

AUGSBURG COLLEGE  
Academic Affairs Committee (AAC)  
**Academic Policy Proposal**

**Grading Policy:**

**Letter Grade System, P-Grade and Minimum Grade Standard**

See [Appendix A \(Current GPA Requirements 2016-17\)](#)

See [Appendix B \(Augsburg Transcript Key\)](#)

See [Appendix C \(Current Catalog Copy\)](#)

See [Appendix D \(Proposed Catalog Copy\)](#)

A. Proposal Information

1. Department: **Registrar and Academic Affairs**
2. Name of person(s) who will answer questions about this proposal: **Crystal Comer and Amy Gort**
3. If approved, when will the proposed change take effect? *Substantive policy changes should be implemented in the fall semester and require approval no later than the preceding fall to allow sufficient time for implementation and communication. **Fall 2017***

B. Detailed Policy Information

1. Clearly state your proposal and rationale. Please provide evidence of the need for this revision and how the changes will improve student learning and operations.

**This proposal has three parts:**

A. Approval of this proposal would result in changing from our current numeric grade system to a letter grade system and would articulate a common grading scale used for all Augsburg College courses (graduate and undergraduate).

Grade	Description	Grade Points
A	Excellent	4.0
A-		3.67
B+		3.33
B	Good	3.0
B-		2.67
C+		2.33
C	Acceptable	2.0
C-		1.67
D+		1.33
D	Poor	1.0
D-		0.67
F	Failure	0.0
P	Pass*	0.0
N	No Pass	0.0

\* The letter grade equivalent of a P grade is a C- / 1.67 or higher for undergraduate courses and a B / 3.0 or higher for graduate courses.

B. In addition, approval would change the P grade to a true passing grade of C- or higher for undergraduate courses. The P grade would remain at a B or higher for graduate courses.

C. Finally, and due to item B above, approval of this proposal would set a minimum grade standard of C-/1.67 for undergraduate core curriculum and major courses that employ a minimum grade requirement (from a 2.0) to align with our current transfer course policies. AAC approved the transfer credit policy on 4-27-2015.

*Note: Graduate programs with minimum grade requirements of 2.5 will be consulted to determine if a B- or a C+ is the most appropriate conversion based on program needs.*

### **Summary:**

#### ***Undergraduate Courses***

This proposal would reset the undergraduate minimum to C- /1.67 for:

- Grades of P in any course.
- Any individual course that now has a 2.0 requirement, such as:
  - ENL101 - Developmental Writing , ENL 111 - Effective Writing, ENL 112 - Advanced Effective Writing or HON 111 - Honors Effective Writing
  - MAT 103 - Prealgebra, MAT105 - Applied Algebra
  - Modern Language I & II
  - Major courses with a 2.0 grade minimum

But not for:

- Cumulative GPA for graduation.
- Cumulative GPA for the major.

#### ***Graduate Courses***

This proposal would not change the graduate minimum grade requirement of B / 3.0.

- *Note: Graduate programs with minimum grade requirements of 2.5 will be consulted to determine if a B- or a C+ is the most appropriate conversion based on program needs.*

But not for:

- Cumulative GPA for graduation.
- Cumulative GPA for the major.

## Rationale for these Changes

- A. Change to a Letter Grade (with + and -) System:** Augsburg students' transcripts are being used to compare our students to those from other institutions. When our grading policies are not in alignment with other colleges, our students' achievements may be misunderstood. The majority of our local peer institutions employ a letter grading scale (with + and -) including, the University of Minnesota, Hamline University, St. Catherine University, St. Thomas University, Macalester College, St. Olaf College, Carleton College, and schools in the Minnesota State system. Because we do not currently use a letter grade system our students' grades are harder for external audiences to interpret (employers, graduate or professional schools, transfer institutions, etc.). In addition, our current numeric grade system can disadvantage our students when they calculate their cumulative GPA in that we do not offer numeric grades equivalent to plus/minus grades. For example, if a student earned a 3.5 it might be equivalent to an A- which would be converted to a 3.67 by other institutions in GPA calculations.

