

CHAPTER 8

8. INSTRUCTIONAL AND STUDENT POLICIES

8.1. Curriculum

8.1.1. University Catalogs

Course descriptions and degree requirements are specified in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, which are published annually online. Instructors should be familiar with the catalog descriptions and prerequisites for the courses they are teaching.

8.1.2. Course Numbering System

Range of Numbers Level of Course

001-099	Noncredit
100-199	Freshman
200-299	Sophomore
300-399	Junior (upper level)
400-499	Senior (upper level)
500-599	Graduate credit, with undergraduate credit awarded in some departments
600-699	Graduate
700-above	Graduate, Ph.D. level

8.1.3. Changes in Catalog

A change that originates in an academic department or program that involves undergraduate programs and that affects catalog copy will become effective and may be implemented only when the following procedure has been completed: the proposed change has been recommended and agreed to by the academic department or program faculty, reviewed and approved by the department chair, reviewed and recommended by the college curriculum committee, reviewed and approved by the dean of the college, reviewed and recommended by the Faculty Senate Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, and approved by the Provost.

Changes affecting the graduate program originate in an academic department or program. The proposed changes are recommended and agreed to by the academic department or program faculty and are reviewed and approved by the department chair. Such changes are reviewed by the college curriculum committee which forwards its recommendations to the dean of the college, who reviews and approves the changes. The dean of the college forwards the changes to the Graduate School Dean who refers the changes to the Graduate Council, The Graduate Council reviews the changes and gives its recommendations to the Graduate School Dean who reviews, approves, and forwards the recommendations to the Provost for review and approval.

Changes that do not affect the degree requirements within an academic department or program but

that do affect general undergraduate degree requirements can be proposed to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Senate for its review and recommendation and then to the Provost for approval.

8.1.4. Changes in Curriculum

Proposals for undergraduate curriculum changes or new undergraduate programs are initiated in the department or program and agreed to by the academic department or program faculty and approved by the department chair. The proposals are reviewed and approved by the college curriculum committee and college dean, then forwarded to the provost with recommendations. Proposals then are referred to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Senate for review and recommendations. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee submits its recommendations to the Provost for approval. Proposals for graduate curriculum changes or new graduate programs are initiated in the department or program and agreed to by the academic department or program faculty and approved by the department chair. The proposals are reviewed by the college curriculum committee and college dean and then forwarded to the Graduate School Dean for consideration by the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council reviews and makes recommendations regarding the proposals to the Graduate School Dean. The Graduate School Dean reviews the proposals, approves, and makes recommendations to the Provost. The Provost should be notified if a proposal for a new program, degree, concentration or certificate is being contemplated. All curriculum changes are approved by the Provost.

8.1.5. Exceptions to Academic Requirements

For specific general education requirements identified with academic departments (e.g., English composition, world history, mathematics, foreign language), refer to the chair of the department responsible for required courses that are involved (e.g., English composition to English Department, World History to History Department).

For requirements that are less well-specified or involve combinations of disciplines (e.g., mathematics/science, social sciences, mixed language options), refer recommendations of the student's advisor and the instructor-of-record to the department chair or appropriate Associate Dean for approval.

For exceptions to University-wide regulations applicable to all students such as residence requirements, 30 percent upper-level rule, total hours, grade-point average, etc., recommendations must be made by the chair of the student's major department or college for non-departmentalized colleges, concurred with by the dean of the college, and approved by the Provost.

8.2. Classes

8.2.1. Scheduling of Classes

A timetable of classes for fall and spring semesters is made available prior to early registration. Schedule timetables typically include the time, room assignment, and instructor for each course. The schedule for each department or program is prepared by the chair or coordinator and forwarded to the dean of the college to allow for resolution of class conflicts between departments. The timetable is then reviewed in the Office of Provost to resolve scheduling problems among colleges, to assure scheduling patterns convenient to students, and to spread classes appropriately across the day and the week. Deviations from the published schedule (additions, deletions, time changes, etc.) are recommended by the chair or coordinator, with approval of the dean, and notice to the Provost.

