SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Grades and Use of Grade Point Averages (GPA)

NUMBER: 2.8.1

A. PURPOSE

To define undergraduate and graduate level grades to be used at a Regental institutions, and to describe the use of grade point averages for the purposes of minimum progression, graduation standards, academic amnesty, and various academic honors.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Dual Enrolled Student:** A student who has earned college credit prior to their high school graduation, where the credit is included on both the official high school and postsecondary institution transcript.
2. **External Transfer Student:** A degree or non-degree seeking student who transfers from a non-Regental institution.
3. **Final Grade:** The last and final grade assigned for all courses regardless of instructional method or length of term.
4. **Full Standard Part of Term:** This is a part of term within the student information system that covers the full semester.
5. **Internal Transfer Student:** A degree or non-degree seeking student who transfers among one of the six Regental institutions which results in the change to the student's "home" designation.
6. **Last Date Attended:** The last date of academic engagement/participation by a student as reported by the instructor.
7. **Level:** Indicates whether a student is an undergraduate, graduate, medical or law student.
8. **Midterm Grade:** Grades assigned for courses delivered over the full standard part of term typically between the sixth and nineth week of courses.
9. **Regental Institution:** Defined as one of the six (6) public universities: Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University, and the University of South Dakota.

C. POLICY

1. Undergraduate Grades

Midterm undergraduate grades will be assigned for all standard full part of term courses unless exempted under AAC guideline 2.8.1.A. Final undergraduate grades will be assigned to the undergraduate academic level and to all courses and sections with course numbers ranging from 001 to 499. Plus and minus grades are not used.

A	Exceptional	4.00 grade points per semester hour
B	Above Average	3.00 grade points per semester hour
C	Average	2.00 grade points per semester hour
D	Lowest Passing Grade	1.00 grade points per semester hour
F	Failure	0.00 grade points per semester hour
S	Satisfactory	Does not calculate into any GPA
U	Unsatisfactory	Does not calculate into any GPA
RI	Incomplete (Remedial)	Does not calculate into any GPA
RS	Satisfactory (Remedial)	Does not calculate into any GPA
RU	Unsatisfactory (Remedial)	Does not calculate into any GPA
W	Withdrawal	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
WD	Withdrawal (First 6 Courses)	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
WW	Withdrawal (All Courses in a term)	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
WFL	Withdrawal (7^{th} Course or higher)	0.0 grade points per semester hour
AU	Audit	Does not calculate into any GPA
I	Incomplete	Does not calculate into any GPA
IP	In Progress	Does not calculate into any GPA
SP	Satisfactory Progress	Does not calculate into any GPA
EX	Credit by Exam	Does not calculate into any GPA
CR	Credit	Does not calculate into any GPA
TR	Note for NSE/MEDT	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
LR	Lab grade linked to Recitation Grade	0 credit course
NG	No Grade	0 credit tracking course
NR	Grade not Reported by Instructor	Does not calculate into any GPA
Grade*	Academic Amnesty	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit given

2. Undergraduate Grade Descriptions, Uses, and Restrictions

2.1. AU: An audit (AU) grade may be granted only when the student has elected the AU option on or prior to the census date of the term.

2.2. CR: A credit (CR) grade may be granted only for non-course credit that is not related to an examination or to equating transfer grades to the BOR grading system. This grade is not used for any Regental university course.

2.3. EX: An examination for credit (EX) grade may be granted only for non-course credit validation obtained through a validation process. This grade is not used for any Regental university course.

2.4. I: An incomplete (I) grade may be granted only when all of the following conditions apply:

- A student has encountered extenuating circumstances that do not permit him/her to complete the course.
- The student must be earning a passing grade at the time the Incomplete is necessitated. Anticipated course failure is not a justification for an incomplete.
- The student does not have to repeat the course to meet the requirements.
- The instructor must agree to grant an incomplete grade.
- The instructor and student must agree on a plan to complete the coursework.
- The coursework must be completed within one semester; extensions may be granted by the institutional Chief Academic Affairs Officer.
- If the student completes the course within the specified time, the grades that may be assigned are A, B, C, D, F, S, RS, RU, or U.
- If the student does not complete the course within the specified time, the grade assigned will be F (Failure) or U (Unsatisfactory) or RU (Remedial Unsatisfactory) or S/U as applicable.