At present we have two separate grading systems for graduate and undergraduate courses (see Appendix B, Augsburg Transcript Key). We propose a single grading system to be used in both graduate and undergraduate courses. Minimum standards for graduate students can still be maintained through minimum course grades.

- B. Changes to our P/N Grading System:** Currently undergraduate students must earn at least a 2.0/C and graduate students must earn at least a 3.0/B to earn a P grade if they have elected a P/N grading option.

Making a change to a letter grading system provides an opportunity to review our practices in comparison to other schools. In our area, it is very common for a P grade to be given to undergraduate students who earn a C-/1.67 or better; that policy is in place for undergraduate students at St. Catherine University, St. Thomas University, and Hamline University. The University of Minnesota, Carleton College and St. Olaf College offer a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading option that equates Satisfactory with a C-/1.67 grade. At Winona State undergraduate students must earn a D/1.0 to receive a passing grade if they elect that grading option, and undergraduate students at Mankato State must earn a C/2.0 to receive a passing grade.

Although it is common at our peer institutions for graduate students to earn a P grade when they have earned at least a B-/2.67 we are not seeking this change at this time. For courses to apply to a graduate program (and meet a passing standard) St. Catherine University requires a B-/2.67 or better, University of Minnesota and St. Thomas University require a C-/1.67 or better, Hamline University requires a B-/2.67 or better. Again, we are not asking for a change to the P grade in graduate programs at this time.

We are basing the proposal to change a passing grade to a C-/1.67 for undergraduate students based on the prevalence of that practice among our local peer institutions.

- C. Changes to Minimum Grade Standards:** A significant number of majors and programs at Augsburg have designated minimum course grades for specific courses in the major or program. In graduate programs the minimum is often set at 3.0/B, while in undergraduate majors the minimum is typically set at 2.0/C.

At the undergraduate level, these minimum grades do not match our current transfer policies which indicate that students can transfer undergraduate courses in which they have earned a C-/1.67. This means that a student could transfer a course but not be able to apply it to their major or program despite having earned a grade that is slightly below good or average.

There is some evidence that our minimum grade practices do not match those at peer institutions. Some local peer institutions use a C-/1.67 as proficient in undergraduate STEM prerequisite courses. For example, St. Thomas University, Hamline University, St. Catherine University and the University of Minnesota use a C-/1.67 as proficient to move forward from General Chemistry I to General Chemistry II. St. Thomas University and the University of Minnesota use a C-/1.67 as proficient to move forward from Calculus I to Calculus II. Hamline University does not have a minimum grade for Calculus I and St. Catherine University has a C/2.0 minimum for Calculus I. Reviewing course catalogs for minimum grades for introductory writing courses reveals no minimum grade policies for similar courses at Hamline University, St. Catherine University, St. Thomas University, or at the University of Minnesota. St. Olaf requires a minimum C/2.0 grade for its introductory composition course (part of a two-course series). The information collected from local graduate programs about passing grades (see information above) also suggests that setting a minimum grade for graduate students of a B-/2.67 would bring our practices into alignment with other institutions, however, we are not asking for this change at this time.

Finally, it is important to consider passing grades and minimum grades together at the undergraduate level where the ability to change grading options exists. We have made a strong argument for changing the grade required to earn a P grade to a C-/1.67 for undergraduate students based on practices of other schools that have well-established letter grade systems. However, if the passing grade requirements do not match minimum grade standards then students will not be able to elect a P/N grading option for any courses that have a minimum grade requirement. To best support our students, it is important that these two grade standards align at the undergraduate level.

For undergraduate programs that are externally accredited, exceptions may be developed for minimum grades in major courses to ensure that accreditation standards are met and that transfer credits are not impacted.

