

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Credit Hours and Grading System

Credit hours are units of credit earned for successfully completing a course during a given semester. A credit or semester hour represents one hour of class work or at least two hours of laboratory work a week together with the necessary outside preparation for a semester. The number of credit hours associated with each course is included in its course description. The value of each course of instruction and the amount of work required for graduation are stated in terms of semester credit hours. The "Program Descriptions" section of the *Catalog* identifies the number of credit hours required for completion of each credential awarded by Nunez.

At the end of each semester, students will receive a grade for every credited course in which they were enrolled. A letter grade is assigned for each credit course they complete. The syllabus for each course describes the criteria for determining the course grade, which indicates the student's level of accomplishment in achieving the course objectives. Each letter grade is assigned quality points, as indicated in the chart below. Quality points earned for each course are determined by multiplying the number of quality points for each grade by the number of credit hours assigned to each course. The total number of quality points a student earns divided by the number of credit hours for those courses produces a grade point average (GPA) for the semester. Quality points are based on those credit hours of which a student registers and receives a grade of "A" – "F". Credit courses for which a student receives a grade of "P" are included in earned hours but not quality hours. Courses for which students register but late withdraw with a grade of "W" are included in attempted hours but not quality hours.

The cumulative grade point average (GPA) is the result of the grade points earned in all courses for which a student receives a letter grade, divided by the total number of credits involved in those courses. Only grades of "A", "B", "C", "D", and "F" are computed in the GPA. Grade Point Averages are rounded to the second decimal place. A cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 for all courses applied to the student's program is required for graduation.

For every course attempted, final grades are reported for each student according to the following grading system:

Letter Grade	Description	Quality Points per Credit Hour
A	Outstanding	4
B	Above Average	3
C	Average	2
D	Passing Below Avg.	1
F	Failing	0
W	Withdrawn	Not Computed
I	Incomplete	Not Computed
P	Pass	Not Computed
NP	Not Passed	Not Computed
AUD	Audit	Not Computed
-E	Excluded	Not Computed
-E	Amnesty Renewal	Not Computed

Nunez Community College accepts only transfer credits that have been awarded a grade of "C" or better, including grades of "P" or "Pass".

The grade of "P" will be awarded for non-traditional credit, non-credit, credit by exam, by-passed courses, and some lab or clinical courses accompanying a lecture course.

Cumulative Quality Hours are all hours for which a student has registered and received a final grade of "A" – "F" at the College as well as all quality hours accepted in transfer (including hours that would have been accepted had the student not earned a grade of "F").

Adjusted Quality Hours are all hours for which a student has registered and receives a grade "A" – "F", excluding those credit hours removed from the calculation of the student's grade point average (GPA) through repeat/delete policy and/or those credit hours removed through Academic Renewal.

Incomplete Grades

An "I" grade is a temporary grade that may be assigned by the instructor only in circumstances where a finite amount of work has been missed. An "I" grade may result from failure to take a final exam or failure to complete the required assignments. When issuing an "I" grade, the instructor must communicate to the student the reasons for the I grade and the work that must be completed for the grade to be converted to a letter grade and the date that all work must be completed and turned in to the instructor.

In most cases, the work must be completed no later than **mid-term of the next semester** following the semester in which the "I" grade was received unless an earlier date is agreed upon. If the "I" grade is not removed, it will convert to an "F" and will be calculated as such in the grade point average.

Repeat/Delete Policy

Students who repeat a course in which a grade of "C" or lower was earned may apply for the deletion of the earlier grade from cumulative grade point average calculations if both attempts were at Nunez. The form to apply for the Repeat/Delete Policy is available in the Student Affairs Office. The cumulative grade point average will reflect the adjusted average on grade reports and transcripts. Grades for the same course will be deleted no more than three times. Although the student may repeat a course more than three times, the prior grades will be deleted only for the first three attempts. The same limits apply to transfer students whose transcripts indicate deleted grades for repeated courses.

Students are cautioned that the grades earned in all courses attempted will remain on the transcript and that other colleges and universities may not honor the repeat/delete policy offered at Nunez.

