Curriculum, Enrollment, and Graduation

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Catalog and Curriculum

Catalog in Effect

MSU-Bozeman undergraduates may elect to follow the catalog in effect when they first enroll at MSU, or any subsequent catalog, if there has not been a break of more than one academic year in their attendance and if they fall within the six-year catalog limitation policy. Undergraduate students transferring from any regionally accredited United States college or university may follow the MSU catalog which was in effect when they first entered the institution from which they transferred, or any subsequent catalog in effect prior to graduation, provided there has been no break in attendance. The six-year catalog limitation policy applies to transfer students, also.

MSU undergraduates who change majors may follow the catalog in effect when they began their freshman year at MSU or any subsequent catalog in effect prior to their graduation, provided there has been no break in attendance of more than one academic year. In these instances, too, the six-year catalog limitation policy applies. In either case (transferring or changing majors), it may be necessary to make course substitutions within the department curricular requirements, due to changes in tabulations from year to year; students should consult with their academic advisors about this. The curriculum advisor and department certifying officer make the official check on degree-specific requirements for graduation. The Registrar provides the final check on university requirements: CORE, total credits earned, grade point, cumulative grade point average earned at MSU, as well as university-wide requirements.

Six-Year Catalog Limitation Policy

Each MSU-Bozeman catalog covers a specific time period beginning fall semester of the first year and ending the following summer session. From the time a student enters Montana State University, he or she has six years to fulfill the curricular requirements stated in the catalog in effect when he or she entered. If a student does not complete the requirements in six years, he or she must select a subsequent catalog. This policy applies to all students, including undergraduates who change curriculum and transfer students.

Change of Major/Curriculum

A Curriculum & Catalog Changes form may be obtained from the Registrar’s Office, the college dean’s office, or online. A change of curriculum becomes official when the form is filed with the Registrar’s Office. Some programs require specific licensure. To inquire further, please visit our website (https://www.montana.edu/stateauthorization/) that lists the majors impacted.

Second Major

A student may declare a second major by completing a Curriculum & Catalog Changes form. A student may earn a second major by fulfilling the curricular requirements of that major in addition to the requirements of the primary major. The student is not required to complete additional core requirements for the second major since these requirements will be fulfilled with the primary major.

The department of the second major will assign an advisor to assist the student in meeting all the second major’s requirements. The second major will be posted on the student’s transcript at the time of graduation and upon verification by the Registrar that all curricular and procedural requirements have been met.

Second Bachelor’s Degree: Second Associate’s Degree.

To receive two baccalaureate degrees a student must complete all of the requirements for each degree including but not limited to Core/Gen Ed, all major requirements, Capstone Coursework, and 27 of the last 30 credits in residence. In addition to meeting all of the courses required in both curricula the student must complete 30 credits beyond the larger number of credits required for either of the two degrees he or she is seeking. Fifty-one credits (forty-two for the first degree; nine for the second) of the total minimum number of credits required for both degrees must be upper division.

To receive two associate degrees a student must complete all of the curricular requirements for each degree including any in-residence restrictions (generally at least 15 credits). Additionally, a student must complete 15 unique credits; these are credits that are not counted toward the completion of the first degree. Generally, a student who has met the requirements for both associate degrees who has at least 75 credits the last 15 of which are completed at Montana State University could be considered for a second associate degree.

Minors

A student must declare his or her intentions of seeking a minor(s), by submitting a completed Curriculum & Catalog Changes form prior to submitting a graduation application. Minor’s must be linked to a baccalaureate degree. A student must be seeking or have already received an MSU baccalaureate degree to declare a minor(s). The minimum number of credits required for a minor is twenty-one, with nine of those being upper-division credits. A student may not receive a minor in the same discipline as their major(s). There are two categories of minors:

Teaching Minors

Teaching minors must be approved by the certifying officer in the Education Department.

Non-Teaching Minors

Non-teaching minors must be approved by the certifying officer in the related department.

Registration

Dates for Registration

The dates for registration are published in the Registration Handbook, which is printed prior to registration and is available online, via MyInfo, or from the Registrar’s Office. See the Registration Handbook for detailed registration instructions and for fee payment dates.

A currently enrolled student in good standing will receive registration information, including alternate PIN, from his or her advisor. Before
meeting with an advisor, all students should review their degree progress using DegreeWorks (through MyInfo), plan a schedule of classes by consulting the MyInfo Schedule of Classes, and make an appointment to meet with an advisor. Additionally, all outstanding fees and holds must be resolved before registration, and students must pay all new fees at the scheduled time.