**Taken together, these three changes to our grading policies will have a number of positive impacts for both graduate and undergraduate students:**

- **Our grading practices will be aligned with practices at other institutions.**
- **Following common practices will improve the ability of external stakeholders to fairly evaluate our students.**
- **Aligning undergraduate passing grade requirements with minimum course requirements will ensure that courses for which students earn a P grade will also apply towards majors or programs, when P grades are allowed.**

- **Aligning undergraduate transfer grade requirements with minimum course requirements will ensure that courses we accept in transfer at a C- will also apply toward majors or programs.**

2. Please provide the existing policy language (for revisions) from [the current edition of the Academic Catalog](#) here or as an attachment.

See [Appendix C \(Current Catalog Copy\)](#).

3. Please provide the proposed/new policy language. Do not include any commentary or rationale within this catalog copy. It should appear exactly as it would in the Academic Catalog. Please see the current edition for formatting and style.

See [Appendix D \(Proposed Catalog Copy\)](#).

C. Impact of Proposal

1. How will these changes affect current students? In the case of revisions to a current policy, will current students follow the former or the new policy?

**The impact of these policy changes is summarized above. Current and new students will be subject to these policy changes starting Fall 2017 but the changes will not applied retroactively. In particular, grades earned before Fall 2017 will remain as previously recorded.**

2. How will these changes impact other departments?

**Many departments and programs have identified courses that have minimum grades. Adoption of this proposal would set a new minimum grade standard for all these courses at the undergraduate level. Departments and programs can still maintain their high academic standards in this new letter grading system.**

3. Are there any enrollment or revenue implications of this policy proposal? In the case of revisions to a current policy, how might this change be perceived by prospective students?

**Aligning the transfer grade policy and the minimum course standards may attract more transfer students to our undergraduate programs because their transferred courses will allow them to progress in their major or program.**

D. Resource Needs

1. What additional resources will be required as a result of this proposal?

**Workload in Registrar and IT to make the system changes in Agresso and on Records and Registration.**

2. What additional information technology resources will be required to implement and support this proposal?

**Web developer time will be needed.**

E. Comments

Please include any additional information or supporting materials that will help AAC evaluate this proposal.

**None**

F. Approvals

1. If you are not the policy owner, approval of the policy owner is required. Email [registrar@augsborg.edu](mailto:registrar@augsborg.edu) if you are not sure who the policy owner is.

Crystal Comer

**Crystal Comer, Registrar**

2. If your proposal impacts other departments, programs, or offices, list them below and obtain the signature of the chair or director to indicate their support of your proposal.

Dallas Liddle

**Dal Liddle, English Department Chair**

**John Zobitz, Mathematics and Statistics Department Chair**

**Michael Kidd, Languages and Cross-Cultural Studies Department Chair**

**Eileen Uzarek, HPE Department Chair**

**Debbie Shapiro, General Studies (GST) Director**

3. Proposals also require the signature of the academic dean who oversees departments impacted by the change. If the change impacts both Arts & Sciences and Professional Studies, both signatures are required. If the change has potential enrollment or revenue implications, the signature of the Vice President of Enrollment Management or your divisional VP (if other than VP-EM or Provost) is also required.

Amy Gort

**Amy Gort, Dean of Arts and Sciences**

Keith Gilsdorf

**Keith Gilsdorf, Interim Dean of Professional Studies**

4. If this revision requires additional Information Technology resources to implement and/or sustain the change, the signature of the Director of Information Technology is required.

**Scott Krajewski, Director of Information Technology**

5. All academic policy changes require the signature of the Provost.

Karen Kaivola

**Karen Kaivola, Provost**

The screenshot shows a vertical list of comments in a document. Each comment includes a profile picture, the name of the commenter, the time and date, and the text of the comment. The comments are as follows:

- Crystal Comer**, 11:38 AM Nov 30: "I support." (Resolve button)
- Dallas Liddle**, 1:26 PM Today: "Delete paragraph" and "Add: 'Dallas Liddle'" (Checkmark and X buttons)
- John Zobitz**, 9:37 PM Dec 2: "I support." (Resolve button)
- Michael Kidd**, 12:16 PM Dec 14: "LCS abstains." (Resolve button)
- Eileen Uzarek**, 6:37 PM Dec 6: "HPE supports." (Resolve button)
- Debbie Shapiro**, 2:19 PM Dec 5: "I support." (Resolve button)
- Amy Gort**, 12:59 PM Today: "Add: 'Amy Gort'" (Checkmark and X buttons)
- Keith Gilsdorf**, 4:59 PM Yesterday: "Add: 'Keith Gilsdorf'" (Checkmark and X buttons)
- Scott Krajewski**, 10:37 AM Dec 19: "I support." (Resolve button)
- Karen Kaivola**, 9:54 AM Today: "Add: 'Karen Kaivola'" (Checkmark and X buttons)