2.5. IP: An in progress (IP) grade may be granted only when all of the following conditions apply:

- The requirements for the course (for every student enrolled in the course) extend beyond the current term.
- The extension beyond the current term must be defined before the class begins.
- The instructor must request permission to award IP grades for a course from their Department Head and Dean, and then approval must be obtained from the institutional Chief Academic Affairs Officer or designee.
- A definite date for completion of the course must be established in the course syllabus.

2.6. NG: A grade of NG will be used only with those course sections that are designated as Tracking/Program Sustaining (Q) and those that are assigned the code for Master's Research Problems/Projects Sustaining, Thesis Sustaining, or Dissertation Sustaining (U).

2.7. RI, RS, RU: Remedial grades (RI, RS, RU) may be granted only for courses numbered 001 to 099.

2.8. S/U: A Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grade may be granted only when the entire course requires the S/U grade or the student has elected the S/U option on or prior to the census date of the term.

2.9. SP: A satisfactory progress (SP) grade may be granted only for students enrolled in MATH 095. If the grade of SP is awarded the following conditions apply:

- The grade is an alternative to RS and RU.
- The student must have made satisfactory progress during the course but the student did not develop mastery of all the required content. If the student successfully mastered the materials, the grade of RS should be assigned. If satisfactory progress was not made, the grade of RU should be assigned.

2.10. WD: Beginning with the Fall 2015 term, a grade of withdrawal (WD) may be assigned only six times during a student's undergraduate career. If the student drops additional classes, a grade of WFL will be assigned. Withdrawal grades assigned to continuously enrolled students prior to this term will not count against the limit. Additionally, those withdrawal grades assigned at a non-Regental institution prior to entry as a transfer student will not be counted against the six course limits. This limit does not include W grades assigned if a student withdraws from all classes in a given term, which will be assigned a WW grade. The campus Chief Academic Affairs Officer may make exceptions to this requirement in those cases where there are unique factors.

3. Definition and Calculation of Grade Point Averages

The following grade point averages are calculated each academic term (Fall, Spring, Summer):

3.1. Institutional GPA: based on credits earned at a specific Regental university. Utilized to determine if degree requirements have been met and to determine Honors Designation at graduation.

3.2. System Term GPA: based on credits earned at any of the six Regental universities within a given academic term (Fall, Spring, Summer). Utilized to determine minimum progression status.

3.3. Transfer GPA: based on credits earned and officially transferred from an accredited college or university outside the Regental system. When a letter grade that normally calculates into the grade point average exists for a non-academic course (e.g., credit earned via examination), it will be included in the transfer GPA.

3.4. Cumulative GPA: based on all credits earned by the student (transfer credit plus system credit). Utilized to determine minimum progression status and to determine if degree requirements have been met and to determine Honors Designation at graduation.

3.4.1. When a course has been repeated for credit, all attempts will be entered on the transcript, but the last grade earned will be used in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average (See also 2:5, section B.7).

4. Minimum Progression Standards

4.1. Minimum progression standards and related actions are based on the student's cumulative grade point average and system term grade point average.

4.1.1. Good Academic Standing: A student, who meets or exceeds the cumulative grade point average requirements as listed, is in good academic standing. The Academic Standing process is completed at the end of the Fall and Spring Term. A good academic standing is at or above a cumulative 2.0 GPA.

4.1.2. Academic Standing

4.1.2.1. Academic Probation: The academic standing process shall be completed in each of the Fall and Spring terms. If a student's cumulative grade point average falls below the GPA standard, the student shall be placed on academic probation for the following term(s) until academic progression is processed.

