

# Curriculum, Enrollment, and Graduation

- Catalog and Curriculum (p. 1)
- Registration (p. 2)
- Final Week Schedule and Examinations (p. 4)
- Credits and Grades (p. 5)
- Dean's List and President's List (p. 7)
- Undergraduate Student Scholastic Warning and Suspension (p. 7)
- Credits for Degree Completion (p. 8)
- Graduation Requirement for Baccalaureate Degrees (p. 9)
- Graduation Procedures (p. 9)
- Student Records (p. 10)
- Name Change (p. 10)
- Transcript of Record (p. 10)

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## Catalog and Curriculum

### Catalog in Effect

MSU-Bozeman undergraduates may choose 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 institutionally recognized (<http://catalog.montana.edu/accreditation/>) accredited body in a United States college or university may follow the MSU catalog that 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 also applies to transfer students.

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's 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 conduct the official check on degree-specific requirements for graduation. The Registrar provides the final check on university requirements: CORE, total credits earned, term 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 with the fall semester of the first year and ending after the following summer session. From the time a student enters Montana State University, they have six years to fulfill the curricular requirements stated in the catalog in effect when they entered. If a student does not complete the requirements within six years, they must select a subsequent catalog. This policy applies to all students, including undergraduates who change their curriculum and transfer students.

## Curriculum & Catalog Change

A curriculum & catalog change may be requested online through the Office of the Registrar's Curriculum & Catalog Change ([https://www.montana.edu/registrar/curriculum\\_catalogchange.html](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/curriculum_catalogchange.html)) page. Any changes become official once the submitted online form has been processed. Some programs require specific licensure; therefore, please visit the State Authorization & Licensure Disclosure (<https://www.montana.edu/stateauthorization/>) page for a list of impacted programs.

### Major

A major is defined as the program of study a student pursues in college. A student must declare their intention to seek a major by submitting a completed online Curriculum & Catalog Change form before submitting a graduation application. While you will often have additional requirements outside of your major, the majority of the courses you take in college will relate to it. Some students enter college with a specific major in mind, while others are undecided.

### Minors

A student must declare their intention to seek a minor by submitting a completed online Curriculum & Catalog Change form before submitting a graduation application. Minors must be linked to a baccalaureate degree. A student must be seeking or have already received an MSU baccalaureate degree to declare a minor. 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. There are two categories of minors:

- **Teaching Minors:** Students must be pursuing a teaching major to pursue a teaching minor for licensing purposes. 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.

### Double Major

A double major is defined as a student who is pursuing two majors. A student may declare a second major by submitting a completed online Curriculum & Catalog Change 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.

### Double Minor

A double minor is defined as a student who is pursuing two minors. A student may declare a second minor by submitting a completed online Curriculum & Catalog Change form. A student may earn a second minor by fulfilling the curricular requirements of that minor in addition to the requirements of the primary minor. The department of the second minor will assign an advisor to assist the student in meeting all the second minor's requirements. The second minor 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.

### Dual Bachelor's Degree

A dual major means you're declaring two majors but will earn a single degree from one school. To receive two baccalaureate degrees, a student must complete all 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 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 they are 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.

#### Dual Associate's Degree

A dual minor means you're declaring two minors but will earn a single degree from one school. To receive two associate degrees, a student must complete all 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, and has at least 75 credits, the last 15 of which are completed at Montana State University, could be considered for a second associate degree.

#### Certificate of Applied Science and Associate of Applied Science Degree in the Same Subject

Students may earn a certificate and an AAS degree in the same subject. However, a certificate and an AAS degree in the same subject cannot be earned concurrently. Students may complete a certificate and an AAS degree in the same subject provided the application for graduation for the CAS is a minimum of one semester prior to the completion of the AAS degree. A certificate can be an exit point and is not required to earn an AAS degree.

