

# GRADES

## Grade Point Average (GPA)

A grade point average is determined by dividing the total grade points earned by the number of graded semester hours of the coursework taken. The quality points for a particular course are found by multiplying the grade points assigned to the letter grade by the number of semester hours of the course. (See also: Grade Scale.)

Saint Mary's computes a semester GPA and a cumulative GPA for all graded graduate courses taken. The GPA excludes grades of courses transferred from other colleges. The GPA also excludes grades earned in undergraduate coursework taken at Saint Mary's College. The student's official GPA is maintained in the registrar's office and is truncated at two decimal places on the academic transcript.

## Grade Reports

Students may view final grades via PRISM (<http://saintmarys.edu/prism/>) through the my.saintmarys.edu (<https://my.saintmarys.edu>) portal. At the end of each semester a student will be mailed a grade report only upon request. The grade report is withheld if a student has not met all financial obligations to the College, and PRISM access denied.

## Grade Scale

At the end of each semester the student receives a final grade in each course based upon the instructor's evaluation of course requirements. The following grades are used in calculating the GPA:

Letter Grade	Grade Points per Semester Hour
A	4.00
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
F	0.00

Grades not included in calculating the GPA:

Letter Grade	Description
H/S/U	honors/satisfactory/unsatisfactory
NR	no grade reported
P	pass (course taken on pass/fail basis)
V	successful audit
W	withdrew with permission
X	incomplete

Grades lower than a B- may be awarded for courses in graduate programs and are used to calculate both semester and cumulative GPA; however, they will not be accepted for completion of graduate coursework. If a student receives lower than a grade of B- in a required course, he or she

must either retake the same course or its equivalent as determined by the program to fulfill the degree requirement.

## Graduation Requirements

### Petitioning for Graduation

A graduate student planning to participate in the commencement ceremony held in May must file a degree petition with the Office of the Registrar. This includes Degree Candidates described in the following paragraph. This petition must be approved by the Program Director of the department.

### Degree Candidates /Late Completion of Graduate Degree Requirements

If a student will have completed all of his/her degree requirements no later than the end of a given calendar year, permission may be requested from the Office of Graduate Studies to walk in commencement exercise as a "degree candidate" in the May of that calendar year (in the only ceremony Saint Mary's provides its graduates). "Graduate Degree candidates" do not receive a diploma and are not graduates of Saint Mary's College until the end of the semester following the completion of all degree requirements.

## Incomplete Grade

All work for credit is expected to be completed within the term it is attempted including independent studies. This expectation of students should also guide faculty members who teach graduate courses. That is, faculty are obligated to evaluate and grade graduate work by the end of the term in which the course is offered.

An incomplete grade (X) should only be given when an emergency or other legitimate reason prevents a student, who has been passing the course, from completing some critical portion of the required work. An incomplete grade is not automatic and must be negotiated with the course instructor prior to the final exam week. If an incomplete is granted by the instructor, the student is generally expected to complete the course requirements within 30 days after the beginning of the next term. If no change has been made by the approved due date, the grade will convert to a grade of F. Extensions for incompletes beyond 30 days require formal approval from the Graduate Program Director.

## Leave of Absence Policy

A leave of absence (LOA) is a period of time during which a student remains in the intended graduate program but is inactive. Students do not take courses at Saint Mary's College during a leave of absence or engage in academic or practicum activities that are part of their program of study.

Whenever possible, students must request a LOA in advance of the leave from the Graduate Program Director at Saint Mary's College. A LOA will only be granted under extraordinary circumstances including but not limited to such events as prolonged illness, serious injury, family circumstances, relocation, change in employment status, etc.

A request for an LOA must be made in writing and should include the length of time desired for the LOA, the reason for the leave request, and a defined plan to return to the program after the LOA is complete.

Without prior approval from the Graduate Program Director, transfer credits will not be granted for courses taken elsewhere during a leave of absence.

Students who do not qualify for or are not granted an LOA may transition to inactive status (See policy on Continuous Enrollment and Academic Standing: Inactive Academic Status). Inactive status does not require formal approval but does count against the maximum time to graduation.

## **Out of Normal Progression and Tuition Policy**

Two situations lead to a student being out of the normal program progression:

- When the student is granted a leave of absence for an extenuating circumstance; or
- When the student earns an insufficient grade (lower than B- or Unsatisfactory).

The Graduate Director will prepare an alternate progression plan for the student. Students continuing their studies out of normal progression will be notified of changes to their tuition fee structure, if any, by the Students Account Manager.

## **Pass/Fail Option**

Graduate students cannot elect a Pass/Fail grading option for graduate courses. Graduate students may elect a Pass/Fail grading option for undergraduate courses. See the "Pass/Fail Option" in the Undergraduate Policies and Programs section.

## **Permanent Record and Transcript**

A student's permanent academic record is maintained in the Office of the Registrar. Official transcripts of the permanent record are available to each student or alumna. Requests for transcripts must be submitted in writing to the registrar or through the secure area within PRISM via the [my.saintmarys.edu](http://my.saintmarys.edu) (<http://my.saintmarys.edu>) portal. Transcripts will not be issued to students or alumni who have not met their financial obligations to the College.