While on academic probation the student must earn a system term grade point average that meets or exceeds the GPA standard required. During this period, the student's academic success team (as determined by the institution) is expected to monitor and meet with the student to best position him or her for success.

When a student on academic probation achieves a cumulative grade point average that meets or exceeds the GPA standard, the student is returned to good academic standing.

4.1.2.2. Academic Suspension: A student on academic probation who fails to maintain a term and cumulative grade point average that meets or exceeds the GPA standard required by the next Academic Standing process as described in Section 4.1.1 is placed on academic suspension for a minimum of two academic terms.

A student on academic suspension will not be allowed to enroll for any coursework at any Regental university except when an appeal has been approved by the Regental university from which the student is pursuing a degree. An approved appeal granted by one Regental university will be honored by all Regental universities. (Also refer to BOR Policy 2.2.1, Section C.9.7. Students on Probation/Suspension.)

4.1.2.2.1. Transcripts

Undergraduate academic progress shall not be notated on the transcript. Institutions may insert academic progress on the graduate transcript.

4.1.3. Students enrolling in the Regental system for the first time with prior credit, including internal and external transfer students and dual credit students, shall not be placed on probation by their designated home institution until they have been enrolled at a Regental university for one (1) academic term.

4.2. Financial Aid Eligibility

If a student has been suspended from the institution, the student is no longer eligible for any financial aid as they will not be enrolled. Once the student has been readmitted or returns to good academic standing, they may be eligible to receive

financial aid if they are meeting the satisfactory progress requirements for the aid programs.

4.3. Minimum Graduation Standards

To be awarded a baccalaureate degree, an associate degree or a certificate a student must at a minimum have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher. With Board approval, additional requirements including more specific GPA requirements may be established for some programmatic offerings.

4.4. Academic Amnesty

4.4.1. The goal of academic amnesty is to respond to the academic needs of individuals as they develop newly identified potential. Through the application of academic amnesty, the student's prior academic record can be excluded from current work under certain conditions.

4.4.2. To be eligible for Academic Amnesty, the student must:

4.4.2.1. Be an undergraduate, full-time or part-time, degree-seeking student at one of the universities in the South Dakota Regental system;

4.4.2.2. Not have been enrolled in any postsecondary institution for a minimum of three consecutive terms prior to the most recent admission to the home institution;

4.4.2.3. Have completed a minimum of twelve (12) graded credit hours taken at any Regental university with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 for the twelve (12) credit hours after the most recent admission to the home institution;

4.4.2.4. Not have earned an associate or baccalaureate degree from any accredited university;

4.4.2.5. Not have been granted any prior academic amnesty at any Regental university;

4.4.2.6. Submit a formal Academic Amnesty Petition to his/her home university following the procedures established by that university;

4.4.2.7. Exceptions may be granted in rare cases only by the Board of Regents Vice President for Academic Affairs upon recommendation by the Chief Academic Affairs Officer.

4.4.3. Conditions of Academic Amnesty:

4.4.3.1. Academic amnesty does not apply to individual courses.

4.4.3.2. Academic amnesty may be requested for:

4.4.3.2.1. All previous postsecondary education courses, or

4.4.3.2.2. All previous postsecondary education courses at a specific postsecondary institution, or

4.4.3.2.3. A specified time not to exceed one academic year (Fall/Spring) completed at any postsecondary institution(s).

4.4.3.3. Academic amnesty, if granted, shall not be rescinded.

4.4.3.4. Courses for which academic amnesty is granted will:

4.4.3.4.1. Remain on the student's permanent record;

4.4.3.4.2. Be recorded on the student's undergraduate transcript with the original grade followed by an asterisk (*);

4.4.3.4.3. Not be included in the calculation of the student's grade point average because no credit is given;

4.4.3.4.4. Not be used to satisfy any of the graduation requirements of the current degree program.

4.4.4. Academic amnesty decisions will be made by the student's home institution, will be honored by all undergraduate programs within the home institution, and will be honored by all undergraduate programs at other institutions within the South Dakota Regental system.