## Appendix A - Current Undergraduate GPA Requirements 2016-17

### College GPA Requirements (not impacted by this proposal)

- 2.0 over better cumulative GPA
- 2.0 or better cum GPA in major
- 2.0 or better cum GPA in minors

### Developmental Courses that require 2.0/P or better:

- MAT 103 Pre-Algebra and MAT105 Applied Algebra
- ENL 101 Developmental Writing
- ENL 217/218 English as a Second Language
- GST 100 Critical Thinking

### Core Curriculum requirements that require 2.0/P or better:

- ENL 111 Effective Writing (or ENL 112 or HON 111)
- Modern Language I and II
- WEL 100 Foundations of Wellness and WEL 1XX Recreational Activity

### Departmental Policies

Unless specified, assume that major or minors require a 2.0 minimum cumulative GPA in every academic department. The exceptions are as follows - copy is from the academic catalog.

\*Majors notated with an asterisk are licensure programs, and likely have GPA requirements based on licensure requirements.

### Biology

Students must earn a minimum grade of 1.0 and an average grade of 2.0 in BIO 151 and 152. Supporting course requirements in chemistry, mathematics, physics, and communication must be satisfied with a grade of 2.0 or higher to satisfy either major or prerequisite requirements. A grade of 2.0 or higher is required in BIO 253 and BIO 255 in order to fulfill major requirements and to fulfill the prerequisite requirements of several upper division biology electives. A grade of 2.0 or higher must be earned in all upper division biology courses applied toward meeting the requirements of a major. All biology courses applied toward the major must be traditionally graded. A GPA of 2.5 in biology courses is required for the life science major.

### Biopsychology

An average grade of 2.0, with no grade below a 1.0 is required for BIO 151 and 152. A grade of 2.0 or above is required for all courses (200 level and above) applied to the major.

**Chemistry**

Students must earn a grade of 2.0 or better in each course that applies toward the major or minor in chemistry. At least two CHM courses numbered above 300 must be taken at Augsburg. A course must be completed with a grade of 2.0 or higher to count as a prerequisite for any chemistry course. A minimum GPA of 2.5 in chemistry courses is required for any chemistry major.

**Computer Science**

A course must be completed with a grade of 2.0 or higher to be counted as completing a major or minor requirement.

**\*Education (required for licensure)**

A minimum GPA of 2.50 overall, 2.50 in the major, 2.00 in the specialty area, and grades of P in student teaching courses are required for licensure as well as 2.0 or better in all required core, specialty, and education major courses. The equivalent of two full courses graded P/N, plus student teaching, is the maximum allowed within the Elementary Education major requirements.

**\*Health and Physical Education**

All students seeking teaching licensure must receive a minimum grade of 2.0 in all required courses with an HPE prefix.

**Modern Language**

Any prerequisite must be completed with a minimum grade of 2.0 or P.

**Mathematics**

Students must earn a grade of 2.0 or better in each course that applies toward the major. A course must be completed with a grade of 2.0 or higher to count as a prerequisite for a Mathematics course.

**\* Music Education**

A cumulative GPA of 2.50 in all Music courses is necessary for the Music Education licensure program.

**\*Music Therapy**

A minimum grade of 2.5 in all music therapy courses is required.

**\*Nursing**

A minimum grade of 2.0 in each nursing course and a cumulative major GPA of 2.5 are required.

**Political Science**

A 2.0 minimum grade is required in all courses taken for the major.

**Religion**

Students are required to have at least a 2.0 GPA in courses counted toward the major or minor.

