

# GRADES

## Academic Bankruptcy

Academic Bankruptcy may be used when an unanticipated crisis impairs a student's ability to successfully complete the semester.

- Academic Bankruptcy is not intended for students who only wish to improve their overall GPA. For a semester to be eligible for bankruptcy, the semester GPA must be below a 2.0.
- The request for Academic Bankruptcy must cite and document the circumstances for the request (e.g., financial problems, illness, or problems of a personal nature). Requests must include a plan of action for future success.
- Requests for Academic Bankruptcy must be within one academic year of the semester requested for bankruptcy (i.e., a request for a fall semester bankruptcy can take place no later than the last day of the following fall semester) or prior to returning from a leave of absence. Requests for bankruptcy should be submitted to the Dean of Student Academic Services. The Academic Standards Committee reviews the request and makes the final determination of whether Academic Bankruptcy is granted. Determination will be made no later than the start of the following semester.
- Only one semester can be forgiven; all courses in that semester will be treated the same regardless of grade and will carry the notation of bankruptcy action on the transcript. Note, that courses taken at another college (e.g., NICE consortium and Notre Dame co-exchange) during the bankrupt semester will remain on the transcript and continue to be calculated into the cumulative GPA.
- A student cannot declare academic bankruptcy more than once in their undergraduate career at Saint Mary's College. Once academic bankruptcy is declared, it can not be reversed.
- Courses that are forgiven which receive a passing grade can count towards requirement fulfillment and credit totals, consistent with all other SMC academic policies, but will not be included in the overall GPA calculation. For example, a grade of C or higher can fulfill a major requirement or a grade of D or higher can fulfill a general education requirement.

Upon receipt of the request, the Dean of Student Academic Services refers the matter to the Academic Standards Committee for its consideration. Student members of the committee will not be present. Deliberations are confidential. The chair of the committee will communicate the decision to the student. The Committee's decision is final.

## 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.

Saint Mary's computes a semester GPA and a cumulative GPA for all graded courses taken. The GPA does not include the grades of courses transferred from another college; however, it does include courses taken through the Notre Dame Co-Exchange, N.I.C.E., or Saint Mary's international programs. 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 through the my.saintmarys.edu (<http://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	Description
A	4.00	Superior
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	
B	3.00	Good
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	
C	2.00	Satisfactory
C-	1.67	
D+	1.33	
D	1.00	Poor
F	0.00	Failure

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

## Graduate Credit

A Saint Mary's undergraduate student may take up to six hours of graduate credit at Saint Mary's College or at the University of Notre Dame and apply these credits toward the undergraduate degree. Graduate courses may not be taken on a pass/fail basis. The following requirements need to be satisfied:

- The student has attained senior status and has achieved a 3.4 cumulative GPA;
- The student meets all prerequisites for the graduate course and has obtained the permission of the instructor;
- The student may register for the graduate course only after graduate students have registered.

### Notes:

- Enrollment in graduate courses at Saint Mary's does not guarantee admission to a Saint Mary's College graduate program, nor does

enrollment in the course guarantee that the credits will count toward a Saint Mary's College graduate degree.

- b. Students admitted to a 4+1 or 3+1 program or a graduate certificate program may take up to 12 hours of graduate credit at Saint Mary's once they are considered a junior (i.e., having earned 61 or more credits) and apply those credits toward the undergraduate degree.
- c. Students admitted to the 4+1 BA-MS Speech Language Pathology program or to the 3+1 MS in Data Science program may take up to 24 hours of graduate credit at Saint Mary's in the junior and senior year and apply those credits toward the undergraduate degree.

## Honors Dean's List

A student who earns a semester grade point average of 3.6 or higher with at least 12 graded hours and with no incomplete or grade lower than a C will receive academic honors.

### Graduation with Honors

The following traditional honors are awarded at graduation for excellence in academics:

Honor	Cumulative GPA
Cum laude	3.5 to 3.69
Magna cum laude	3.7 to 3.89
Summa cum laude	3.9 or above

### Valedictorian

The honor of valedictorian is conferred upon the student, or students, who has the highest cumulative grade point average in the graduating class. A student must have completed at least 80 semester hours of credit at Saint Mary's College to qualify for this honor.

(For a complete listing of College Honors and Awards (<https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/honors-awards/>))

## Hybrid Courses

Hybrid courses combine positive features of face-to-face and online instruction, and Saint Mary's College offers hybrid courses as part of our undergraduate course offerings. Hybrid courses combine online learning experiences that are not possible in the traditional classroom, with the benefits of the face-to-face classroom experience that is one of the hallmarks of a Saint Mary's education.

In a hybrid course, online learning activities offer a functional equivalent to classroom contact hours, with a subsequent reduction in the number of face-to-face meetings over the course of a semester.

When hybrid courses substitute online learning activities for classroom contact hours, the online activities need not occur for the same amount of time as the in-class contact hours they replace. Instead, the online learning activities must cover the same material and achieve the same learning outcomes as the in-class contact hours, as laid out in the course syllabus. Assessments (such as graded assignments, exams, student collaborations and student presentations, etc.) ensure that the material and outcomes are the same in the hybrid course as they would be in its wholly face-to-face counterpart.

