

EVALUATIONS AND GRADING

22. Grading System

a. The final grade for a course will be based on the quality of a student's work including, where appropriate, essays and exercises, class tests, end of semester examinations, final examinations, reports, class participation, laboratory work, tutorial sessions, projects and field work.

b. **On the first day of class for a course**, instructors must provide students with a written copy of the course outline. The outline must conform to the Senate Policy on Course Outlines. In accordance with the Policy, the outline must include the grading system to be used in the course.

The grading system includes the relative weight which will be given to class and/or laboratory participation, examinations, tests, written assignments and other means of evaluation. The statement must also show how these evaluations will be used to determine final letter grades.

Subsequent changes to this system must also be made available to students in writing. A copy of the course outline and any subsequent changes to it must be placed on file in the office of the Department Chairperson and Dean of the Faculty at the time when they are distributed to the students.

c. Instructors must also inform students in writing on the first day of class of any "in-class" test which will be scheduled outside of the regular instructional hours of the course. Students who cannot write the test outside of class time must be offered reasonable accommodation. Students must give the instructor a minimum of a two week notice.

23. Graduate Ratings, Grades and Grade Points

a. Letter grades and grade points for graduate courses will be assigned as follows. These are the grade points for six (6) semester hours. Three (3) semester hour courses carry 50% of these grade points.

Letter Grade	Grade Points	Description
A+	4.30	Exceptional
A	4.00	Excellent
A-	3.70	Very Good
B+	3.30	Good
B	3.00	Satisfactory
B-	2.70	Substandard
C	2.00	Marginal
F	0.00	Failure
P	—	Pass
IP	—	In Progress

b. The P (Pass) grade is only applicable for evaluation of theses in programs which grade the theses according to a pass/fail regime. The P grade is not calculated in grade point averages. The IP (In Progress) grade is applicable for graduate level courses, theses, dissertations, major research paper/project (MBA), and practicum courses; also for Co-operative Education work terms. For all graduate thesis, dissertation major research paper/projects and practicum courses, this grade can remain in effect until the expiration of the timeline for the completion of the individual student's entire graduate program. For all other graduate courses, the IP grade is valid only for a maximum of twelve months beyond the last day of classes in the semester in which the course was taught. Thereafter, it becomes an F ("failure") which is calculated into

the student's grade point average. The IP grade is not calculated in grade point averages.

c. The following grades shall be given when appropriate but will not be calculated in the grade point or cumulative grade point average:

Description	Grade
Aegrotat	AE
Authorized withdrawal from a course	W
In Progress	IP
Pass	P
Satisfactory	S

Note: This "S" grade is reserved exclusively for Professional Development (SMBA 6010) and Immersive Learning (SMBA 6020). Grades earned on advanced standing and transfer courses are also not included in the calculation of averages.

d. In cases where through no fault of the student, grades have not been received and processed by the deadline stipulated by Senate, a temporary grade of AI ("administrative incomplete") will be assigned but will not be included in the calculations of grade point and cumulative grade point averages. This temporary grade of AI is assigned by the Registrar.

e. Once a final grade has been submitted to the Registrar, supplementary examinations or any additional assignments for the purpose of changing that grade are not permitted.

24. Examinations

a. At the end of a Fall or Winter semester, at the discretion of the Department concerned, a final test or examination may be held during the special periods set aside for this purpose in December and in April.

b. All final tests and examinations held during the above periods are scheduled by the Registrar. The maximum time allowed for each examination is three hours.

c. (i) In a six (6) credit hour course, no single test given in a regularly scheduled class period (50 minutes or 75 minutes) shall contribute more than 20% of the overall evaluation for that course.

(ii) In a three (3) credit hour course, no single test given in a regularly scheduled class period (50 minutes or 75 minutes) or laboratory/recitation session (up to 3 hours) shall contribute more than 35% of the overall evaluation for that course.

(iii). In the Fall and Winter terms, tests and examinations individually or collectively contributing more than 10% of the overall evaluation of the course are not permitted to be held during the last fourteen calendar days preceding the end of classes except as noted below in iv. End of term tests and examinations are to be held during the final assessment period as specified in sections, 23 a. and b.

