arriving for Orientation and they sign off on their acknowledgement and acceptance of its provisions. Discussions of the meaning of academic honesty are held during Orientation. Ignorance of our community's standards is not considered a valid excuse or defense for misconduct.

Cases of Suspected Academic Dishonesty

The following is a summary of the procedures to be followed, but the complete Policy and electronic versions of the reporting forms are available on the Academic Honesty website: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty

Any instructor who discovers, or who is informed of, a probable case of academic dishonesty should contact the Chair of the College Board on Academic Honesty, Professor Elaine Sia, at 275-9275 or the Academic Honesty Liaison at 275-9049, to learn how similar cases have been handled in the past. For cases involving graduate students, the instructor must consult with the AS&E Dean of Graduate Studies, Nick Vamivakas, at 275-4053. The instructor should then discuss the matter with the student in a confidential setting. If after meeting with a student about a suspected violation, the instructor is convinced that no violation was committed, the incident no longer counts as a suspected violation and does not need to be reported.

In all other cases, the instructor *must* choose either to attempt to resolve the matter directly with the student by using one of the two "Instructor Resolution" forms or to submit it, unresolved, on a Board Resolution form. Once notified of the charges, the student will not be allowed to drop or withdraw from the course or select the S/F option. If a grade must be reported pending the outcome of a case, the student should receive an "N" until the case is concluded.

In instructor resolution processes, the instructor discusses the evidence with the student, suggests an appropriate consequence as discussed with the BAH chair, liaison, or Dean, and directs the student to review the Policy online. The student then has 48 hours to decide whether or not to accept responsibility and to accept the suggested consequence. If the student so admits and accepts, then the instructor and student both sign a completed Instructor Resolution Warning Letter (for undergraduate students only) or Instructor Resolution with Penalty form. The instructor submits the completed form either electronically or by campus mail. If Board records show that the student has a prior finding of responsibility for academic dishonesty, the instructor will be informed and will need to complete and submit a Board Resolution form as second cases are resolved through Board hearings. Instructor Resolution forms must be approved by the BAH chair or the AS&E Dean of Graduate Studies to complete the process.

If the instructor chooses not to pursue the matter directly with the student, or if the student declines to accept responsibility and/or to accept the penalty suggested by the instructor, then a written report of the incident, including all pertinent evidence, must be forwarded to the Chair of the BAH via a Board Resolution form. The written report should also include any honesty guidelines noted in relevant course materials such as the syllabus.

The BAH has the responsibility for reviewing all cases of suspected academic dishonesty by College students or in College courses. In cases in which the instructor and the student do not resolve the case, or the Board does not approve their resolution, the Board hears the case. It determines if academic misconduct has occurred, determines the penalty, and reports its decision to the student and to the reporting person. If the Board determines that the alleged misconduct in any way involves sponsored research (including federal training grants), threatens the integrity of the scientific method, or compromises the creation of new knowledge (including original art, scholarship and research), the matter will be referred to and will follow the procedures outlined in the Policy on Misconduct in Scholarship and Research in the *Faculty Handbook*.

After receiving an unresolved case, the Chair will notify the student in writing. Hearings are scheduled in a timely manner, usually not more than a month after the report is received, except when school breaks cause a delay. While a case is pending, the student should continue in the course, completing all work as required. When the hearing is scheduled, the student is notified. The person who made the initial allegation will not be present at the hearing, but should be available to reach by phone during the hearing.

Disposition of the Case After the hearing, the Chair of the Board or the Dean of Graduate Studies reviews and signs the decision letter, which specifies either a finding of responsibility with an appropriate penalty, or an exoneration of the charges, and transmits the letter to the student and the reporting person. Undergraduate students may appeal the Board's decision to their Dean, and graduate students to the Provost.

The complete Academic Honesty Policy and other relevant information is available at <http://www.rochester.edu/College/honesty/>