8.2.2. Academic Advising

Faculty members may be expected to perform advising duties at registration and throughout the academic year. Faculty advising assignments are made by the department or program chair. Faculty members who serve as academic advisors should be familiar with current University requirements and policies. Basic information can be found in the University catalog.

8.2.3. Faculty Class Attendance

Faculty members are expected to conduct each of their classes as scheduled. Faculty members are required to notify the department chair before missing scheduled classes, in advance, where practicable. Faculty members are expected to make prior arrangements for the conduct of a missed class if possible. Classroom work missed because of a faculty member's absence has to be made up as soon as possible and in the manner deemed most appropriate by the instructor in consultation with the chair or coordinator. Faculty members are encouraged to make full use of the learning management system to provide students instructional material, class assignments, supplemental learning material, etc. to continue the teaching and learning process while the faculty member is absent or when the University is closed because of unforeseen circumstances. Planned cancellation of classes requires the prior written approval of the department chair and dean (for non-departmentalized colleges).

8.2.4. Student Class Attendance

The University does not have a mandatory attendance policy. Students are responsible for all work missed when absent, and no makeup work should be given unless the student provides an acceptable excuse to the instructor. An instructor may impose an attendance requirement, especially if a significant portion of the course depends on class participation. If imposed, such an attendance policy must be included in the course syllabus.

8.2.5 Missed Classes for Official University Activities

Students who participate in official University sanctioned student activities (such as Higher Education Day, music tours, student design competitions, intercollegiate athletic competitions, and other similar extracurricular activities), must be allowed to make up, without penalty, any work missed as the result of participating in these activities. It is the responsibility of the student to present to his or her instructors notice and verification of authorized participation in such activities and to make arrangements, no later than one week in advance, to complete any work that will be missed. Individual instructors retain the authority to determine how students in their classes will avoid academic penalties for the resulting absences.

Only activities approved by the Office of the Provost will be considered to be official University sanctioned activities. Any activity that is not expressly approved by the Office of the Provost will not be considered a University sanctioned activity. Faculty or University employees in charge of such activities shall file, with the Office of the Provost, a list of students and the dates they request the students be exempted from class. Athletic practice sessions and other practices, which are sometimes scheduled at the same time as a course that a student must take, are not officially sanctioned. Deans, department chairs, directors and faculty may check any names against the list by contacting the Office of the Provost.

8.2.6. Schedule Adjustments

After the beginning of an academic term, students seeking to change their course schedules must follow the Schedule Adjustment Process. Schedule adjustments fall into six categories: Drop/Add, Late Addition, Credit/Audit, Withdrawal, Late Withdrawal, and Retroactive Withdrawal. The definitions and procedures that govern the Schedule Adjustment Process are given Policy 02.01.13 Registration and Schedule Adjustments. In some cases, the instructor's and chair's approval is required such as changing a class section after the sixth day of class for regular semesters and shorter times for shorter terms and approval for a student to add a class section after the deadline for the given term, which also needs approval from the Office of the Provost. When graduate students are involved, the Graduate School Dean must also approve late class additions. New international students who want to register after the deadline must obtain approval from the International Student Advisor, and in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School Dean. Approvals for late registration for new international students will include the respective academic units.

8.2.7. Syllabi

During the first week of a class, the instructor must provide each student with a written outline of the administrative information for the course. Such an outline should include: goals/objectives of the course, course content, text or other materials required or recommended, methods of evaluation (including values of each assignment and mechanisms for determining final course grades), any modifications of student code of conduct, a statement that the University follows the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA, 2008) and the Association for Higher Education and Disabilities (AHEAD) and fully supports providing access to all students with documented disabilities, faculty office location and scheduled office hours and location. For the student code of conduct, consult the *Student Handbook* (<http://www.uah.edu/dos/student-conduct/handbook>). Syllabi for all courses are required to be posted on the UAH learning management system.

8.2. 8. Office Hours

A faculty member is expected to maintain office hours in order to be available to students, other faculty members, and administrative officers at regular places and times. A regular schedule of office hours and electronic availability (email, discussion boards, chat rooms, etc.) shall be established for each course taught and the times known to students, advisees, and the departmental office. Office hours should be posted in the departmental office and outside the faculty office.