(iv). Prior to the first class date, the Dean of the Faculty may authorize a lab examination worth more than 10% of the final grade within the last 14 days preceding the end of classes. A lab examination requires the use of lab resources.

d. To be eligible to write any type of test or examination in any course, students must be properly registered in that course. Students must

write all such tests or examinations at the designated times and in the designated places.

e. Students are responsible for knowing the date, time and location for writing each of their formal examinations. Students are responsible for ensuring they have up-to-date schedules. This information is posted on Banner Self Service with the student's schedule. While this is accurate when viewed/printed, it is subject to revision without any prior notice; hence students are responsible for ensuring they have up-to-date schedules. Missing an examination for reasons of misreading or misunderstanding the date, time, and location does not constitute grounds for a "special test or examination" or for rescheduling the test or examination.

f. Students are required to present their valid Saint Mary's University student identification cards at all tests and examinations for possible verification of their photographs or signatures.

g. The University acknowledges that due to the pluralistic nature of its community, some students may, on religious grounds, require alternative times to write tests and examinations. Students who requires an alternative test or examination time on these religious grounds should consult with the Dean of the Faculty in which the course is offered regarding alternative arrangements. Such a request must be made in writing within one week of the announcement of the test or examination date.

A list of **holy dates** can be referenced on the Office of the Registrar webpage (<https://www.smu.ca/registrar/>).

h. Participation in university sanctioned activities and events may occasionally conflict with exam schedules. Students experiencing such conflicts should follow the instructions in g. (above)

i. In the case of courses delivered at extension centres, midterms and final examinations will take place at the extension centre. If the location is within the Halifax Regional Municipality, the final examination may be held on the Saint Mary's University campus, with the approval of the Dean of the Faculty.

j. In the case of distance education courses taught via the internet or other means, the course outline will specify if midterms and final examinations will be either held online or at locations in reasonable proximity to the students. Remotely offered examinations must be invigilated by an invigilator (proctor) that is approved by the course instructor.

k. Supplementary examinations are not offered.

25. Evaluations

a. At the end of each semester, instructors must submit to the Registrar, through Self-Service Banner, their evaluations of all students registered in their courses. For six credit hour courses taught over two terms (i.e., designated .0), interim grades will be submitted at the end of the first semester and final grades at the end of the academic year. The time frames for the submission of mid-year and final grades to the Registrar are:

(i) in the case of courses in which no formal examination was scheduled by the Registrar within the period designated by Senate for formal examinations, one week from the beginning of the examination period;

(ii) in the case of courses in which formal examinations were scheduled by the Registrar within the period designated by Senate for such

examinations, one week from the day on which the examination was written; and

(iii) in the case of courses taught in Summer Sessions, grades are due no later than one week from the last day of instruction in the course. Students have the right to expect their grades to be submitted by these deadlines in conformity with the faculty member's terms of appointment.

b. Final grades are available on Self-Service one day after submission by the instructor. Grade reports are not produced.

c. Final grades are withheld from students who have money owing to the University or who have either money or books owing the University Library system.

d. Grades given at the end of a semester shall not be made known to students except by the Registrar. Under the FOI-POP legislation, it is not legal for members of faculty to publicly post grades without the written permission of the student.

e. Grade changes must be approved by the Dean of the Faculty in which the course is offered before they can be accepted for processing by the Registrar. Reason(s) for the change(s) is required at the time of submission.

At the start of each term, any blank grades from the previous term will be assigned a grade of F.

26. Deferred Final Examinations

a. A student may request a deferred final examination based on:

(i) serious illness, personal/family emergency, or unforeseeable adverse situation;

(ii) religious grounds, as per 24.g.;

(iii) participation in regional, provincial, national, or international activity.

Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting a deferred final examination.

A list of **holy dates** can be referenced on the Office of the Registrar webpage (<https://www.smu.ca/registrar/>).

b. A student who wishes to have such a request considered must submit the request in writing according to the timelines given in c. and d. (below). A student may submit a single request that applies to multiple examinations. Requests should be submitted through the Academic Advising Office of the Faculty in which the student is registered. Decisions on deferred examination requests are made by the Dean of the Faculty in which the course is offered.

c. Requests under a. (ii) and a. (iii) must be made in writing to the Dean and include appropriate documentation to support the request. When possible, such requests must be made within seven calendar days of the announcement of the examination date.

d. For consideration of requests under a.(i), a student must:

(i) Within 48 hours after the end of the final examination, report, or have a representative report (in writing if possible), to their Academic Advising Office, intention to request a deferred examination and

(ii) Within seven calendar days after the end of the examination submit to the Dean (or designate) a written request for a deferred examination. This request must be accompanied by an explanation of the circumstances which made it impossible for the student to write the regular examination and documentation that supports the request.

e. A decision will be communicated to the student and the instructor(s) within one week of receipt of the request.

f. On approval of a deferred examination, the responsibility for setting and conducting the deferred examination will lie with the instructor and the department. Deferred examinations should be completed as soon as possible and normally (i.e. wherever possible) as follows: for fall term by January 31, for the winter term by May 31, for summer session one by July 31 and for summer session two by September 30.