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## Registration

### Dates for Registration

The dates for registration are disclosed in the Registration Handbook, which is released prior to registration and available online via MyInfo or from the Office of the Registrar. Refer to the Registration Handbook for detailed registration instructions and fee payment dates.

A currently enrolled student in good standing will receive registration information, including an alternate PIN, from their 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.

There are three categories of advisors. Students may have multiple advisors in each category but only one primary advisor.

- **Major Advisor:** Indicates the advisor associated with the student's primary major.
- **Secondary Major Advisor:** Indicates the advisor associated with the student's second major or second degree (as well as third majors or third degrees).
- **Minor Advisor:** Indicates the advisor associated with the student's minor or minors.

Additionally, one advisor will be marked as **"Primary"**. Students will only have one advisor from one of the above-mentioned categories indicated as "primary." Generally, the primary advisor is the student's Major Advisor and should be the first contact when the student is looking for a registration PIN.

Because academic advisors are usually associated with a student's 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, and WWAMI—offer additional advising assistance. Students can access DegreeWorks via MyInfo to view their advisor, degree plan, and degree requirements.

### Classification of Students

- **Freshman:** An undergraduate student who has earned fewer 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.

## Add/Drop 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 additions require the instructor's and the advisor's electronic signatures on an online Add/Drop form. After the 10th semester day, all additions require the additional electronic signature of the Assistant Dean of the student's major curriculum on an online Add/Drop form.

### Drop Procedure

Students may drop classes online using MyInfo through the 10th day of the semester. From the 10th semester day through the 59th semester day, all drops require the student to meet with an advisor who may initiate the drop process through the MyInfo advisor's portal. Any course dropped after the 15th class day will appear on the student's transcript with 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 prevents the student from executing the withdrawal at the normal time—then 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 the 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 the following reasons, specific to COVID-19, that might influence a student's post-deadline decision to drop a course:

- The student was diagnosed with COVID-19 and, due to the diagnosis, was severely ill and unable to engage academically.
- An immediate family member was diagnosed with COVID-19 and suffered an untimely death or whose illness placed an undue burden upon the student (e.g., a primary caretaker for siblings).
- The student had to be a primary caregiver of someone diagnosed with COVID-19.
- The student had an economic hardship resulting from COVID-19 directly impacting the ability to meet academic requirements.
- The student had to become a first responder due to COVID-19.
- The student had increased hours of employment to address financial hardship related to COVID-19.
- The student lost a babysitter/childcare due to COVID-19.
- The student was unable to complete online education/distance education due to COVID-19.
- The student had no WIFI access during COVID-19 due to facility closures.
- Other—must be specific and not general “stress due to COVID-19.”

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

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

Online Add/Drop forms are available here: [https://www.montana.edu/registrar/add\\_drop.html](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/add_drop.html). 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 an electronically signed online Add/Drop form by the 10th semester day, indicating that 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 into 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 in writing via the course syllabus during the first- or second-class meeting.

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

The provisions for making up missed classwork 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 classwork.

### **Class Rolls**

During the third day of university instruction and thereafter, 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 online Add/Drop form.

### **University Withdrawal**

If a student must withdraw from all classes after confirming attendance or paying fees, they 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, 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 coursework for that semester.

Please note that withdrawing from an individual semester does not mean a student is completely withdrawn from future semesters if they are already registered. For example, if a student withdraws from summer and is already registered for fall classes, the summer classes will be dropped, but the student will remain enrolled in their fall classes as long as they have registered for fall before submitting a summer withdrawal.

### **Retroactive University Withdrawal Policy**

#### **Medical Leave of Absence**

Montana State University is committed to the health, safety, and well-being of individual students and the campus community. Occasionally, students may experience situations that significantly limit their ability to function successfully or safely in their role as students. In such circumstances, students may be eligible for a leave of absence or a retroactive withdrawal. A leave of absence permits students to temporarily withdraw from the University and their studies so they may address the issues that led to the need for leave. Similarly, a retroactive withdrawal may be available for students who were unable to request a timely leave of absence but were forced to leave the University due to a health or safety emergency, or who experienced a mental or physical illness, injury, or other extraordinary circumstance.