Faculty should consult with the department chair, program coordinator, or dean for building use policy and availability of keys, locks, lights, office equipment and off-hours heating and cooling.

8.2.9. Copyrighted Materials

The University's policy on copyrighted materials is given in Appendix H of the UAH Faculty Handbook and as 02.01.68. Determination of Rights in Copyrightable Materials Policy. The bookstore will assist faculty members in securing copyright clearance for classroom materials to be included in course packs. Questions regarding the Copyright Policy should be directed to the Office of the Provost.

8.2.10. Field Trips

Certain courses lend themselves to field trips for demonstration purposes. In general, such trips are permissible if they do not interfere with attendance in other classes. The proposed trip must be cleared with the department chair (or equivalent) or the dean of the college. Travel authorizations must be submitted and approved by the department chair and dean for all individuals who are involved in the field trip. For assistance regarding the need for signed releases for participating students, contact the College's

Dean's Office or the Office of the Provost. Such contact should be made as soon as possible to facilitate timely preparation and completion of releases, if required. All due caution should be taken on such trips to safeguard the students. If car pools are used for transportation, they should be required to return to the campus at the completion of the trip. In addition, the Office of Risk Management shall be consulted in order to assess the level of risk involved in the activity and to develop appropriate plans of action.

8.3. Grading Policies and Examinations

8.3.1. Grading System

The grading system at UAH includes grades of (A, B, C, D, F, I, X, W, S, U, P, AU, and N). Instructors have the option of augmenting the course grades of A, B, C, and D with the symbols "+" and "-" signifying, respectively, high and low achievement within the assigned letter grade. These augmented letter grades become part of the student's permanent record and appear on transcripts, but augmentation of a letter grade does not affect its value for the purposes of GPA computation. Faculty are advised that many graduate schools and professional schools recalculate the student's GPA to include +/- grades which can impact the student's competitiveness. Course grades should be posted for each course in the learning management system so that the students have access to their grades during the semester.

A Superior achievement: Four quality points given per semester hour.

B Above average achievement: Three quality points given per semester hour.

C Average achievement: Two quality points given per semester hour.

D Passing work: One quality point given per semester hour.

F Failing work: No credit given; no quality points assigned.

I Incomplete: Assigned by the instructor when a student, because of extenuating circumstances, has not satisfied a course requirement. The deadline for a student to remedy a grade I is the last day of class of the next term enrolled or one calendar year from the date of the grade, whichever occurs first. If the grade of I is on a student's record past the deadline or at the time of graduation, it is treated as an F.

X Excused absence from Examination: Assigned by the instructor when a student completes all course requirements except the final examination. This grade becomes an F unless the examination is completed by the time of the announced deferred examination date given on the University's Academic Calendar at the beginning of the semester of the next regular enrollment of the student of the last day of the next term enrolled whichever occurs first. If the grade is of X is on a student's record at the time of graduation, it is treated as an F.

W Withdrawal. Recorded by the Office of the Registrar when a student withdraws from a course.

S Satisfactory work: Applicable to noncredit courses and to some specified credit courses. Will not be counted in the GPA.

U Unsatisfactory work: Applicable to noncredit courses and to some specified credit courses. It will be counted as an F and computed in the GPA for undergraduates, but not graduate students.

P Passing work: Assigned in some courses. See Pass-Fail Option in the Catalog.

AU Audit: No credit given; no quality points assigned.

N No grade: Assigned by the Office of Student Records when a grade is not reported by the instructor.

8.3.2 Mid-term Grades

Faculty teaching freshman and sophomore level courses (except Co-operative Education) are required to report on student progress at mid-semester. Mid-term grading is accomplished via the designated course management system. The Registrar turns on the mid-term grading system about the fifth week of class and asks instructors to enter grades by the seventh week of the regular semester. (Instructors should assign and evaluate a sufficient amount of class work early enough to provide meaningful reports). Reports are electronically distributed to students and to the student's advising office after the seventh week of class. For maximum benefit to students, faculty should schedule adequate exams and assignments well in advance of the mid-semester reports.