Dean's List

At the end of each semester, the College publishes a Dean's List recognizing those students who have completed at least 12 hours with a semester GPA of at least 3.50. The Dean of Strategic Enrollment and Student Success will submit the list to the Director of Communications. Changes or corrections that occur after the list is published will not be submitted for publication.

Graduation Requirements

Students should meet on a regular basis with an advisor and make use of the Degree Works tool on LoLa to be sure that they are making progress toward the completion of their certificate or degree program. To qualify for an associate degree or certificate, students must meet the following requirements:

- a. Apply for graduation by the deadline noted in the *Catalog*. Applications are available online via LoLA. The college may initiate an application on behalf of the student.
- b. Complete the requirements of their program as described in the *Catalog* in effect at the time they enrolled. As an alternative, students may follow the requirements in the *Catalog* in effect during their final semester as long as they have been continuously enrolled. If a student changes their major, or if they do not enroll at Nunez Community College for a fall or spring semester, they must follow the program requirements described in the *Catalog* that is in effect at the time of the change of major or the return to College.
- c. Earn at least a "C" in each required major course, as identified in the *Catalog* program description, and any other courses identified in the program description. (The last grade earned is the official grade for a repeated course.) **The adjusted program grade point average must also be at least 2.00.**
- d. Complete at least 25% of required courses applied toward the degree or certificate in residence at Nunez. This percentage may not include any credit from non-traditional sources, with the exception of credit earned through credit by examination. Courses applied toward the 25% residency requirement may include the 50% of required major courses reference in #7 below.
- e. Earn no more than 25% of the total hours applied to the degree or certificate from portfolio-based, non-traditional sources.
- f. Earn no more than one-third of the credits needed in required major courses from non-traditional sources (not including credit by examination). Major courses are identified in the *Catalog* program description.
- g. Earn no less than 50% of the required major courses in residence at Nunez. Major courses are identified in the *Catalog* program description.
- h. Complete **at least** the number of credits stipulated in the degree program. In cases where courses or programs have been revised, however, an appropriate course substitution may be approved by the Program Chair responsible for that program, the Dean of Instruction, Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, or designee.
- i. Complete the required amount of 2000-level courses applicable toward an associate degree as described in the program description.
- j. Receive, in writing, approval from the Dean of Instruction, Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, or designee for any deviation from the required curriculum. Students may not apply toward graduation credit a lower-level course in a sequence after earning credit in the higher-level course.
- k. Fulfill all obligations to the College, including financial obligations, prior to established dates. Student loan recipients must complete an exit interview online at <http://www.studentaid.gov> which will be sent to the institution.
- l. The College strongly encourages participation in commencement. Students participating in the ceremony must adhere to Nunez graduation dress code. Information about specific graduation costs & procedures are sent to all applicants in the spring.
- m. The College reserves the right to confer a certificate, diploma, or degree on any student who has fulfilled the program requirements.

Students must receive written approval from the Vice-Chancellor for Education, Training and Student Success or designee for any deviation from these requirements.

Requirements for a Second Degree or Certificate

A student must meet all course requirements for a second degree or certificate and must earn at least an additional nine semester hours for a second certificate or 15 semester hours for a second degree. These hours cannot apply toward the first degree or first certificate. In addition, an official declaration of major must be on file prior to applying for a second degree or certificate so that the appropriate *Catalog* requirements can be determined.

In degree and certificate programs (e.g., LA Transfer degrees, Business Technology, General Studies Degrees, etc.) where there are several possible concentrations, a student is not eligible for a second credential if an additional concentration is completed.

Students in Discontinued Majors

Any student remaining eligible for a discontinued program who has completed 50% or more of the required courses in that program will be allowed to complete the program at Nunez. The student must complete the requirements within two years after the semester in which the program was discontinued. A student may be allowed to transfer into Nunez remaining required courses to complete the degree if Nunez can offer the courses. Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Dean of Instruction, Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, or designee.

Transfer and Re-Entry Students

Transfer and re-entry students applying for admission must note on the Application for Admission each regionally-accredited institution they have attended and must provide an official copy of each transcript in order for the College to determine their eligibility to enroll and in order to determine which transfer credits may be applied toward graduation requirements. Transfer students may be required to provide the Catalog and/or syllabi from each of the other institutions attended.