Students who wish to explore leave of absence or withdrawal options should confer with the Office of the Dean of Students and their academic advisor. Students should discuss their situations and tentative plans with the following offices, where applicable: Office of Disability Services, Office of the Registrar, the Office of Financial Aid Services, Student Accounts, the Graduate School, and the Office of International Programs. The University also offers reasonable accommodations to qualifying students through the Office of Disability Services that may complement or affect the need for a leave of absence.

The University offers different options for a leave of absence, including voluntary medical leave, involuntary leave, and a retroactive University withdrawal.

Requiring a student to take an involuntary leave of absence is rare and only occurs when current medical knowledge or the best available objective evidence indicates that:

1. There is a significant risk to the student's health or safety or the health or safety of others, or
2. The student's behavior severely disrupts the University environment, and no reasonable accommodations are available that can adequately reduce that risk or disruption.

Students will be given the option to take a voluntary medical leave of absence before a decision is made regarding an involuntary leave of absence.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as a limitation on the Office of Institutional Equity to implement remedies or interim measures in accordance with the Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation Policy (<https://www.montana.edu/policy/discrimination/>) and Grievance Procedures (<https://www.montana.edu/equity/policies/grievanceprocedures.html>).

### Retroactive University Withdrawal

A retroactive University withdrawal may be an option for students who were unable to complete a standard withdrawal through the Office of the Registrar or the Graduate School (if applicable), or who were unable to submit a timely leave of absence request in accordance with the above policy 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 leave the campus without completing a leave of absence request or who fail to withdraw may apply for a retroactive university withdrawal only if they can provide evidence of the following:

1. The student experienced a mental or physical illness, injury, or another extraordinary circumstance that significantly limited their capacity to withdraw or request a leave of absence in a timely manner; or
2. The student was forced to leave the University abruptly due to a health or safety emergency within their immediate family, including an individual whose close association with the student is the equivalent of a family relationship, or some other type of extenuating circumstance.

### 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 their name and student identification number (GID), the semester for the retroactive withdrawal requested, and supporting documentation to verify claims of illness, injury, or emergency that 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, consult with appropriate administrators, faculty, Department Head, and/or college Assistant Dean, then render a decision on the withdrawal request. 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, render a decision, and notify the student 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 particular 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 before registering for the course.

A graduate-level course approved by petition may be used for fulfilling either 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.

## Final Week Schedule and Examinations

### Final Week Schedule

All courses adhere to a modified meeting pattern in the final week of the semester. The final week schedule for courses of two or more credits are on a rotating schedule, managed by the Registrar, and published online. According to University policy, the Final Week schedule is instructional time, and it is expected that that classes will meet during the assigned Final Week period, either for a final exam or for another instructional use.

The following classes do not meet during the final week of the semester: laboratory classes, independent study, recitation and one-credit classes. The final instructional time for these classes is in the week prior to Final Week.

A student who, on a single day during Final Week, has three or more courses scheduled or more than 5 consecutive hours of instructional time may have their schedule adjusted upon request. In this instance, the student should first contact the instructors of the courses to see if one course can be rescheduled. If this rescheduling cannot be resolved, then the student should contact the assistant dean of their college at least one week before the beginning of Final Week to assist in resolving the conflict.

If a student has a time conflict with multiple courses during Final Week, they should contact the instructors of the courses to see if one can be rescheduled. If rescheduling cannot be resolved the student should contact the Assistant Dean of their college who will work with the Registrar to determine which meeting time will need to make an accommodation.

### Common-Hour Final Exams

Common-hour final exams are occasionally given for multi-section courses during Final Week. Dates and times are posted online at [https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam\\_schedule.html](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam_schedule.html). Please note that Final Week locations for courses with common hour examinations may differ from the usual meeting location. Students should confirm with their instructor when and where to meet for their common-hour final examination.