**Academic Advisors**

Academic advisors are available to help students plan their programs of study and make informed choices about courses. Although students are fully responsible for their academic decisions, they should recognize the advantages of close cooperation and understanding between themselves and their advisors. Because academic advisors are usually associated with a students' major department or field, students should contact their major departmental offices or the offices of their college deans to determine the names and locations of their advisors. Some programs—University Studies, Native American Studies, University Honors, pre-health professions, WWAMI—offer additional advising assistance.

**Classification of Students**

- **Freshman:** an undergraduate student who has earned less than thirty credits.
- **Sophomore:** an undergraduate student who has earned thirty to fifty-nine credits.
- **Junior:** an undergraduate student who has earned sixty to eighty-nine credits.
- **Senior:** an undergraduate student who has earned ninety or more credits.
- **Post-Baccalaureate:** an undergraduate student who has already earned one or more baccalaureate degrees and is seeking another.
- **Non-Degree Undergraduate:** a student taking courses for special interest, but not planning on using the credit toward a degree.
- **Non-Degree Graduate:** a student with at least a baccalaureate degree but not seeking another degree.
- **Graduate:** a student who has at least a baccalaureate degree and has been accepted into The Graduate School.

**Drop/Add Regulations and Procedures**

**Add Procedure**

Students may add classes online using MyInfo through the 5th day of the semester. After the 5th semester day, all adds require the instructor’s and the advisor’s signatures on an Add/Drop form. After the 10th semester day, all adds require the additional signature of the Assistant Dean of the student’s major curriculum on an Add/Drop form.

**Drop Procedure**

Students may drop classes online using MyInfo through the 10th day of the semester. After the 10th semester day, all drops require the instructor’s and the advisor’s approval communicated through signatures on an Add/Drop form. Between the 15th and 60th semester days, students may continue to drop courses, with the approval of the instructor and of the advisor, though the student will receive a “W” (withdrawn) grade.

**Drop for Extraordinary Reasons**

From the 60th day of the semester through the 70th class day (generally Friday before finals), students may only drop for extraordinary reasons. To complete this process the student is required to document the extraordinary reasons—such as a family or personal medical injury or other personal hardship that prevent the student from executing the withdrawal at the normal time, submit that documentation along with an advisor and instructor approved (signed) Add/Drop form to the Dean of the College of their primary degree. Upon signature of the Dean, the form, together with appropriate documentation, must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar for review and approval by GARC and recording by the Registrar.

During the pandemic, Montana State University considers that COVID-19 might influence a student’s post-deadline decision to drop a course. Please visit the COVID-19 Addendum (http://catalog.montana.edu/curriculum-enrollment-graduation/spring-2020-addendum/) for more information pertaining to those specifics.

**Drop/Add (courses with alternative start/stop dates)**

Courses within a specialized part of term follow the drop/add calendar specific to that part of term. Students registered in courses with multiple parts of term or in courses that fall outside a specified part of term will follow the drop/add calendar for the “full semester.” However, students are not allowed to drop any course after the final scheduled day (including exams) for any course.

Add/Drop forms are available online or through the Office of the Registrar. If the student has confirmed attendance or paid fees and wishes to drop all courses, a University Withdrawal must be obtained through the Office of Student Success. Graduate students seeking a complete withdrawal must contact The Graduate School. Each student is responsible for fees upon registration. Contact the Student Accounts Office for partial-refund dates.

**Taking Courses for Zero Credit**

**Auditing Course**

Registered students may, with the permission of the instructor, audit a course and earn zero credit. A student must submit a signed Add/Drop form, by the 10th semester day, indicating the course is for audit. Auditors pay the same fees as students enrolled for credit.

**Absence from Classes**

When students enroll in a course, they enter a contractual agreement with the instructor for the duration of the course, and both the student and the instructor are expected to honor the specified terms of that agreement. It is important, therefore, for the student to understand the attendance requirements in each course. The instructor should communicate these requirements during the first or second class meeting in writing via the course syllabus.

Absences from classes are handled exclusively within the purview of the individual instructor. If a student has an accident, falls ill, or suffers some other emergency over which he or she has no control, the student should gather available documentation (e.g., copies of repair or tow bills, prescriptions, accident reports, or statements from physicians) to show to instructor. In some instances, the student may wish to petition the instructor for I grades.

The provisions for making up missed class work may vary from one instructor to another. Most but not necessarily all instructors provide for some opportunity to make up missed work: for example, if a student is absent from campus to participate in a university-sponsored event. Students involved in such activities should advise their instructors of these events in advance and determine what arrangements are available to make up missed class work.