Graduation Honors

Three categories of honors are recognized at graduation. All honor graduates will wear an honor cord at graduation.

- **4.0 Graduates** are graduates in a degree/diploma program who have earned an "A" in every course attempted. These graduates will be identified as a perfect 4.00 graduate. The unadjusted cumulative/overall grade point average is used to determine this honor.
- **Chancellor's Honor Graduates (teal cord)** are students who have earned an Associate's degree and/or technical program with an adjusted program grade point average of at least 3.80 on the college-level work attempted **for the degree or diploma program.**
- **Honor Graduates (silver cord)** are students who have earned an Associate's degree and/or technical diploma with an adjusted program grade point average of a 3.50-3.79 on the college-level work attempted **for the degree or diploma program.**

Degree Designations & GPA

- **Associate Degree Recipients** – An applied/academic degree program, with a general education core component. The Associate degree can prepare students to enter the workforce or for transfer to a 4-year university. A.A. degrees are usually offered by community colleges and two-year transfer institutions.
- **Technical Diploma Recipients** - An applied, technical program (45-60 hours), often formed by combining multiple Certificates and/or

Certificates of Technical Competency. Technical Diploma programs are strictly limited to technical and community colleges.

- **Certificate Recipients** – An applied, academic, or technical program (16-34 hours), for which the certificate marks completion of a trade or, in some instances, partial mastery in a subject area.
- **Adjusted Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)** – This GPA is adjusted to exclude those quality hours and grades that have been removed from the calculation of a student's grade point average through a repeat/delete policy and/or Academic renewal.
- **Cumulative Grade Point Average** – This unadjusted grade point average is calculated using all grades earned from all institutions. This is the grade point average used to recognize "4.00 Graduates" at commencement.

Academic Status

There are three categories of academic status: academic good standing, academic probation, and academic suspension. Specific programs within the institution may set higher academic status rules.

- **Academic Good Standing** – Students whose grade point average is at least 2.00 are in academic good standing.
- **Academic Probation** – A student is placed on academic probation whenever his or her adjusted cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below a 2.00. Once on academic probation, a student remains on probation (as long as each semester's GPA is at least 2.00) until an adjusted cumulative GPA of 2.00 or higher is achieved. Students on probation are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor to discuss support services that are available to help students achieve academic success.
- **Academic Suspension** – Students who are on academic probation and who fail to achieve a semester GPA of at least 2.00 will be suspended for one semester. If a student is put on academic suspension at the conclusion of a spring semester, the student is suspended for the following fall semester. If a student is put on academic suspension at the conclusion of a fall semester, the student is suspended for the following spring semester.

Enrollment During a Suspension Period

Students who have been suspended may appeal to the Vice-Chancellor for Education, Training and Student Success if they feel that extenuating circumstances contributed to their unsatisfactory academic performance. Appeals must be submitted prior to the end of regular registration for the semester for which the student wants to enroll. Appeals may be granted or denied. As a condition of enrollment during a suspension period, the courses in which the student is allowed to enroll may be limited. If a suspended student is granted permission to enroll, and earns a semester grade point average of less than 2.00, another one-semester suspension will occur.

Credits earned by students while on suspension may or may not be accepted toward a degree or certificate at other institutions. Individual colleges and universities determine whether students will be awarded credit for courses taken while on suspension. Therefore, all students on suspension who intend to transfer should confer with the transfer institution prior to enrolling.

Academic Appeals

This policy governs the conditions under which a student may initiate an Academic Appeal and provides a procedure for conducting the appeal process.

This policy applies to academic grievances not addressed in Nunez's Student Complaint Policy, Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, and other College policies that govern student grievances. Through the procedure outlined in this policy, students may petition for a final grade change, initiate a retroactive withdrawal request, or request removal from a first-time academic suspension.

Academic appeals are not used for financial aid appeals or refund requests.