8.3.3. Confidentiality of Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the confidentiality of student educational records. To implement this law, the University has formulated and adopted a written institutional policy governing the handling of these records. A student's privacy interest in his or her records is further protected by FERPA against unauthorized disclosure. The University may not, without the student's written consent, release educational records or any personally identifiable information contained in them to other individuals or agencies. Disclosure to the following parties, however, is specifically excepted by the Privacy Act from this rule: (a) administrative and academic personnel within an institution who have a legitimate educational interest; (b) officials of institutions in which the student seeks to enroll; (c) persons or organizations to whom the student is applying for financial aid; (d) accrediting agencies; (e) organizations conducting studies relating to tests, student-aid programs or instruction; (f) certain federal and state government officials; (g) any person where the disclosure is required for compliance with a judicial order or proper subpoena; (h) appropriate persons where a health or safety emergency affecting the student exists; and (i) parents of a dependent student if dependency is proven. As to some of these parties, additional conditions must be met in order for the disclosure to be allowable in the absence of a written consent from the student. Personally identifiable information will be transmitted by the University to a third party only on the condition that the recipient not permit any other party to have access to it without the student's consent. The University may release directory information to others without the necessity of obtaining permission from the student. For a description of what constitutes directory information, see the *Student Handbook* (<http://www.uah.edu/dos/student-conduct/handbook>). Questions about the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act should be directed to the appropriate dean or to the Office of the Provost.

8.3.4. Students with Disabilities

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act, and Section

504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University must provide reasonable academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Any student who has a documented condition that substantially limits his or her learning activities can request coordination of appropriate academic support services through the University's Disability Support Services (DSS) office. The function of DSS is to collaborate with students, faculty, and staff to ensure appropriate services are provided to students registered with the DSS office. If a student self-identifies to a member of the campus community, the student must be given a referral to DSS.

The University relies on faculty to provide access to all of its programs and activities to students with disabilities. As members of the campus community, faculty members are required to adhere to relevant disability laws. The University accepts only those students who are qualified for admission regardless of their disabilities. Accommodations are provided for eligible students in order to provide equitable access so that students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to succeed in their academic pursuits. Students must register with the DSS Office and provide appropriate medical documentation of disability to be eligible for services. Faculty members are not legally allowed to ask students if they have a disability. For those students registered with the DSS office, faculty are not legally allowed to ask about the nature of the disability. If students choose to disclose their disability, this information should be treated confidentially.

Instructors are to announce procedures for arranging academic accommodations at the beginning of each semester and include the information in the course syllabus. DSS is available to provide consultations via email or phone to any faculty member. The "Information for Faculty" section of the DSS website has been developed to support faculty as they work with students with disabilities <https://www.uah.edu/dss/faculty-resources/faculty-guidelines> (Questions about compliance to policies related to students with disabilities should be directed to the Disability Support Services Office.)

8.3.5. Make-up Exams

Students who are unable to take announced quizzes and examinations because of illness or extenuating circumstances should report to their instructor. The faculty member may require verification of the illness or extenuating circumstance before administering a make-up examination. Absences from a scheduled final examination without prior arrangement with the course instructor (except in extenuating circumstances) will be classified unexcused, and a failing grade may be assigned. An X is to be assigned as a temporary grade in a course in which the student has an excused absence from a final exam. If the faculty member does not wish personally to conduct the makeup of the final examination, he or she should contact Instructional Testing Services and provide a copy of the makeup final examination which will be administered by that office. The date of the makeup exam is normally the first Saturday following the beginning of the next semester/term or summer term and is noted as the Deferred Exam Date on the official calendar.

8.3.6. Final Exam Policy

The University expects each faculty member to give a final examination unless the nature of a particular course precludes the administering of a final examination. The semester/term calendars distributed specifies the schedule of final exams. For fall and spring regular semesters, there is a separate final exam date. For shorter terms (e.g., 5 or 7 week semesters) the final exam date is the last day of class. Any change to the final exam schedule must be approved in writing and in advance (where practical) by the department chair. If changes are approved, the department chair will notify the Office of the Registrar of the schedule change.