**Class Rolls**

During the third day of University instruction and thereafter, those students who have registered but have not attended class may be required by the instructor to drop the course when space and/or equipment is limited and other students have requested to add that class. Students are not automatically dropped; this action requires a student-initiated drop/add form.
University Withdrawal

If a student must withdraw from all classes after he or she has confirmed attendance or paid fees, he or she must initiate the withdrawal through the Office of the Registrar. Graduate students must initiate the withdrawal through the Graduate School.

Students who withdraw before the end of the fifteenth day of instruction will not receive grades for any registered courses. Thereafter through the last day of instruction a grade of W shall be assigned in all courses for which the student is registered unless an appeal is approved by the Dean of Students authorizes otherwise. The Dean of Students Office also indicates the official date of the university withdrawal in these instances.

Students who leave the campus without withdrawing through regular channels or who withdraw late without extraordinary reasons will receive F grades in all course work for that semester.

Retroactive University Withdrawal Policy

A retroactive university withdrawal may be an option for students who were unable to complete a standard university withdrawal during the semester of their departure from the university. A retroactive university withdrawal is an extraordinary remedy that is available only for the reasons set forth below.

Students who are granted a retroactive university withdrawal receive W grades in all courses for the semester in which they apply for the retroactive withdrawal. Requests for retroactive withdrawals must be submitted no later than three years from the last day of the semester for which the withdrawal is sought.

Students who leave the campus without applying at the Dean of Students Office for a university withdrawal during the semester of departure or who fail to withdraw through regular channels or who fail to withdraw for extraordinary reasons may apply for a retroactive university withdrawal only if they can provide evidence of the following:

1. The student had a debilitating illness or injury that significantly limited his/her capacity to withdraw in a timely manner; or
2. The student was forced to leave the University abruptly due to a health or safety emergency within his/her immediate family; or
3. The student has been recommended to apply for a retroactive university withdrawal by the University Scholastic Appeals Board and meets the other criteria for a retroactive university withdrawal.

For undergraduate students: To apply for a retroactive university withdrawal, students must submit a written request to the Dean of Students, Strand Union Building (SUB) Room 174, no later than three years after the last day of the semester for which the withdrawal is sought. The student must include his/her name and student identification number (GID), the semester for the retroactive withdrawal requested, and supporting documentation to verify claims of illness, injury or emergency which precluded the student from applying for a university withdrawal during the semester of departure.

The Dean of Students will review the written request and the documents provided and consult with appropriate administrator(s), faculty, Department Head and/or college Assistant Dean, then render a decision on the request for withdrawal. If the request is granted, the Dean of Students will assign the official date of withdrawal and notify the student in writing. If the request is denied, the student may further appeal in writing to the Vice President of Student Success (VPSS). The VPSS will review the request and supporting documents and render a decision. The VPSS will notify the student of the decision in writing. The VPSS’S decision is the final decision of the University.

For graduate students: Students enrolled in graduate degree programs and those enrolled as non-degree graduates are subject to the same parameters and must follow the same process as described above except that the written request is submitted to the Dean of The Graduate School, Montana Hall Room 108. If the request is denied, the student may further appeal to the University Provost. The Provost’s decision is the final decision of the University.

Undergraduate Student Petitions for Registration and Reservation of Certain Courses

Generally, courses are applied to the student record associated with the academic level (undergraduate or graduate) of the student at the time the course was taken. Students may petition to reserve certain classes in a certain situation to be applied to an academic level other than their current status. For example: register for and reserve undergraduate or graduate credits for possible application to a graduate degree, register for a graduate course for use toward an undergraduate degree, register while a graduate student for use toward an undergraduate degree, register for a graduate class as a foreign exchange student with no intent to use the credit toward an MSU degree.

To reserve a course a student must complete the Petition to Reserve/Register for Credits form available through the graduate school. A successful petition must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The student is of senior or post baccalaureate standing.
2. The student has a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.25.
3. All prerequisites for the course(s) have been completed.
4. Credits reserved for a graduate degree may not exceed nine (9) in total.
5. For reserved credits to be applied to the graduate transcript the student must earn a minimum grade of a B.
6. The petition may not include any internship or independent study courses for either registration or reservation.
7. The petition is filed prior to registering for the course.

A graduate-level course approved by petition may be used either for fulfilling undergraduate or graduate program requirements, but not for both. The student must indicate on the petition form the intended use of the registered/reserved course credits.

Undergraduate senior students with financial aid should be aware that credits reserved for future application to a graduate program may affect their current financial aid eligibility.