4.4.5. Universities outside of the South Dakota Regental system are not bound by the academic amnesty decisions made by the South Dakota Regental system.

4.4.6. Regental graduate programs and graduate professional schools may consider all previous undergraduate course work when making admission decisions.

4.5. Dean's List Designation

4.5.1. Undergraduate, full-time students may be designated for the Dean's List at the end of the fall and spring terms. The Dean's List designation is determined by the home university and is based on a student's total course registrations for academic credit for the term from any Regental university. The Dean's List designation does not appear on the transcript.

4.5.2. To be awarded Dean's List designation, students must meet the following guidelines.

4.5.2.1. Students must have earned a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours in courses numbered 100-699 during the term.

4.5.2.2. Students must achieve a System Term GPA of at least 3.50.

4.5.2.3. Students with F, I, U, RI, or RU grades are not eligible regardless of System Term GPA attained.

4.6. Academic Recognition for Undergraduate, Part-Time Students

4.6.1. Undergraduate, part-time students taking fewer than twelve (12) credits per term may be designated for Academic Recognition for Part-Time Students at the end of the fall and spring terms. The Academic Recognition for Part-Time Students designation is determined by the home university. The Academic Recognition for Part-Time Students designation does not appear on the

transcript. To be awarded the Academic Recognition for Part-Time Students designation, students must meet the following guidelines:

4.6.1.1. Students must have completed at least twelve (12) credit hours prior to the current semester at one or more Regental institutions.

4.6.1.2. The student must have earned at least three (3) and up to eleven (11) credit hours of 100-699 level courses during the term.

4.6.1.3. Students must achieve a System Term GPA of at least 3.50.

4.6.1.4. Students with F, I, U, RI, or RU grades are not eligible regardless of System Term GPA attained.

4.7. Honors Designation at Graduation

4.7.1. Post-baccalaureate Degree: The institution granting the degree determines the Honors Designation for its post-baccalaureate graduates. Common practices of the academy and of the specific discipline shall be followed.

4.7.2. Baccalaureate Degree: The institution granting the degree determines the Honors Designation for its graduates. To earn an Honors Designation at graduation the undergraduate student must meet both the following cumulative and institutional grade point averages:

- Summa Cum Laude equal to or greater than 3.9
- Magna Cum Laude equal to or greater than 3.7 and less than 3.9
- Cum Laude equal to or greater than 3.5 and less than 3.7

4.7.2.1. The undergraduate student must have completed a minimum of sixty (60) credit hours at the institution granting the degree. Courses that are part of a formal collaborative agreement among Regental universities are considered to be earned from the institution granting the degree. (Also refer to BOR Policy 2.3.7.)

4.7.3. Associate Degree: The institution granting the degree determines the Honors Designation for its associate-level graduates. To earn an Honors Designation at graduation, an associate-level graduate must meet both the following cumulative and institutional grade point averages:

- With highest honor equal to or greater than 3.9
- With high honor equal to or greater than 3.7 and less than 3.9
- With honor equal to or greater than 3.5 and less than 3.7

4.7.3.1. An associate-level graduate must have completed a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours at the institution granting the degree. Courses that are part of a formal collaborative agreement among Regental universities are considered to be earned from the institution granting the degree. (Also refer to BOR Policy 2.3.7.)

4.8. Graduate Grades

Midterm grades are based on institutional requirements. Final grades will be assigned to the Graduate Academic Level and to all Courses and Sections with course numbers of 500 or greater. Plus and minus grades are not used.