## 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 ([https://prodmyinfo.montana.edu/pls/bzagent/bzskcrse.PW\\_SelSchClass/](https://prodmyinfo.montana.edu/pls/bzagent/bzskcrse.PW_SelSchClass/)). Continuing education courses are arranged through Extended University. General guidelines follow:
  - **Lecture-LEC:** Presentation of course material by the instructor using the lecture method. [Final Week Schedule \(https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam\\_schedule.html\)](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam_schedule.html).
  - **Laboratory-LAB:** Instructing and supervising students in laboratory investigations.
  - **Studio-STU:** Instructing and supervising students in studio investigations. [Final Week Schedule \(https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam\\_schedule.html\)](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam_schedule.html).
  - **Recitation-RCT:** Presentation of course materials designed to involve students in recitation and/or discussion.
  - **Seminar-SEM:** Students share responsibility for preparation and presentation of course material. [Final Week Schedule \(https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam\\_schedule.html\)](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam_schedule.html).
  - **Independent Study-IND:** Directed study and/or research on an individual basis, supervised by an instructor.
  - **Lecture/Lab Combo-LECLAB:** Combines elements of Lecture (LEC) and Laboratory (LAB) in one meeting time. [Final Week Schedule \(https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam\\_schedule.html\)](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/exam_schedule.html).
- **Credit.** A credit is the unit used to record an amount of work, 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 an additional two hours of out-of-class engaged effort and work per student) each week during a 15-week (minimum) semester. One credit should approximate 45 hours of combined instruction and student work/engaged effort. Equivalent work is required regardless of pedagogical format (lab, web-enhanced,

on-line, condensed coursework, internships, studio, independent study, etc.). See standard meeting patterns here: [Standard Meeting Patterns & Military Time \(https://www.montana.edu/registrar/coursescheduling\\_meetingpatterns.html\)](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/coursescheduling_meetingpatterns.html).

- **Credit Load.** Undergraduate students enrolled for twelve or more credits and graduate students for nine or more credits are certified as full-time students. Completing a 120-credit undergraduate curriculum in four years requires an average of fifteen credits each semester.
- **Curriculum.** A curriculum is a combination of courses constituting 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 provides dates for each semester.
- **Grades.** The quality of a student's work is denoted by a letter grade, each assigned a specific number of grade points per credit. Final grades are due within forty-eight hours after the final examination and are typically posted to the student record by the end of the week following finals. No grade or credit is given to students not properly registered in a course.

### Minimum Competency Requirements

The Montana Board of Regents has implemented a common policy regarding minimum course grades across all campuses in the system. As per this policy:

- A grade of C- or better is mandatory to meet prerequisites for majors, minors, and certificate programs, as well as for all core requirements.
- Additionally, a grade of C- or better is required in all courses counted toward the 42 upper-division credits required for all degrees.
- Courses with a passing grade of D-, D, or D+ can only be counted toward the overall 120 credit requirement.

It's important to note that this policy establishes a minimum requirement, and specific majors may impose more stringent criteria, which are detailed within the descriptions of those curricula.

### Passing Grades

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

## Non-passing Grades

Grade	Quality of Work	Grade Points for Each Credit
F	Failure	0
I	Incomplete	0

## Grade-Point Average

The overall quality of a student's performance is quantified through the grade point average (GPA). The cumulative grade point average is computed solely based on credits earned at MSU-Bozeman. GPA plays a pivotal role in determining academic standing, including University warning, suspension warning, or suspension. The GPA is calculated by dividing the total grade points earned by the total credits carried. It's important to note that neither the credits nor the grade points are considered for courses passed on a pass/fail basis.