An Academic Appeal may be initiated by a student who believes that their academic performance is not accurately reflected in the final grade they have received for a course or by a student who believes that their academic record or academic status should be corrected, updated, or changed due to extenuating circumstances not previously considered by the College.

The policy provides students with due process for submitting academic appeals. Failure to follow the policy procedures by faculty and staff of Nunez Community College would deny students their due process rights. Students who do not follow the procedures, including, but not limited to, adhering to the timeline for filing an appeal and providing supporting documentation, may have their appeal denied on those grounds.

Final Grade Appeal

Students may only appeal a final course grade after the grade has been issued at the end of the semester. Unresolved grading issues that arose earlier in the semester may become the basis for a formal course grade appeal once the semester has ended and a final course grade has been assigned. Although the grade appeal process may only be used to contest grading issues that impact the final course grade, faculty members and students should attempt to find a resolution to any grade dispute before it escalates to a formal grade appeal once final grades have been issued.

A student who is dissatisfied with an instructor's grading decision during a semester should discuss the issue with the instructor and attempt to resolve the matter informally. A student who believes that a grading issue has not been satisfactorily resolved may choose to submit a grade appeal if they feel that the unresolved grading issue has adversely affected the final grade of the course. The burden of proof is on the student to demonstrate why the grade should be changed.

All academic appeals must be initiated within thirty (30) business days of the awarding of the final grade, except in the case of extenuating circumstances that could not have been known within the designated petition period as deemed appropriate by the academic dean of the course in question. If the faculty member who assigned the grade is no longer at the college, the student should begin the appeal process with the academic dean of the appropriate department, discipline, or subject area.

Students may appeal final course grades if they believe the following:

- The final grade in question is based on an error in calculation, and the student has tangible evidence to support the claim that an error had been made.

- The assessment resulting in the assigned grade did not follow the grading criteria, standards, and requirements as stated in the course syllabus.
- The instructor did not apply grading criteria uniformly to evaluate the student's academic work compared with the work of other students.
- Without notifying students, the instructor departed substantially from his or her previously articulated written standards in determining the grade.
- The instructor demanded, as a condition of passing a course, a requirement not germane to the subject matter of the course.

An appeal shall not be used to question the professional judgment of a faculty member, the content of an examination, or any previously articulated and unaltered course or assignment requirement.

If a student feels as if they have cause to submit a grade appeal on the abovementioned grounds, the grade appeal procedure is as follows:

Level 1

The student informally meets with the instructor to discuss the final grade. In this meeting, the instructor will explain the rationale for awarding the grade in question. The student is responsible for demonstrating why the grade should be changed. If, in this informal meeting, it is determined that the grade should be changed, the instructor completes and submits a grade change form. If the instructor is not available to meet face-to-face, email correspondence between the student and the instructor will be regarded as an informal meeting.

If a grade appeal involves an instructor no longer employed by the college or an instructor who is unavailable for an extended period of time, the student may appeal in writing to the appropriate academic dean, who will attempt to serve as mediator between the student and the instructor. If this mediation does not end in a resolution, the dean will convene a two-person committee of faculty members of the former instructor's program who also teach in the same subject area of the course in question or who have expertise in a closely related field of study. This committee will review the contents of the student's appeal within seven (7) working days of receiving the appeal and offer a recommendation to the dean to deny or approve the appeal. The dean will review the reading committee's recommendation and render a written decision (including a brief rationale) to deny or approve the appeal within five (5) working days.

Level 2

If the final grade dispute is not resolved through Level 1 of the grade-appeal process, the student may proceed with the next level.

- The student must submit the following documents to the appropriate academic dean. The Academic Appeal Form may be found in the Forms Clearinghouse on the Nunez website.
 - Academic Appeal Form
 - A letter explaining the student's reason(s) for the grade appeal
 - Any supporting documentation the student deems relevant evidence for why the grade should be changed
- The dean receiving the Academic Appeal Form will forward all appeal documents to the instructor's Program Chair. The Program Chair will provide the faculty member with a copy of the appeal. The faculty member shall provide the Program Chair with a statement concerning the basis for the grade with any supporting documentation. The Program Chair will discuss the appeal with the student and faculty member as needed and, after review, render a decision on the appeal and, in writing, notify each party of this decision.

