

GRADING SYSTEM AND POLICIES

Grading System

Permanent Grades

For graduate coursework, PCS assigns letter grades corresponding to a 4-point scale as follows:

| Letter Grade | Numerical Equivalent | Grade Description |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| A | 4.000 | Outstanding |
| A- | 3.750 | Excellent |
| B+ | 3.500 | Very good |
| B | 3.000 | Good |
| B- | 2.750 | Pass |
| C | 2.000 | Minimal pass |
| F | 0.000 | Fail |

There are no grades of C+, C- or D.

Fordham University does not allow for grade replacement. All courses taken and all grades earned will be reflected on the transcript and included in GPA calculations.

Other permanent grades include:

| | |
|-----|------------|
| AUD | Audit |
| W | Withdrawal |

Temporary Grades

| | |
|-----|--|
| ABS | Missing required or final coursework, or absent from final examination |
| NGR | No grade reported |
| INC | Incomplete coursework requirements in addition to the final examination |
| IMS | (Incomplete Due to Military Service) When a member of the Armed Forces (including reserve components) receives orders to perform a period of service (i.e. active duty, inactive duty training, or state service), the temporary grade of IMS is assigned by the Office of Academic Records. Students who receive a grade of IMS will have the opportunity to complete the given term after the period of service. Service members must provide a copy of their military orders to the Office of Military and Veterans' Services (veterans@fordham.edu) prior to receiving an IMS grade. |

Temporary grades automatically changed to permanent grades following the deadlines detailed in the graduate program's academic calendar.

All graduate students in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.000 to remain in good academic standing.

Absence from Final Examination

Students who are absent from a final examination must have a valid reason for their absence, or their grade for the examination will be assigned as a grade of F. Students should contact the program director to discuss the reason for the absence prior to the examination. The reason

provided must be supported by documentation—for example, an official letter from a physician.

If a student possesses a valid reason for her/his absence, and receives approval, the instructor will record an interim grade of "ABS." The program director will assign a new date to take the exam.

Upon completion of the make-up examination, the grade of "ABS" will be removed and replaced by a permanent grade. If the make-up examination is not completed by the specified deadline in the PCS academic calendar (generally four weeks after the officially scheduled final examination) the "ABS" is automatically changed to "F." Only in extraordinary circumstances will this administrative "F" be changed, pursuant to the approval of the dean.

No Grade Reported

The notation "NGR" is used by the Office of Academic Records to indicate that the instructor reported no grade for a student. Instructors may fail to submit a grade if the student is missing assignments.

An "NGR" automatically becomes an "administrative F" at the same time as uncleared "ABS" or "INC" grades. Thus, if students receive "NGR," they should contact the instructor immediately.

Incomplete Coursework

It is expected that the requirements and assignments for a graduate-level course will be completed by the date listed for the final examination in that course.

The status of "incomplete" is assigned **solely in the event of circumstances outside of the student's control**, and will not be approved for students simply wishing to revise graduate work or to be allowed additional time to complete assignments.

Applications for incomplete grades should be made on the official Incomplete Request Form and shall be made no later than the date of the last day of class prior to the final examination in that course.

Requests for an incomplete grade must be made by filling out the Request for Grade of Incomplete Form, and they require approval by the instructor, program director, and the dean. Documentation of the reason should accompany each request.

Students who are on academic probation or those who have had several previous incomplete grades should submit documentation demonstrating that the circumstances surrounding the request for an incomplete are outside of the student's control, along with their application.

At the time of submission of grades, the instructor will assign a grade of INC to the student. The grade INC indicates that the student has not completed all required coursework. The instructor must detail the course requirements that need to be met and associated deadlines.

Upon completion of all required course requirements, the instructor submits a Change of Grade form to the dean's office. When approved, the INC will be removed and replaced by a permanent grade. If all course requirements are not completed by the date specified in the graduate program's academic calendar for removal of incompletes, the INC will become a permanent "F."

Permission to extend an INC beyond the incomplete deadline stated in the academic calendar requires the written approval of the instructor or program director, and the dean, and reasons offered in support of the application must be substantial. If, following approval of a deadline extension, the requirements are still not met by the new deadline, the

grade of INC is automatically changed to an "F" (called an "administrative F"). Only in extraordinary circumstances will an administrative F be changed, pursuant to the approval of the dean and the provost.