## Repeated Coursework GPA

For repeated courses, only the most recent credits and grades will factor into the cumulative grade-point average calculation, and only the most recent credits will contribute to the graduation credit counts. It's important to note that all grades received will be displayed on the transcript. Repeated courses will be indicated on the transcript with an "E," signifying exclusion from GPA calculation. The latest attempt(s) at the course will be marked with an "I" and included in the GPA calculation. Courses with both honors and standard course numbers will be treated identically in terms of GPA calculations and repeat processing; for instance, CHMY 151 can be substituted with CHMY 141 (and vice versa). It's essential to recognize that excluding a grade from a previous semester does NOT impact the calculation of academic standing for that specific semester; the academic standing remains as 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 provided. Up to one week past the last day of the official registration period on the registration timetable for the following semester, students use an online Add/Drop form to withdraw from courses with a W. The W grade is non-punitive; it is considered in credits attempted but does not contribute to earned credits or quality points toward the GPA. If a student retakes the course in a subsequent semester, the new grade will be factored into the GPA, but the original W grade will persist on the transcript.

## "I" Grade (Incomplete)

Instructors may assign a grade of "I" (Incomplete) when students have been unable to fulfill their academic obligations due to circumstances beyond their control. The University maintains the position that, upon registration, students commit to completing their academic responsibilities as their primary duty. Consequently, instructors may assign an "I" grade only in instances where students have experienced severe personal hardship or encountered uncommon academic situations.

An instructor may assign an "I" grade in cases of personal hardship when students have been unable to fulfill their commitments due to 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 course work 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 due to reasons such as apparatus or equipment failure, death or disease in experimental animals, delays in material shipments from suppliers, or other unusual academic circumstances clearly beyond the student's control. In these situations, the student must have completed three-fourths of the course work 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 an "F" grade.

To change the "I" grade after the make-up work has been completed, the instructor will complete and submit the Grade Change form available through the Office of the Registrar. 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 Office of the Registrar 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 Office of the Registrar on a Grade Change form. No fee is charged. These grades are not included in the next semester's grades, and the student should NOT register for the same class in a future term to make up the "I" grade.

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 successfully completed the course objectives. These students must re-enroll in the course immediately 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 online Pass/Fail form can be found here: [https://www.montana.edu/registrar/documents/pdfs/pass\\_fail\\_form.pdf](https://www.montana.edu/registrar/documents/pdfs/pass_fail_form.pdf).
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 add/drop procedures, except that students changing to a pass/fail registration must also secure the written permission of the instructor and adviser (see point 4 above).

7. Prerequisites apply to 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 ([https://prodmyinfo.montana.edu/pls/bzagent/bzskcrse.PW\\_SelSchClass/](https://prodmyinfo.montana.edu/pls/bzagent/bzskcrse.PW_SelSchClass/)). 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 Change

Once a grade has been reported by the instructor to the Registrar, it cannot be changed except in the 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

Former Montana State University undergraduates who return to the University after an absence of two calendar years or more may petition to begin a new cumulative Fresh Start GPA. The process is as follows:

1. Re-enroll in MSU and complete a minimum of twelve credits of academic study with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher in the new coursework.
2. During the semester immediately following completion of part 1, submit a Fresh Start petition for review by the Graduation and Admissions Requirements Committee (GARC). Petitions must be submitted to GARC in the semester immediately after the successful completion of 12 credits following a return from an absence of 2 or more years.
3. GARC will review the petition and inform the student of its decision. The decision of GARC is final.
4. Upon GARC approval, cumulative GPA will be recalculated to include only coursework grades earned after re-enrollment in MSU. No grades attained prior to re-enrollment can be included in the new cumulative Fresh Start GPA. However, all credits earned will apply towards the student's graduation requirements.

Students who participate in Fresh Start can expect the following:

1. Participation in Fresh Start will be recorded on the student transcript.
2. Cumulative GPA can be reset only once using the Fresh Start Policy.

3. All courses taken at MSU with their corresponding credits and grades will remain on the student transcript, including those earned prior to re-enrollment.
4. All academic standings on the student transcript will be retained and the determination of future academic standings will be based on the entire academic record at MSU.
5. Students will be directed to their academic college and the Office of Return to Learn to receive additional guidance to promote good academic standing and potential scholarship opportunities.