27. Credit Hours without Final Examination

Students who, for medical or compassionate reasons, have been unable to finish a course but who have satisfactorily completed the other requirements, may apply to the Dean of the Faculty for credit hours in that course without examination. They must support their request with adequate evidence. If the Dean permits the request to go forward, instructors involved will be asked to assign an estimated final grade. If the instructors judge that the student should be given credit hours for the course but are unable to determine a precise grade point grade, then they will assign the grade of AE (aegrotat). This grade will not be included in computing the grade point average. Students may apply for aegrotat standing for a maximum thirty (30) credit hours during their undergraduate program. This grade of AE is available only as a final grade and therefore cannot be awarded at mid-year for six (6) credit hour courses [i.e., those designated .0].

28. Evaluation of Thesis/Program Progress

a. In graduate programs which require a thesis, students are required to submit a written annual report to their Program coordinator reporting on their progress over the previous year. Submission dates, formats and approval processes for the annual reports are defined by the individual programs. Assessment of student progress and actions coming forth from such assessments are as defined in regulations 28 d. below.

b. Aside from the annual report defined above, a student may be required to provide updates to the Supervisor/ Supervisory Committee on the progress of their thesis research or overall graduate program from time to time. If required, a student will be given a minimum of thirty (30) days notice to provide an update to the Supervisor/ Supervisory Committee.

The update will be in the form of a meeting at which the student will present the written report on the research activities/progress and address questions and comments of the Supervisor/ Supervisory Committee on the report and research progress.

c. The Supervisor will prepare a report on the student's progress using the form available from FGSR. The report must be witnessed by the student's signature and the student is free to make comments regarding the report. The report, which will include an evaluation at one of the three assessment levels indicated below, will be sent to the Program Coordinator for signature and forwarded to the Dean of the FGSR. These evaluations become part of the student's record within the FGSR, but are not recorded on the student's transcript.

d. The progress in a student's program can be assessed at three levels:

(i) Satisfactory

(ii) Unsatisfactory - In Need of Improvement

(iii) Not Acceptable

e. The actions coming forth from the assignment of the above grades are:

(i) Satisfactory: The students' progress in their research relevant to the period of time working pursuing the research is at least sufficient in terms of quality and quantity. In the assessment, leeway must be given for problems that may arise in pursuit of the research which are beyond the reasonable control of the student. With a Satisfactory rating, the student is recommended for continuation of his/her Program.

(ii) Unsatisfactory - In Need of Improvement: Progress is not satisfactory.

The students' progress in their research relative to the period of time working pursuing the research is insufficient in terms of quality and/or quantity. With an "Unsatisfactory" rating, the Supervisor's report on the progress of the student must include a timeline (minimum of 4 months; maximum of 12 months) with outcomes for the student to achieve within the specified period. After the specified period in the timeline, another update will be provided by the student per the procedures identified above. If the expected outcomes have been achieved successfully, a student will be assigned a "Satisfactory" rating. If the expected outcomes are not achieved in a satisfactory manner, the Supervisor's new report on the student's progress will include an assessment of "Not Acceptable."

(iii) Not Acceptable: If the expected outcomes are not achieved and the Supervisor/Supervisory Committee concludes that the student will not succeed in completing the Program, the Supervisor/Supervisory Committee will note the rating of "Not Acceptable" in the Supervisor's report and forward this report to the Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will review the case and make an independent recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. Upon the recommendation of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, the student will be dismissed from their Program. Students who have received an evaluation of "Not Acceptable" and have received notice of dismissal have up to thirty (30) days to make an appeal in writing to the Senate Committee on Academic Appeals. (**Note:** The Supervisor/ Supervisory Committee cannot change a student's assessment directly from a "Satisfactory" rating to "Not Acceptable". If a student's progress has been determined to be less than fully satisfactory, the student must be rated "Unsatisfactory - In Need of Improvement" and actions as defined above taken before a rating of "Not Acceptable" could be considered.)