Examinations

Common Hour Exams

Common hour exams are given during the semester for multi-section courses. Dates and times are posted online at www.montana.edu/registrar/Schedules.php. These exams take the place of one class meeting and are included in the student’s commitment to the course upon enrolling in it. For the complete Common Hour Exam Policy, please go to the Code of Conduct, Policies, Regulations, & Reports (http://catalog.montana.edu/code-conduct-policies-regulations-reports-common-hour-policy/) section of the catalog.

Final Exams

Final examinations in one-credit courses are given during regular class periods. Final examinations for all other courses are scheduled by the Registrar and published online, and may not be rescheduled or given prior to the start of the final examination period. According to University policy, the examination period is instructional time, and it is expected that some instructional use is made of this period if a final examination is not given. When a final examination is given it must be given at the time shown in the examination schedule. Exception: no formal laboratory classes are held during final examination days.
A student who has three or more final examinations on any one day should first contact the instructors of the courses to see if one exam can be rescheduled. If this rescheduling cannot be resolved, then the student should contact the assistant dean of his or her college at least one week before the beginning of final examination week to assist in resolving the conflict.

**Credits and Grades**

**Definitions**

- **Course.** A course is a unit of instruction in a subject-matter area offered in a single university semester. Resident courses (courses for which resident credit is granted) are those listed in the Schedule of Classes. Continuing education courses are arranged through Extended University. General guidelines follow:
  - **Lecture—LEC:** Presentation of course material by the instructor, utilizing the lecture method. Final Exam Assigned.
  - **Laboratory—LAB:** Instructing and supervising students in laboratory investigations.
  - **Studio—STU:** Instructing and supervising students in studio investigations. Final Exam Assigned.
  - **Recitation—RCT:** Presentation of course materials designed to involve students in recitation and/or discussion.
  - **Seminar—SEM:** Students share, with the instructor, responsibility for preparation and presentation of course material. Final Exam Assigned.
  - **Independent Study—IND:** Directed study and/or research on an individual basis, under the supervision of an instructor.
  - **Lecture/Lab Combo—LECLAB:** Combines the elements of Lecture (LEC) and Laboratory (LAB) in one meeting time. Final Exam Assigned.
  - **Credit.** A credit is the unit used in recording an amount of work and engaged effort represented in learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. Each credit hour represents a minimum of three class-oriented work hours (50 minutes of classroom instruction and an additional two hours of out-of-class engaged effort and work per student) each week during a 15-week (minimum) semester. One credit of achievement should approximate 45 hours of combined instruction and student work/engaged effort. At least an equivalent amount of work and engaged effort is required regardless of pedagogical format (lab, web-enhanced, on-line, condensed coursework, internships, studio, independent study, etc).
  - **Credit Load.** Undergraduate students who are enrolled for twelve or more credits and graduate students for nine or more credits, will be certified and reported as full-time students. Completion of a 120-credit undergraduate curriculum in four years requires students to complete an average of fifteen credits each semester.
  - **Curriculum.** A curriculum is a combination of courses that constitutes a program of study leading to the completion of an academic program.
  - **Semester.** Montana State University operates on a semester system consisting of two semesters and a summer session. The Term Calendar gives the dates of each semester.
  - **Grades.** The quality of the student’s work in each course is denoted by a letter grade according to the following tabulation. In computing scholastic averages, each letter grade is assigned a specific number of grade points for each credit. Final grades are due within forty-eight hours after the final examination in each course and are generally posted to the student record by the end of the week following finals. No grade or credit will be given to students in courses for which they are not properly registered.

**Minimum Competency Requirements**

The Montana Board of Regents has established a common policy on minimum course grades across all campuses in the system. According to the policy, a grade of C- or better is required to satisfy requirements for pre-requisite and required courses in majors, minors, and certificate programs and for all core requirements. Further, a grade of C- or better is required in all courses that will be counted toward the 42 upper-division credits required in all degrees. Courses with a passing grade of D-, D, or D+ may only be counted toward the overall 120 credit requirement. This policy creates a minimum requirement, which may be superseded by more stringent requirements within specific majors. Any such requirements are explained within the descriptions of those curricula.

**Passing Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality of Work</th>
<th>Grade Points for Each Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>Passing</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Continuing (self-paced Math, 590, 690 courses only)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Satisfactory (CEU only)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdraw</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Au</td>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>Missing Grade</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-passing Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality of Work</th>
<th>Grade Points for Each Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grade-Point Average**

The general quality of a student’s work is expressed in terms of a grade point average (GPA). Only credits taken at MSU Bozeman are used to compute the cumulative grade point average. GPA is used to determine academic standing including: University probation, suspend warning, or suspended. The grade-point average is computed by dividing the sum of grade points earned by the sum of credits carried, except that neither the credits nor the grade points shall be counted for courses passed on a pass/fail basis.