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

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### Dean's List and President's List

Any undergraduate student who passes twelve or more college-level credits and attains a 3.5 grade-point average or better for any one semester is placed on the Dean's List. A student who achieves a 4.0 grade-point average while 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.

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### Undergraduate Student Scholastic Warning and Suspension

Montana State University is committed to supporting the academic success of all students and recognizes that academic underperformance is a barrier to persistence and timely degree attainment. Supports and interventions exist at the institutional, college and department levels to provide students with the skills and habits necessary for their return to good academic standing. MSU envisions the academic sanction system as a call to action for the student and institution to identify and address factors contributing to academic underperformance. We encourage students to work with MSU faculty and staff to develop a strategy to facilitate a return to good academic standing.

**Academic Warning.** Students will be placed on academic warning at the end of a fall or spring semester in which their cumulative grade point average (GPA) drops below 2.0 on a 4.0 scale if they have attempted at least two semesters of MSU coursework, excluding summer semesters. Students will be notified through an email from the Office of Academic Affairs, and the academic warning status will be placed in the student's permanent record.

**Academic Suspension.** Students will be placed on academic suspension at the end of a fall or spring semester if their cumulative GPA remains below 2.0 on a 4.0 scale when they had been placed on academic warning or suspended reinstate during the prior semester of attendance, and their semester GPA is below 2.0. If a student's semester GPA is 2.0 or above, they would remain on academic warning if their cumulative GPA is still below 2.0. Students will receive an email and written notification from the Office of Academic Affairs, and the academic suspension status will be placed in the student's permanent record.

Students with an academic standing of Academic Warning or Suspension will be required to participate in programming established by the Office of Academic Affairs.

The University Scholastic Appeal Board (USAB) reviews the records of students who meet the criteria for academic suspension. The USAB is composed of the Vice Provost for Curriculum, Assessment and

Accreditation and representatives from the Dean of Students Office, the Allen Yarnell Center for Student Success, the Office of Disability Services, Veteran Services, the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Financial Aid, Academic Advising and representatives from each academic college. The board meets between semesters and at other times as needed to act upon individual cases recommended for academic suspension. This board has the authority to:

1. Require a student on suspension to take specific actions as a condition of continuation, such as meeting with advisors, meeting with student success coaches, meeting with financial aid, or participating in course-based interventions.
2. Require a suspended student to stop out from the University for one or more semesters,
3. Reinstate a student who has been suspended for academic reasons.

Semester grade reports and the student's transcript indicate the current academic standing, and it is the individual student's responsibility to review their grade report each semester.

### Appeal of Suspension

Students have the right to appeal any academic suspension. In the appeal, the student shall explain the circumstances that they believe contributed to their unsatisfactory academic performance and shall present a plan to address them. Appeal forms are available from the offices of academic deans in each college and on the Office of Academic Affairs website at <https://www.montana.edu/provost/students/appeals.html>.

### Reinstatement

Students with an academic standing of suspension that have not enrolled in the university for any length of time must also submit an appeal to be reinstated to the university. In the appeal, the student shall explain the circumstances that they believe contributed to their unsatisfactory academic performance and shall present a plan to address them. Appeal forms are available on the Office of Academic Affairs website at <https://www.montana.edu/provost/students/appeals.html>.

For Reinstatement	Deadline
Fall Semester	August 1
Spring Semester	January 1

Reinstated students will be on academic warning or suspended reinstated when they re-enroll. When students achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above, the academic warning designation is removed, and the student is in good standing. Students must have a cumulative GPA and semester GPA of 2.0 or above to graduate.

Academic standing at the graduate level is separate from undergraduate academic standing. Please visit <http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/#policiestext> for information on graduate-level academic standing.