A	Exceptional	4.00 grade points per semester hour
B	Good	3.00 grade points per semester hour
C	Average	2.00 grade points per semester hour
D	Unsatisfactory	1.00 grade points per semester hour
F	Failure	0.00 grade points per semester hour
S	Satisfactory	Does not calculate into any GPA
U	Unsatisfactory	Does not calculate into any GPA
W	Withdrawal	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
AU	Audit	Does not calculate into any GPA
I	Incomplete	Does not calculate into any GPA
IP	In Progress	Does not calculate into any GPA
NG	No Grade	0 credit tracking course
NP	Normal Progress	Does not calculate into any GPA
NR	Grade not Reported by instructor	Does not calculate into any GPA
EX	Credit by Exam	Does not calculate into any GPA
CR	Credit	Does not calculate into any GPA
TR	Note for NSE/MEDT	Does not calculate into any GPA, no credit granted
LR	Lab grade linked to Recitation Grade	0 credit course

4.9. Graduate Grade Descriptions, Uses, and Restrictions

4.9.1. AU: An audit (AU) grade may be granted only when the student has elected the AU option on or prior to the census date of the term.

4.9.2. CR: A credit (CR) grade may be granted only for non-course credit that is not related to an examination or to equating transfer grades to the BOR grading system. This grade is not used for any Regental university course.

4.9.3. EX: An examination for credit (EX) grade may be granted only for non-course credit validation obtained through a validation process. This grade is not used for any Regental university course.

4.9.4. I: An incomplete (I) grade may be granted only when all of the following conditions apply:

- A student has encountered extenuating circumstances that do not permit him/her to complete the course.
- The student must be earning a passing grade at the time the Incomplete is necessitated. Anticipated course failure is not a justification for an incomplete.

- The student does not have to repeat the course to meet the requirements.
- The instructor must agree to grant an incomplete grade.
- The instructor and student must agree on a plan to complete the coursework.
- The coursework must be completed within one calendar year; extensions may be granted by the Graduate Dean.
- If the student completes the course within the specified time, the grades that may be assigned are A, B, C, D, F, S, or U.
- If the student does not complete the course within the specified time, the Incomplete grade remains on the transcript.

4.9.5. IP: An in progress (IP) grade may be granted only when all of the following conditions apply:

- The requirements for the course (for every student enrolled in the course) extend beyond the current term.
- The extension beyond the current term must be defined before the class begins.
- The instructor must request permission to award IP grades for a course from their Department Head and Dean, and then approval must be obtained from the Chief Academic Affairs Officer.
- A definite date for completion of the course must be established in the course syllabus.

4.9.6. NG: A grade of NG will be used only with those course sections that are designated as Tracking/Program Sustaining (Q) and those that are assigned the code for Master's Research Problems/Projects Sustaining, Thesis Sustaining, or Dissertation Sustaining (U).

4.9.7. NP: A normal progress (NP) grade may be granted by an instructor when the instructor determines that a graduate student is making normal progress in a graduate Thesis/Dissertation course. If a graduate student does not enroll for a period of one calendar year, the NP grade may change to I (Incomplete) upon approval by the Graduate Dean. The NP grade calculates into attempted credits but does not calculate into completed credits or grade point averages.

4.9.8. S/U: A Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grade may be granted only when the entire course requires the S/U grade or the student has elected the S/U option on or prior to the census date of the term.

4.10. Last Date Attended Under federal rules, the institutions are required to track the Last Date of Attendance which is the last date of academic engagement, whenever reporting a final grade of F, U, or RU. AAC Guideline 2.8.1.A shall provide more information on the process for coding the last date of attendance.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR May 1996; BOR December 1998; BOR March 2002; BOR June 2002; BOR August 2002; BOR October 2002; BOR June 2003; BOR October 2003; BOR March 2004; BOR May 2004; BOR October 2004; BOR March 2005; BOR May 2005; BOR June 2005; BOR August 2005; BOR October 2005; BOR August 2006; BOR October 2006; BOR June 2009; BOR August 2009; BOR March-April 2011; BOR December 2011; BOR December 2013; BOR December 2014; BOR June 2015; BOR August 2015; BOR May 2018; BOR December 2020; BOR August 2021; October 2023 (Clerical); BOR April 2025; October 2025 (Clerical).