**Repeated Coursework GPA**

For repeated courses, only the most recent credits and grades received will be used in the calculation of the cumulative grade-point average, and only the most recent credits received will be included in the credits counted for graduation. However, all grades received will be listed on the transcript. Repeated courses will be noted on the transcript with an “E” (when the course grade is excluded from GPA calculation). The most recent attempt(s) at the course will be noted with an “T” and included in GPA calculation. Courses with both honors and standard course-numbers will be treated
as the same course in terms of GPA calculations and repeat processing, for
example: CHMY 151 can be replaced with CHMY 141 (and vice versa).
Excluding a grade from a previous semester does NOT affect the calculation
of academic standing for that semester. Academic standing remains as it was
originally earned.

W Grade Eligibility
After the 15th day of the semester, students may drop courses and receive
a grade of W (withdrawal) only if approved by the academic advisor and
course instructor. Approval is not guaranteed, and no refund is given. Until
one week past the last day of the official registration period for the following
semester, students use a Drop/Add form to drop courses with a W. The
W grade is non-punitive; it counts in credits attempted but not in earned
credits or in quality points toward the GPA. If a student repeats the course
in a subsequent semester, the new grade will count in the GPA but the
original W grade will remain on the transcript.

I Grade (Incomplete)
Instructors may assign a grade of “I” (Incomplete) when students have been
unable to complete their academic obligations because of circumstances
beyond their control. The University takes the position that when students
register, they commit themselves to completing their academic obligations
as their primary responsibility. Therefore, the instructor may assign an I
grade only in cases when students have suffered extreme personal hardship
or unusual academic situations.

An instructor may assign an I grade in cases of personal hardship when
students have been unable to fulfill their commitments because of illness,
death or illness in the immediate family, family emergencies, or military
orders. The Dean of Students will verify personal hardship cases at the
instructor's request. The instructor may assign an I grade to a student for
personal hardship, provided the student has completed three-fourths of the
work of the course with a passing grade. If the student has not satisfactorily
completed three-fourths of the course work the instructor must provide
written justification for assigning an I grade.

An instructor may also assign an I grade, subject to the department head's
approval, in cases when a student has been unable to complete course
requirements for reasons such as apparatus or equipment failure, death
or disease in experimental animals, delays in material shipments from
suppliers, or in other unusual academic circumstances which are clearly
beyond the student's control. In these situations, the student must have
completed three-fourths of the work of the course with a passing grade. If the
student has not satisfactorily completed three-fourths of the course work the instructor must provide
written justification for assigning an I grade.

In each instance qualifying for an I grade, the instructor must prepare an I-
Grade Authorization form. On this form, the instructor will list the makeup
requirements and the date beyond which the I will revert to a F grade.

To change the I grade after the make-up work has been completed,
the instructor will complete and submit the Grade Change available
through the Registrar's Office. Unless an alternate time is specified by
the instructor, an I grade shall be made up no later than the end of the
following semester (excluding summer session). An instructor may extend
the specified completion time by submitting the required documentation to
the Registrar's Office before the reversion grade takes effect. An I grade may
not be extended beyond one calendar year. An I grade not made up in the
prescribed length of time or within one calendar year lapses to a failure (F).

Make-Up of I Grades
An I Grade make-up is reported to the Registrar on a Grade Change Form.
No fee is charged. These grades are not included on the next semester
grades.

During the time allowed for the completion of the unfinished work leading
to the I grade, the student may have access to university resources (e.g.,
library) necessary to complete the work.

N Grade
An N grade may be assigned to students enrolled in specified continual
or on-going courses only (for example BFIN 317, 590 and 690 thesis
courses, CEEX/continuing education courses or self-paced pre-college math
courses). This grade indicates that, though students have made progress,
they have not completed the course objectives successfully. These students
must re-enroll in the course immediately in order to continue with the
course work and complete the course objectives. The N grade does not affect
the GPA.