Saint Mary's College places the following constraints on undergraduate hybrid courses:

- Hybrid courses substitute online activities for 33–50 percent of contact hours.
- Courses not designated as hybrid are expected to meet in accordance with their scheduled face-to-face session.
- Faculty may teach up to two hybrid courses during the academic year, contingent on permission from the department chair or program coordinator.
- Faculty must still hold five office hours per week on campus.

Saint Mary's College places the following limits on undergraduate student registration in hybrid courses:

- Up to 21 credits may be hybrid courses.
- Departments and Programs may limit the number of hybrid courses that a student may take in her major or minor program of study during the regular academic year.
- Sophia Program in Liberal Learning courses may be hybrid courses, subject to the same limits detailed above.
- Students may take hybrid courses from Saint Mary's College, the University of Notre Dame, or NICE Consortium institutions during the academic year, but not from other colleges or universities. Hybrid courses taken in the Co-Exchange Program with the University of Notre Dame and the N.I.C.E. program are counted in the limits set above.
- Faculty development in teaching hybrid courses is required for those who wish to do so. A syllabus of an existing course that is reconfigured as a hybrid course shall undergo an expedited review by the hybrid course committee or their designee. Active instructor engagement is expected in the online portion of the course.
- Hybrid course syllabi shall be reviewed by the department chair to ensure that they do not exceed any department limits on online activities that substitute for class time.

Student advising is key to implementing this policy. A student must demonstrate eligibility to take a hybrid course prior to registration. Failing this eligibility, the student will be blocked from registering for the hybrid course.

## Incomplete

Incompletes are used to respond to a crisis that impairs the student's ability to finish a course that they have been progressing in throughout the semester. In order to be eligible for an incomplete, a student is expected to have completed at least 70% of the work in the course and the faculty member has a reasonable expectation that the student will be able to complete the coursework independently within the first 30 days of the following semester.

A student is not eligible to be on the Dean's list if they have an incomplete for the semester. The incomplete grade will revert to an "F" on the record if not changed to a passing grade within 30 days after the beginning of the next semester.

## Independent Study/Internships

A for-credit internship (paid or unpaid) is a form of learning that integrates knowledge and skills gained in the classroom with knowledge and skills developed in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields.

*Criteria for an experience to be defined as a for-credit internship:*

- a. The experience must be an extension of the classroom; a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not simply advance the operations of the site or consist of work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
- b. The skills or knowledge learned are transferable to other settings.
- c. The experience has a defined beginning and end.
- d. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the goals of the student's academic coursework as documented in the College's learning contract, available from the Registrar's Office.
- e. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience
- f. There is at least a midterm and final evaluation completed by the relevant supervisor.
- g. The host site provides the resources, equipment, and facilities needed to support the learning objectives/goals.

Specially designed courses of study such as independent study or internships are available to juniors and seniors. Learning contracts must be completed and filed with the Registrar's office before credit can be given. Three hours (independent study) or three hours (internship) of work per week are required for every hour of credit earned. Credit should not exceed 3 hours per semester. No more than 6 hours of independent study may be taken in one department with no more than 9 hours total counting toward the 128 hours needed for a degree. For internships, generally no more than 6 hours may be applied toward the fulfillment of major requirements or toward the 128 hours required for a degree.

## Mid-semester Deficiency Notices

Instructors are required to provide deficiency notices to all students whose work is not satisfactory at midterm. Failure to receive a mid-semester deficiency notice does not preclude the possibility that the student may still fail the course, nor does it imply that the student will automatically pass the course. Mid-semester deficiencies do not become part of a student's official record. Deficiency notices are available online through PRISM.

## Pass/Fail Option

A student may choose to take a limited number of courses on a pass/fail basis. The following rules apply to such courses:

- The deadline to choose the pass/fail option is the 10th class day of the semester.
- First year students are not permitted to take a course pass/fail in the first semester.
- Sophia Program requirements and courses in the student's major or minor cannot be taken pass/fail unless they are in excess of the minimum required for a major or minor.
- Two courses may be taken pass/fail in a semester. Only six pass/fail courses total may be selected and applied to the bachelor's degree.
- A pass/fail course permit must be approved by the Office of Academic Advising & Registrar, and the student's department chair.
- Grades "A" through "F" will be assigned by the instructor, with grades "A" through "D" being recorded as "P." A grade of "F" will be included in the calculation of the grade point average.
- A decision to take a course pass/fail may not be reversed, nor may a graded course be taken pass/fail after the first 10 class days of each semester.

- A course taken pass/fail does not apply to the 12 graded hours required for calculation of honors.
- Graduate courses may not be taken on a pass/fail basis.

## Permanent Record and Transcript

A student's permanent academic record is maintained in the Registrar's Office. 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 portal. Transcripts will not be issued to students or alumnae who have not met their financial obligations to the College.