

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION

PRESENTED BY: Kevin Flynn, Chair, Academic Programs Committee

DATE OF MEETING: January 19, 2017

SUBJECT: **Retroactive approval of changes to the approved grading system in the College of Dentistry**

DECISION REQUESTED:

*It is recommended:
That Council provide retroactive approval to the changes to the literal grade descriptors for courses in the College of Dentistry, effective immediately.*

PURPOSE:

Under University Council's authority, Registrarial Services is responsible for ensuring adherence to the university regulations on assessment that are outlined in the Academic Courses Policy. Specifically, the policy states that "University Council will receive and evaluate requests from Colleges desiring exceptions...to the percentage system of assessment."

Under this direction, Registrarial Services reviewed assessment regulations for each college section of the catalogue and identified non-standard pass scores the College of Dentistry.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

In 2012/13 the College of Dentistry adopted a minimum passing grade of 60%, with exceptions as indicated in the attached materials. Immediately preceding this, the College of Dentistry used a Pass/Fail grading system. The change was approved by faculty members in the College of Dentistry on June 27, 2012.

CONSULTATION:

The Academic Programs Committee of Council reviewed the request for non-standard passing grades to be approved retroactively at its meeting on September 14, 2016. The committee agreed with the Registrar that it would be appropriate to seek retroactive approval for these grading changes for two reasons: (1) to ensure that appropriate documentation exists for the current non-standard minimum pass scores in Dentistry and (2) to correct an error caused by miscommunication at the time the changes were made. The committee further agreed that had these changes been proposed in advance of their implementation, it would have supported them fully.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. College of Dentistry Grading System

Grading System

The College of Dentistry will no longer use the Pass/Fail grading system which was implemented during the academic years of 2007/08 to 2011/12. Effective the 2012/13 academic year, the grades in all years will be reported using numerical percentages, unless the UEC has granted an exemption to use Pass/Fail.

The minimum passing grade in any Dentistry course must be a minimum of 60%, but cannot exceed a maximum of 70%.

There are a small number of courses within the dental program where a "Pass/Fail" is more appropriate than a percentage grade. In such courses, a "P" or an "F" will appear on the official transcript.

Course coordinators will continue to maintain all aspects of their courses that require evaluation including didactic, practical, and professionalism components. Course syllabi will continue to outline evaluation methods and expectations of what constitutes a pass for a course.

Conversion of Marks to the University of Saskatchewan Standard 50% Passing Grade

If a grade of $\geq 60\%$ is achieved, the grade remains as such on the official University transcript.

The only grades to be converted are failing grades ($< 60\%$). For example, a grade of less than 60% is a failure in a Dentistry course. Therefore such a grade must be mathematically converted to a grade below 50% to comply with the University of Saskatchewan guidelines which have the minimum passing grade at 50%. A failing grade of $< 60\%$ would thus be recorded as $< 50\%$ on the official transcript.

The following is an example:

Final assigned grade in a Dentistry course = 55%

Minimum passing grade in a Dentistry course = 60%

If the final assigned grade of 55% were submitted to the University, it would be considered to be a passing grade ($> 50\%$). Therefore, the College must convert such a grade to reflect the 60% passing standard. In this example 55% becomes 45.83% ($55 \times 50/60 = 45.83\%$).

Policy effective 2012/13 Academic Year

Approved by faculty members on June 27th, 2012

Approved by UEC on September 19th, 2012

Approved by Executive on September 20th, 2012

Promotion & Graduation Regulations

The following promotion and graduation regulations apply within the College of Dentistry. The grading system followed differs from the general one detailed in the Grade Reporting section of the *Calendar* in that the literal descriptors have been expanded to include some terminology which reflects competency in cognitive and/or psychomotor and/or attitudinal skills.

These guidelines apply to students in all years of the dental program and supersede rules that may have been in place in any preceding year of a currently registered student.

1. In most Dentistry courses the passing grade is 60%. There are some courses in which the passing grade is 65 or 70%. When deemed appropriate by the UEC, Course Coordinators may receive approval for a pass/fail evaluation system in their courses. A failing grade in such a course will be assigned a mark of 45%.
2. There are also some courses that are P/F. A "P" grade will not be included in the overall average calculation but an "F" will be assigned a mark of 45%.
2. Should a student fail a supplemental or remedial examination, the original of the two failing grades shall be used to calculate the overall average in the current academic year.
3. Upon successful completion of a supplemental or remedial examination the student will be assigned the minimum pass percentage grade for that class.
4. Failure of a "program course", defined as a course that has a credit unit score greater than 9, will mean failure of the entire year.
5. A student achieving less than 50% in a course is not allowed a supplemental or remedial examination.
6. Failure of a single course may result in failure of an entire year if a supplemental or remedial examination is not practical, possible, or warranted.
7. At the discretion of the Undergraduate Education Committee, a student who has failed in not more than two courses, received a grade of at least 50% in the course(s) failed, and has an overall average of at least 60% or greater in all courses, may be allowed to take supplemental or remedial examinations in the course(s) failed.
8. At the discretion of the Undergraduate Education Committee, a student who has failed a laboratory or clinical course may be allowed to complete a specified remediation program between the regular academic sessions (summer months). If remediation is unsuccessful, the student will fail the year.
9. Students who have failed and wish to repeat the year must submit a formal written request to the Dean for approval by the Executive Committee within 30 days of notification of the failure.
10. A student who has failed a year and has permission to repeat must repeat all courses for that year.
11. Failure of more than one year (including failing the same year twice) automatically requires withdrawal from the program.

12. Under extenuating circumstances, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, a student may be asked or permitted to withdraw for one year. A student must apply to the college for reinstatement.
13. During any year of the program, the circumstances outlined below require the UEC to determine if a student should be allowed to continue in good standing:
- Students missing an extraordinary length of time due to illness or personal problems such that it is not possible for them to meet the requirements prior to the next academic year.
 - Students demonstrating persistent documented weakness (< 64% grade) in one or more preclinical or clinical discipline(s) that indicates to faculty that they are not prepared to meet the standards for the next year of the program.
 - A student displaying (documented and reviewed) unprofessional behavior.
 - A student failing enough components of a “program course” or failing enough “half-classes”, that failure of the year is inevitable.

The UEC will determine if students in such circumstances are asked to withdraw or required to withdraw immediately. UEC will then determine if such students can repeat the current academic year.

14. In the year end evaluation of students, the circumstances outlined below require the UEC to determine if a student is to be allowed to proceed in good standing to the next year of the program or to graduate:
- Students missing an extraordinary length of time due to illness or personal problems such that it is not possible for them to meet the requirements prior to the next academic year.
 - Students demonstrating persistent documented weakness (< 64% grade) in one or more preclinical or clinical discipline(s) that indicates to faculty that they are not prepared to meet the standards for the next year of the program or have not met the standards for graduation.
 - A student displaying (documented and reviewed) unprofessional behavior.

The UEC will determine if students in such circumstances are asked to withdraw, required to withdraw or permitted to repeat the current academic year.

Approved by UEC on September 19th, 2012
Approved by Executive on September 20th, 2012