Pass/Fail Registration
Undergraduate students may take some of their University elective courses
on a pass/fail basis subject to the following restrictions:

1. Students can elect the pass/fail option only for courses that are not
   specifically required for their academic program. Pass/fail courses
   may not be applied toward completion of Core requirements. This
   restriction does not apply to (ACT) activity courses.
2. A student may not register for more than one pass/fail elective course
   per semester, excluding one-credit (ACT) activity courses.
3. Undergraduate students may take a maximum of twelve credits of pass/
fail elective courses. This maximum does not include courses that are
   offered only on a pass/fail basis.
4. Students register for pass/fail courses in the same manner as for other
courses, but they must have written permission from their advisers,
college deans, and the instructors of the course. The Registrar has forms
for this purpose.
5. The instructor's requirement to obtain a grade of P in the course must
   be submitted with the Request for Pass/Fail form.
6. Students may only change a pass/fail registration to a regular
   registration, or a regular registration to a pass/fail registration, prior to
   the end of the tenth day of instruction. Students will follow the regular
drop-add procedures, except that students changing to a pass/fail
registration must also secure the written permission of the instructor
and adviser (see 4 above).
7. Prerequisites apply for all courses taken on a pass/fail basis.

Pass/Fail Grading
As a general policy, courses at Montana State University are graded by the
letter grades, A, A-, B+, B, etc. However, in certain courses, pass/fail grading
may be more appropriate. Courses may be offered on a pass/fail basis for all
students registered in the course, with the approval of the department head
and college dean. Courses offered on a pass/fail basis will be identified in
the Schedule of Classes. Permission to offer a course on a pass/fail basis is
limited to one academic year; if the permission is not renewed, the course
reverts to a letter-grade basis.

In pass/fail grading, passing work will receive a P grade on the student's
transcript, but it will not count in the grade point average. However,
the course credit will count toward the number of credits required for
graduation. Failing work will receive an F grade and will count in the grade-
point average.

Grade Changes
Once a grade has been reported by the instructor to the Registrar, it cannot
be changed except in case of clerical error or unless it was fraudulently
obtained. All grades and credits will stand as recorded in the Registrar's
official record if changes are not reported in writing to the Registrar within
five years of the last day of the semester in which the course was taken.
A change of final grade does not mean allowing additional time to complete the work of a course or allowing the student to submit work or to take or to retake examinations after the conclusion of the semester. A change of grade is not a substitute for an I grade when an I grade cannot be justified.

A change of grade may be made only with the approval of the department head. If the grade being changed was given more than one academic year previously, the college dean must also approve the change.

**Fresh Start Policy**
A former Montana State University undergraduate who returns to the University after a minimum absence of five years will have the opportunity to petition to begin a new cumulative (or Fresh Start) GPA as follows:

1. After returning to Montana State University, a student must complete thirty credits of academic study with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 for the new course work before petitioning for a Fresh Start GPA.
2. A student who is eligible for a Fresh Start GPA must petition for a new cumulative GPA during the semester following that in which he or she meets the requirements stated in #1.
3. A student may begin a Fresh Start GPA only once.
4. Student petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Admission and Graduation Requirements Board. The decisions of the Board will be final.
5. When the new GPA is started, all previous grades and credits earned at Montana State University are excluded; it is not possible to select some grades and credits to exclude while retaining others. Only Montana State University grades and credits will be excluded.
6. The new GPA begins the first semester the student is re-enrolled. The transcript will state that a new GPA has been started. The old grades will remain on the transcript. Although old credits will appear on the transcript, they may not be used to fulfill any University requirements.

Students wishing to petition for a Fresh Start GPA should contact the Registrar's Office to initiate the process.

**Dean's List and President's List**
Any undergraduate student who passes twelve or more college-level credits and attains a 3.50 grade-point average or better for any one semester is placed on the Dean's List. A student who receives a 4.00 grade-point average and is taking twelve college-level credits or more is placed on the President's List. Developmental courses do not count towards the twelve credits required. The names of the students making the Dean's List and President's List are announced by the Registrar at the end of each semester. These lists apply only to undergraduate students.

**Undergraduate Student Scholastic Probation and Suspension**

**Academic Probation** – Students will be placed on academic probation at the end of any semester in which their cumulative grade-point-average (GPA) drops below 2.00 on a 4.0 scale, and will be notified as part of the campus' normal grade reporting procedures and through an email from the Office of Academic Affairs.

Academic Suspension – Students will be placed on academic suspension at the end of any semester if they had been placed on academic probation during the prior semester of attendance, their cumulative GPA remains below 2.00 on a 4.0 scale, and their semester GPA is not above 2.0. If students have a semester GPA of 2.00 or above, they would remain on academic probation if their cumulative GPA is still below 2.00.