- The student may appeal the Program Chair's decision, in writing, to the appropriate academic dean. The dean will convene the Grade Appeal Committee. The committee will consist of three faculty members (one who teaches in the subject area in which the grade was given), two officers of the Nunez Student Government Association, a representative of Student Affairs, and the dean (as a non-voting chairperson). The chairperson will be responsible for assuring adherence to the established procedures and for maintaining records. The chairperson has authority to grant a warranted time extension in the appeal process. The chairperson will share all appeal documents to the committee members, who will review the documents within seven (7) calendar days from the date they are received. At the end of this seven-day period, the committee will meet to discuss the evidence and render a decision.

- If the committee (by a majority vote of the committee membership) recommends changing the original grade, the chairperson will inform both the student and the faculty member of the decision. If both the student and the faculty member agree to this outcome, the chairperson will submit a Grade Change form to the Registrar.
- If the committee (by a majority vote of the committee membership) recommends upholding the original grade, the chairperson will inform both the student and the faculty member of the decision.

A written report of the committee's decision will be sent to the chairperson no later than three (3) working days after the conclusion of the hearing. The chairperson will forward the committee's written decision to all parties no later than five (5) working days after receiving the decision.

Level 3

If the appeal is denied, the student may submit an explanation to the dean (the Grade Appeal Committee Chairperson) an explanation detailing why the appeal should be reviewed again. The dean will forward this explanation and all documents originally reviewed by the Grade Appeal Committee to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success, who will consider the evidence and render a decision. The decision of the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success is final.

If the faculty member wishes to appeal the decision of the Grade Appeal Committee, they may submit to the dean (the Grade Appeal Committee Chairperson) an explanation detailing why the originally assigned grade should be upheld. The dean will forward this explanation and all documents originally reviewed by the Grade Appeal Committee to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success, who will consider the evidence and render a decision. The decision of the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success is final.

Retroactive Withdrawal

The Academic Calendar, posted on the College's website, lists the deadlines by which students may withdraw from their courses. Each semester and mini-session are given their own withdrawal deadline, which students are responsible for knowing and adhering to. Students may not withdraw from a course (with a grade of W) after these posted deadlines. However, they may petition for a retroactive withdrawal, granted after the withdrawal deadline of the semester in question, if they meet the criteria outlined below. A course from which the student has withdrawn, including retroactively, will remain on the student's academic record with a grade of W.

The College discourages retroactive changes to students' academic records and considers exceptions to this rule only when a student makes

a compelling case that a retroactive withdrawal is appropriate and provides documentation supporting this case.

Appeals for retroactive withdrawals must be submitted no more than sixty (60) days from the end of the course for which the student is requesting a retroactive withdrawal and must be grounded in what the College considers an appropriate condition for an appeal. Appropriate conditions for appeals are typically acts beyond the reasonable control of the student that prevented them from withdrawing from the course by the withdrawal deadline posted to the Academic Calendar.

Examples of appropriate conditions for appeals:

- Death of an immediate family member (spouse/domestic partner, child, sibling, parent, grandparent)
- Physician-documented onset of a mental health or medical condition, including pregnancy, that prohibited continued attendance
- Accident or injury that prohibited continued attendance
- Administrative error made by the college
- Call to active military duty or training or voluntary armed services enlistment
- Relocation or the necessity to leave the country to take care of the health of an immediate family member (spouse/domestic partner, child, sibling, parent, grandparent)

The abovementioned examples do not constitute an exhaustive list of potentially legitimate conditions for which to request a retroactive withdrawal. The burden of proof is on the student to explain why any of these (or other) conditions prevented them from dropping the course by the withdrawal deadline posted to the Academic Calendar.