### Guidelines Used by the University Scholastic Appeals Board

Grade Point Average (SGPA = Semester GPA, CGPA = Cumulative GPA)

Good Standing	A student has a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 or better or is a new student (transfer students may be admitted on an academic status below Good Standing).
Academic Warning	A student's cumulative GPA drops below 2.0 or a student's cumulative GPA remains below 2.0 with a semester GPA above 2.0.

### Academic Suspension

A student was placed on Academic Warning or Suspend Reinstate in the prior semester and their next semester GPA was below 2.0.

## Credits for Degree Completion

### Credits

A candidate for the bachelor's degree must complete the minimum number of credits required for the selected degree. The minimum number of credits must be composed of credits earned for graduation. The required number of credits varies among the four-year curricula leading to the bachelor's degree.

### 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 previously earned 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 (<http://catalog.montana.edu/coursedescriptions/>) 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 for all courses to count toward the upper-division credits required for 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 12 credits of seminar 194, 294, 394 or 494 combined in each rubric may 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 no less than thirty MSU credits and maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA, in addition to meeting 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 through correspondence, extension, or continuing education from accredited colleges or universities may be counted toward graduation. However, special circumstances may warrant consideration, and the approval of such courses is on a case-by-case basis.

### Advanced Standing

Under certain circumstances, if students can demonstrate mastery of coursework 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 the grade of a course previously taken. University Core requirements can be satisfied by the CLEP procedures. In general, a department will not administer 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 their own initiative 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 in which the challenge exam is taken. Official permission forms should be secured in advance from the Office of the Registrar. Students must be registered at MSU when they take the challenge examination, and they must have passed ten credits of regular coursework at Montana State University before the challenge grade will be recorded on their permanent records.

The challenge examination for credit in a course that 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 \$30.00 per credit is assessed and must be paid prior to taking the challenged exam.

For a complete and current list of CLEP examinations accepted for transfer and the corresponding MSU course for which credit is given: <https://www.montana.edu/testing/renne/clep.html>.

*In general, a department will not administer a challenge examination if a CLEP examination is available for the same course.*

### Deficiencies, "I", and NR Grades

All "I" grade completions, transfer work, advanced standing, missing grades and challenge examinations must be completed or resolved, and transcripts filed in the Office of the Registrar at least one month prior to the end the semester of expected graduation. "I" grades received in the final semester must be completed within one month after the end of the semester.

## Graduation Registration Requirements for Baccalaureate Degrees

### Graduation Registration Requirements

A student must be registered at Montana State University during the semester of their graduation. If the student is not required to take any courses at Montana State University during the final semester, they must process an "in absentia" registration and pay a registration fee of \$30.00 before the end of the third week of the semester in which they expect 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 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) and university-sponsored exchange programs (with certifying officer pre-approval), 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.

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## Graduation Procedures

### Notification of Degree Eligibility

Students are expected to submit an online Application for Baccalaureate Degree form by October 1st for spring semester graduation and March 1st for summer or fall semester graduation. A \$40.00 degree application fee is assessed at the time the Application for Degree form is filed. Returning former students must file the application during the first week of university instruction of the semester of completion. Application for Degree forms can be advanced up to two semesters if requested before the withdrawal date of the original degree candidacy. Subsequent changes, graduation denials, or withdrawn applications require a new Application for Degree resulting in an additional \$40.00 fee.

### Satisfaction of Financial Obligation

All candidates for degrees must fully satisfy their financial obligations to the University (or make arrangements with Montana State University for doing so) as a condition for completing their degree programs. Candidates failing to comply with this requirement shall not be eligible for graduation, diplomas, degrees, or transcripts of their records.

### Graduation Grade Point Average

In order to graduate, students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0. Further restrictions and graduation requirements may be imposed by the various curricula. To receive a graduate degree from MSU-Bozeman, students must achieve a 3.0 grade point average.

### Graduation with Honors

Graduation with honors or highest honors applies only to undergraduate degrees.