When an undergraduate student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.0, the record of the student's performance is reviewed by the University Scholastic Appeals Board, which is composed of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and representatives from the Dean of Students Office, the Office of Student Success, the Office of Disability Services, Veteran Services, the Registrar's Office, and the Office of Financial Aid. Also included are representatives from each of the Colleges (either an Assistant/Associate Dean or a Student Success Coordinator). The board meets between semesters and at other times as needed to act upon individual cases recommended for academic suspension or transfer out of a curriculum. This board has the authority:

1. to require students on academic probation to take actions that might include meeting with advisors, meeting with student success coaches, attending MSU 101 or US 101, or meeting with financial aid,
2. to suspend a student from the University for academic reasons,
3. to reinstate a student who has been suspended for academic reasons,
4. to require reinstated students to take actions that might include meeting with advisors, meeting with student success coaches, attending MSU 101 or US 103, or meeting with financial aid, and
5. to require a student to transfer out of a curriculum with the consent of both colleges involved.

The chairperson of this board will notify students placed on academic probation via their preferred email address and will notify students placed on academic suspension in writing to their permanent address and via email to their preferred email address. The designation of academic probation or academic suspension will also be noted in the student's permanent record. Semester grade reports indicate the academic standing of students, and it is the individual student's responsibility to review his or her grade report each semester.

**Appeal of Suspension**
A student who has been suspended may appeal the suspension if he or she believes there were extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control of which the University Scholastic Appeals Board was unaware when it reached its decision. Appeal forms are available from the offices of academic deans in each college and on the Office of the Provost website at [https://www.montana.edu/provost/students/appeals.html](https://www.montana.edu/provost/students/appeals.html).

**Reinstatement**
A student who was suspended for the first time may be reinstated after one semester has elapsed (exclusive of Summer Session). In order to enroll again at MSU, however, a suspended student must submit an Intent to Register form ([https://www.montana.edu/registrar/Returning.html](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/Returning.html)) to the Registrar's Office. After a second suspension, one academic year must elapse before the student will be reinstated, again with submission of an Intent to Register. Students may complete their intent to register online through their MyInfo account. Completed Intent to Register submissions must be received by the following approximate deadline dates (check with the Registrar's Office for current deadline dates).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Reinstatement</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Semester</td>
<td>August 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Semester</td>
<td>January 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Session</td>
<td>May 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who have received more than two suspensions at MSU must petition for reinstatement through their academic dean to the University Scholastic Appeals Board. Petitions are available from the academic deans and must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines listed above.

Reinstated students will be on “academic probation” or “suspend reinstated” when they re-enroll. When students achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or above, the “academic probation” designation is removed and the student is
allowable number of credits in each category. Independent Study in each rubric will count toward graduation. No more than six credits of 492 Special Topics 291 or 491 combined in Special Topics and Individual Problems Courses requirements. Note: The curricula for specific majors may have more stringent degrees.

Credits Earned for Graduation
Credits earned for graduation include the total number of credits for which passing grades (A through C-, and P) have been received in courses numbered 100 or above. If students repeat courses in which they have passing grades, the most recent grade will be the effective grade for graduation. A course taken by an undergraduate or a non-degree student may not later be repeated and applied toward requirements for a graduate degree. For further credit-use restrictions, see Special Topics and Individual Problems, or refer to the Course Descriptions for maximum allowable credit limits placed on certain courses.

Upper-Division Credit Requirement
A minimum of forty-two credits for the first degree and at least nine additional credits for the second degree must be earned in courses numbered 300 and above (upper-division courses). As required by the Minimum Competency Requirements, a grade of C- or better is required in all courses to be counted toward the upper division credits required in all degrees.

Note: The curricula for specific majors may have more stringent requirements.

Special Topics and Individual Problems Courses
No more than twelve credits of Special Topics 291 or 491 combined in each rubric will count toward graduation. No more than six credits of 492 Independent Study in each rubric will count toward graduation. Some departments have established lower limits than these, and students are responsible for checking course listings to ensure that they do not exceed the allowable number of credits in each category.

Transfer Student Credit Requirements at MSU-Bozeman
To graduate with a baccalaureate degree from Montana State University, transfer students must earn not less than thirty MSU credits and a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA, as well as meet the curriculum requirements for a degree. Furthermore, twenty-three of the last thirty credits earned to meet graduation requirements must be MSU credits. For an associate degree, transfer students must earn at least 15 credits at MSU with a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA.

Correspondence Credits and Extension Courses
No more than thirty semester credits earned by correspondence, extension, or continuing education from accredited colleges or universities may be counted toward graduation. However, special circumstances may warrant consideration, and approval of such courses is on a case-by-case basis.