Change of Grade

Student grades will be changed only under extraordinary circumstances. This policy also applies to administrative grades.

To change a grade, the instructor must submit a petition to the dean, specifying the reason for the change. If approved by the dean, the grade change request will typically be forwarded to the relevant University office for final approval. If either office deems the reason for change insufficient, the grade will not be changed.

Grade changes are primarily approved for reason of a clerical error; grade changes for extra work or revised work after the end of the semester are not permitted.

Grade Appeal Process

This policy applies to both undergraduate and graduate courses in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies.

Only final grades may be appealed. If students receive a final grade in a course that they wish to appeal, they must appeal the grade prior to the completion of the next semester in which the course was taken—even if they are not in attendance; otherwise, the appeal will not be considered. Once students have graduated and have a degree awarded by the University, a grade appeal will not be considered.

Complete the Grade Appeal Form

Students who believe they have received a grade that does not fairly reflect their academic performance must consider the following before beginning the process of a grade appeal:

1. Double-check the calculation of the final numerical grades for the class based on the percentages each exam/project was worth, as stated in the instructor's syllabus.
2. Objectively assess your attendance record. As partners in learning, students are expected to attend class and contribute.
3. Objectively assess the quality of class participation. If a student's grade appeal is based solely on a difference of opinion about class participation, it will be virtually impossible to resolve this issue, as only the instructor will be able to evaluate this.
4. Compare all of the above with the original class syllabus to determine whether all requirements have been fulfilled, as stated by the instructor.
5. Check that the work submitted met the requirements enumerated by the instructor. For example, if a student submitted a well-written and well-researched paper on the life of Plato, but the instructor specifically asked for a comparative study of the ideas of Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates, the grade will not be reviewed since the student did not follow instructions.

If, after all considerations, a student determines that a grade appeal is warranted, then the following process should be followed:

Level 1: Faculty

Students should contact the instructor to discuss any concerns about their grade **prior** to beginning any grade appeal process. Students should contact the instructor by the email provided on the syllabus to detail the reason for the grade appeal. The student should initiate contact within 10

days of the posting of the final grade for the semester in which the course was taken.

Level 2: Written Appeal to the PCS Grade Appeals Committee

If all attempts to contact the instructor have failed, the student has successfully contacted the instructor in writing and subsequent communication did not resolve the dispute by clarifying the basis on which the grade was given, or the instructor clarified the basis on which the grade was given and the student still disagrees with the instructor's assessment, the student may begin the formal grade appeal process by submitting the appeal to the associate dean for academic programs. The appeal must be received within 10 days of the faculty's response or within 10 days of when the email was sent if no response was received.

Note: A disagreement about the subjective evaluation of the student's performance in the class is **not** grounds for appeal. It is assumed that the instructor, as the subject-matter expert, is the one most qualified to evaluate any and all work submitted. Therefore, in order for an appeal to be considered, students must demonstrate an objective discrepancy between the way in which they were evaluated and the grading policies and procedures outlined in the syllabus.

By submitting a grade appeal, the student acknowledges that, upon review and investigation, the determination may result in a final grade:

- That may be the same as that of the original grade.
- That may be higher than the original grade.
- That may be lower than the original grade.

The associate dean for academic programs will advise the student on what materials they must submit to start the appeal process with the PCS Grade Appeals Committee. The grade appeals committee convenes once a semester, approximately six weeks after the first day of classes, to review all outstanding grade appeals. Students will be notified in writing of the decision within 30 days of the meeting of the committee.

Level 3: Written Appeal to the Dean

If, after receiving the decision in writing from the PCS Grade Appeals Committee, the student remains in disagreement, the final step is to submit an appeal in writing to the dean of the School of Professional and Continuing Studies **within 10 days of the date on the letter**. Grade appeals must include:

1. A letter to the dean indicating why the decision rendered by the PCS Grade Appeal Committee is being appealed.
2. A copy of the decision letter received from the PCS Grade Appeal Committee.
3. A copy of the supporting materials submitted to the PCS Grade Appeals Committee.

The dean will only consider appeals based on a lack of due process or evidence that relevant information was not taken into consideration. The final decision rendered by the dean will be the grade that appears on the student's official Fordham University transcript. The student must be prepared for a final decision that keeps the original grade, is a higher grade, or lowers the original grade, since **no further grade appeals of the same course at the University will be considered**.

These instructions supersede any prior versions of the PCS grade appeal process.