Students have the right to review their final examinations with faculty members. For this reason, final examination papers must be kept on file for one calendar year. Continuing full-time faculty and graduate teaching assistants may keep these papers in their offices. Part-time faculty must turn in exam papers to the departmental office. In addition to the final examination, other examinations are administered and outside work assigned in a manner deemed appropriate by the instructor. Sufficient work should be assigned and evaluated prior to midterm to permit students to assess clearly their progress in the course.

8.3.7. Final Exam Rescheduling for Students

Any student whose final examination schedule is such that he or she is scheduled to take three or more examinations during a single day has the right to have one examination, typically the middle one, rescheduled. The date and time of the rescheduled examination must be by mutual agreement between the student and the affected faculty member and must be agreed upon by the end of the thirteenth week of classes. It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her instructor of the conflict, and it is the instructor's responsibility to verify that the conflict actually exists. If a student is scheduled to take four examinations during a single day, then the same procedure applies except that the student then has the right to have both the second and the third examinations rescheduled.

8.3.8. Reporting of Grades

Final grades are filed electronically by faculty members or designee, as required by FERPA. Faculty must meet the grade report deadline, which is posted in the semester/term academic calendar. Faculty are required to submit mid-term grades for 100- and 200-level courses in the current designated course management grading system.

8.3.9. Changing of Grades

As a rule, grades may be changed only by submission by the instructor of a Change of Grade form containing a written explanation of the reason for the grade change. Grade changes for X or I to a letter grade are also submitted on a Change of Grade Form. The Change of Grade form must be approved by the chair of the department or equivalent and received in the Office of the Registrar no later than two semesters from the date the original grade was assigned.

A student who believes the grade received in a course is inaccurate is permitted to request a change of course grade by utilizing the Academic Appeals process (Policy 02.01.12). The Academic Appeals Policy 02.01.12 establishes a consistent procedure for graduate and undergraduate academic appeals. An academic appeal may be filed by a student against University personnel including instructional personnel, administrators, or staff members at the University. Resolution of a student's appeals, unless otherwise specified, shall begin with the University official whose decision is being appealed. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the matter may be pursued through the appropriate administrative chain. Appeals related to course grades must be filed within 30 calendar days after the beginning of the next semester/term after the semester/term the grade was earned.

Appeals of a final course grade or other final comprehensive evaluations must be based upon one or more of the following:

1. Arithmetic or clerical error.
2. The course grade was assigned on a basis other than performance in the course.
3. The instructor used standards that were different from those allowed for other students in the same class, or different from those allowed in departmental/college/school policies if specific departmental/college/school grading policies exist.

4. Changes in course requirements or grading components as defined in the course syllabus.
5. A substantial or unannounced departure from the instructor’s previously articulated standards was used in assigning the grade.

8.3.10. Public Posting of Grades

Instructors are neither required nor encouraged to post grades publicly. If they choose to do so, FERPA guidelines must be followed.

8.3.11. Class Records

Faculty members must maintain grade records for one year after the completion of a course. Faculty members are encouraged to keep multiple copies of grades in separate locations during a term, and to double check final grades once they are entered and submitted in the designated course management system. Upon termination of services with the university, the faculty member is to turn in grade records to the department chair or program coordinator, who maintains such records in accordance with institutional policy and the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

8.4. Policy Formation

The University must preserve the primacy of shared academic governance in planning, development, and implementation of policies. Faculty should have input into departmental and institutional priorities as well as the institutional mission. The faculty, subject to review and approval by the Provost, President and Board of Trustees, has responsibility for the conduct of faculty affairs, curriculum planning, and scholarly activities.

Review The Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs is responsible for the review of this document every five years (or whenever circumstances require).

Approval

Campus Designee

Date

University Counsel

Date

Provost and Executive Vice President
for Academic Affairs

Date

Approved:

President

Date