To receive honors, a student must earn a cumulative grade-point average between 3.25 and 3.69. To receive highest honors, a student must achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.70. Cumulative grade point averages are computed at the end of the semester of graduation.

All MSU credits attempted and grades received will be used in computing graduation with honors or highest honors.

Transfer students receiving their first baccalaureate degree must meet the cumulative grade-point average requirements stated above and complete a minimum of thirty credits at MSU. The credits earned at MSU must result in minimum grade point averages of 3.25 or 3.70 for graduating with honors or highest honors, respectively.

For second-degree or subsequent baccalaureate candidates, the grade point average of the first or subsequent degrees will be included in the determination of honors or highest honors.

### 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 Office of the Registrar.

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

### Commencement Ceremony

Commencement is a ceremony designed to celebrate the graduation of students in a particular semester. The commencement ceremony generally occurs before final grades are posted, and walking in commencement does not guarantee the conferral or final awarding of the degree. Students should plan to RSVP for commencement and watch the commencement website for details on their commencement celebration.

Students must walk in the semester they are applying to graduate. Students graduating in summer participate in the commencement affiliated with their student level. Undergraduate summer degree candidates participate in the preceding spring commencement. Graduate summer degree candidates participate in the following fall semester commencement. Students may appeal to participate in an alternative commencement ceremony if a university-sponsored event, policy, or practice prevents them from participating in the ceremony associated with their term of graduation. For petitions and details, the student should contact the Office of the Registrar.

### Regalia

Academic Regalia is required for all students and faculty participating in the Commencement ceremonies. To purchase regalia, stop by the MSU Bookstore or order through the MSU Bookstore online. In addition to the traditional cap and gown regalia worn at this event, we invite our degree candidates to wear stoles and cords at commencement to symbolize these associations in accordance with accepted university standards regarding appropriate content. We invite our degree candidates to decorate the top of their mortarboard (graduation cap) but ask that they respect the dignity of this occasion and be considerate of accepted university standards.

In accordance with Montana State Law 2-1-315, American Indian degree candidates are permitted to wear tribal regalia instead of traditional academic regalia at Montana State University's commencement ceremonies. Keep in mind that all students participating in commencement

must adhere to accepted university standards regarding appropriate content, as outlined below. For more information about Montana State Law 2-1-315, please visit the Montana Code Annotated 2023 ([https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title\\_0020/chapter\\_0010/part\\_0030/section\\_0150/0020-0010-0030-0150.html](https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0020/chapter_0010/part_0030/section_0150/0020-0010-0030-0150.html)) page.

**University staff reserve the right to confiscate any and all inappropriate materials. Examples of inappropriate content include intimidating or profane language and/or visual materials that insinuate drugs, alcohol, or discrimination or harassment of a protected class. Students unwilling to comply with these guidelines may not participate in the Commencement ceremony.**

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### Student Records

Access to student records is restricted according to the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA). For more information, see the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Notification of Rights ([https://www.montana.edu/policy/family\\_ed\\_privacy\\_act/](https://www.montana.edu/policy/family_ed_privacy_act/)) page. Questions regarding privacy of student records should be directed to the Registrar.

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### Name Change

Notice of legal change of name, resulting from marriage, divorce, or another reason, must be promptly filed with the Office of the Registrar. The online Name Change Request Form can be found here: <https://www.montana.edu/registrar/documents/pdfs/Name%20Change%20Request%20Form%202024.pdf>. This form must be submitted with copies of a legal court document, driver's license and Social Security card with the new name before academic records can reflect any name change.

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### Transcript of Record

Transcripts are sent only at the signed request of the student. Transcripts may be requested online via the National Student Clearinghouse (<https://tsorder.studentclearinghouse.org/school/welcome/>). A \$10.00 transcript fee and processing charges related to delivery method will be required at the time of order. For electronic transcripts send to the e-mail address of your choice. Please check with recipients before placing your order to ensure they will accept this delivery method. Transcripts must be opened in Adobe Reader otherwise they will appear blank.

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