Advanced Standing
Under certain circumstances, if students can demonstrate mastery of course work not taken at the University, they may receive advanced standing and University credit for the course. Two mechanisms are available for obtaining advanced standing:

1. College Level Examination Program (CLEP). Montana State University awards credit toward graduation for successful performance in certain Subject Examinations of the College Level Examination Program conducted by the College Entrance Examination Board. Students may arrange to take these examinations on campus or at designated centers throughout the country. Passing grades are determined by Montana State University. These students receive credit and a P grade on the transcript for scores above the passing level; scores below the passing level are not entered on the transcript. CLEP examinations may not be used to replace a grade of a course previously taken. University Core requirements cannot be satisfied by the CLEP procedures. In general, a department will not give a challenge examination if a CLEP examination is available for the same course.

2. Advanced Standing by Challenge. Challenge provides the opportunity to earn college credits and grade points without formal course enrollment. A student who has completed the work of a college course on his or her own initiatives and time, may, with the approval of the student’s academic advisor, the instructor, the department heads, and the college deans, take a comprehensive examination in the subject matter of the course. Performance in the examination will become the basis for a grade in the course, and the results will be recorded on the student’s permanent academic record at the end of the term which the challenge exam is taken. Official permission forms should be secured in advance from the Registrar’s Office. Students must be registered at MSU when they take the challenge examination, and they must have passed ten credits of regular course work at Montana State University before the challenge grade will be recorded on their permanent records.

The challenge examination for credit in a course which is a prerequisite to a second course must be taken before enrollment in the second course. Students who have enrolled in a regular or an extension course and received a grade (other than that of W) or have taken a regular or an extension course for zero credit may not challenge that course. Challenges are not permitted in any 290, 291, 292, 490, 491, 492 and 498 courses.

A fee of $30 per credit is assessed and must be paid prior to taking the challenged exam.

The following list gives the names of the CLEP examinations and the course for which credit is given:
A student must be registered at Montana State University the semester of his or her graduation. If the student is not required to take any courses at Montana State University during the final semester, he or she must process an “in absentia” registration and pay a registration fee of $30 before the end of the third week of the semester he or she expects to earn a degree.

**Graduation Registration Requirements for Baccalaureate Degrees**

Graduation Registration Requirements

- **A student must be registered at Montana State University the semester of his or her graduation.**
- **If the student is not required to take any courses at Montana State University during the final semester,** he or she must process an “in absentia” registration and pay a registration fee of $30 before the end of the third week of the semester he or she expects to earn a degree.

**Arrangements for this registration must be made by the student with the Registrar.**

Graduate students must have the written permission of the Graduate Dean to register in absentia.

Enrollment must coincide with the university’s offering of a specific credential. A student must enroll and complete at least one course for credit during the time a credential is offered in order to receive that credential.

Retroactive awarding for a newly approved and offered credential when all credits earned preceded that offering is not permitted.

Except for certain pre-professional curricula (e.g., pre-medicine), twenty-three of the last thirty credits earned to meet the graduation requirement must be MSU Bozeman credits. Specific majors may have program-specific requirements for courses that must be taken from MSU Bozeman to meet graduation requirements. Such requirements are clearly identified in the curriculum description for that department.
Diplomas
Diplomas are dated the last day of the semester in which the requirements for the degree are completed. Diplomas are mailed to graduates the semester following degree completion after final degree verification is complete.

Appeals of Graduation Requirements
The Admission and Graduation Requirements Committee (GARC) is composed of the Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (chairperson), the assistant dean of the college concerned, and the Registrar. This board considers appeals and/or petitions from undergraduate and non-degree students seeking waivers of established requirements in special situations.

Instructions for submitting appeals and petitions are available through the Registrar’s Office.

These submissions should be forwarded by letter to the Registrar and should originate with the student in conjunction with the student’s adviser.

Student Records
Access to student records is restricted according to the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA). For more information see www2.montana.edu/policy/family_ed_privacy_act/ (http://www2.montana.edu/policy/family_ed_privacy_act/). Questions regarding privacy of student records should be directed to the Registrar.

Name Change
Notice of legal change of name, resulting from marriage, divorce, or other reason, must be promptly filed with the Registrar. Name change forms are available from the Registrar’s Office and must be submitted with copies of a legal court document, driver’s license and Social Security card with new name before academic records can reflect any name change.

Transcript of Record
Transcripts are sent only at the signed request of the student. Transcripts may be requested online at www.montana.edu/registrar (http://www.montana.edu/registrar/) or may be requested in person at the Registrar’s Office, 101 Montana Hall, and for each transcript issued, a fee is charged. Transcript requests are generally processed within four to six business days, though at the end of the semester, additional time is needed.

If the student requesting a transcript has an outstanding debt with the University, the request will not be processed until the bill has been paid.