Examples of unacceptable conditions for appeals:

- Forgetting to withdraw from a course(s) by the deadline published on the Academic Calendar
- Bad personal habits or poor judgment
- Lack of knowledge of deadlines or other college policies
- Insufficient resources to pay tuition
- Known medical condition, injury, or illness that has not changed materially since the time of enrollment in the course
- Unsubstantiated claims of LoLA (student management system) error when attempting to withdraw

Students who believe they have cause to request a retroactive withdrawal must adhere to the following procedure:

- a. The student completes the online Academic Appeal Form, selecting the appropriate type of appeal process (e.g., Retroactive Withdrawal) and attaches digital copies of documentation that supports the student's appeal. This documentation must include the following:
 - i. Written verification from the instructor who taught the course in which the student is requesting a grade of W that the student never completed the course, including the student's last day of attendance in the course
 - ii. A statement from the student's academic advisor verifying that withdrawal from this course will not affect other classes on the student's transcript (e.g., prerequisites)
 - iii. All other relevant documentation that supports the student's appeal, including an explanation as to why the student did not withdraw from the course by the deadline posted to the Academic Calendar

- b. The form will be routed to either the Dean of Instruction or the Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, as appropriate, who will review the documentation submitted with the appeal and will choose to approve or deny the request.
- c. The form will then be routed to the Dean of Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Success, who will review the documentation submitted with the appeal and will choose to approve or deny the request.
- d. The form will then be routed to the Director of Financial Aid, who will review the documentation submitted with the appeal and will choose to approve or deny the request.
- e. The form will then be routed to the Bursar, who will review the documentation submitted with the appeal and will choose to approve or deny the request.
- f. If all parties deny the appeal, the matter will be closed, and the course grade currently on the student's transcript will remain. This decision is final. If all parties approve the appeal, the appeal form will be routed to the Registrar, and the course grade will be changed to a W. If all parties do not render identical decisions on the student's appeal, the appeal will be routed to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success, who will review the appeal documents and render a decision. This decision is final.

Academic Suspension Removal

Students who are on academic probation and who fail to achieve a semester GPA of at least 2.00 will be suspended for one semester. If a student is put on academic suspension at the conclusion of a spring semester, the student is suspended for the following fall semester. If a student is put on academic suspension at the conclusion of a fall semester, the student is suspended for the following spring semester.

Students who are under a first-time suspension may appeal to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success if they feel that extenuating circumstances contributed to their unsatisfactory academic performance. Appeals must be submitted prior to the end of regular registration in the semester for which the student wants to enroll.

As a condition of enrollment during a suspension period, the courses in which the student is allowed to enroll may be limited. If a suspended student is granted permission to enroll, and earns a semester grade point average of less than 2.00, another one-semester suspension will occur.

Credits earned by students while on suspension may or may not be accepted toward a degree or certificate at other institutions. Individual colleges and universities determine whether students will be awarded credit for courses taken while on suspension. Therefore, all students on suspension who intend to transfer should consult with the transfer institution prior to enrolling.

Students who believe they have cause to be removed from Academic Suspension must adhere to the following procedure:

- a. The student completes the online Academic Appeal Form, selecting the appropriate type of appeal process (e.g., Removal from Academic Suspension) and attaches digital copies of documentation that supports the student's appeal.
- b. The form will be routed to either the Dean of Instruction or the Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, as appropriate, who will retain a copy of the appeal form for their records and forward it to the Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success.
- c. The Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success will review the appeal and render a decision, which is final.

- d. If the appeal is approved, the form will be routed to the Dean of Strategic Enrollment Management and Student Success, who will direct the Registrar to remove the student from Academic Suspension.

The Vice Chancellor for Education, Training, and Student Success may impose certain conditions that the student must abide by, should the appeal be granted. These conditions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Consultation with an academic advisor before the student is allowed to enroll in courses
- A limitation to the number of courses the student may enroll in for that semester
- Mandatory regular meetings with an Academic Advisor or Student Success Coach
- Mandatory tutoring in the subject area(s) in which the student has shown poor academic performance

Academic Status Determination in Specific Majors

Faculty in a given major may, with the approval from the Vice Chancellor of Education, Training, and Student Success or designee, establish higher academic standards for admission to, continuation in, and/or re-entry to that major. At present, the only areas with such higher academic standards are Emergency Medical Technology, Process Technology-Fast Track, Practical Nursing, and Teaching.