**\*Social work**

Social Work majors must have a cumulative 2.20 GPA to enter the program. Students who do not meet this minimum GPA standard will be given an opportunity to explain their GPA and may be considered for conditional admission. Admission to the program is required as a prerequisite for those 300- and 400 level courses restricted to Social Work majors only. Contact the Social Work Department for details.

**Sociology**

Majors must have a 2.0 or higher in each required course (SOC 121, 362, 363, 485, and 490) to receive credit in the major.

**Urban Studies**

A minimum GPA of 2.0 in the core courses is required for the major.

## Appendix B - Current Transcript Key



**REGISTRAR'S OFFICE**  
 2211 Riverside Avenue  
 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55454  
 612-330-1036  
[www.augsburg.edu/registrar](http://www.augsburg.edu/registrar)  
 FICE CODE: 002334

### ACCREDITATION:

Augsburg College is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Specific program accreditation can be found in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs.

### ASSOCIATED COLLEGES OF THE TWIN CITIES:

Augsburg College is a member of the Associated Colleges of the Twin Cities (ACTC), an exchange program with Hamline University, Macalester College, St. Catherine University, and the University of St. Thomas. The University of Minnesota participates on a limited basis.

### ACADEMIC CALENDAR:

All programs operate on a semester calendar effective Fall 2013.

### HISTORY

Fall 2002 to Present	Semester calendar
Fall 1982 to Summer 2013 <i>Weekend College Program</i>	Trimester calendar
Fall 1972 to Summer 2002	Semester calendar with January Interim
Fall 1966 to Summer 1972	Quarter calendar
Prior to Fall 1966	Semester calendar

### CREDITS:

All credits appearing on this transcript are expressed in semester credits. Historical credit values have been converted to semester credits.

### HISTORY

Fall 2013 to Present	Semester credits
Fall 1972 to Summer 2013	Units (1.0 unit equaled 4 semester credits or 6 quarter credits)
Fall 1966 to Summer 1972	Quarter credits
Prior to Fall 1966	Semester credits

### COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM:

Number	Level
100 & 200	Undergraduate (lower division)
300 & 400	Undergraduate (upper division)
500 & 600	Graduate
700 & 800	Doctoral

### SYMBOLS FOLLOWING COURSE NUMBERS:

Symbol	Explanation
L	Lab
W	Weekend College course
CE	Continuing Education

### EXCHANGE PROGRAM COURSES

Symbol	Explanation
C	ACTC-St. Catherine University course
H	ACTC-Hamline University course
M	ACTC-Macalester College course
T	ACTC-University of St. Thomas course
U	ACTC-University of Minnesota course
MDC	Minnesota Dept. of Corrections Course
MS	McNally Smith College of Music course

### GRADING SYMBOLS:

Symbol	Explanation
P	Pass, 2.0 or higher undergraduate or 3.0 or higher graduate work
S	Satisfactory
N	No pass, no credit
V	Audit, no credit
W	Withdrawn
I	Incomplete
X	Incomplete
IP	In progress
R	Repeat
GRT	Credit granted
L	Required lab section
NG	Not graded, no credit

### REPEATED COURSES:

Repeated courses are designated by two (2) means: The repeated course grade may be placed in a bracket or may be indicated with an asterisk and with an 'R' grade. In both instances, the indicated courses are no longer computed in the grade point average.

### GRADING SYSTEM:

#### DECEMBER 1973 TO PRESENT

#### UNDERGRADUATE

Grade	Grade Points
4.0	4.0 (Highest standard of excellence)
3.5	3.5
3.0	3.0 (Above basic standards)
2.5	2.5
2.0	2.0 (Meets basic standards)
1.5	1.5
1.0	1.0 (Below basic standards)
0.5	0.5
0.0	0.0 (Unacceptable, no credit)
FN	0.0 (Unacceptable, no credit)

#### GRADUATE

Grade	Grade Points
4.0	4.0 (Highest standard of excellence)
3.5	3.5 (Above basic standards)
3.0	3.0 (Meets acceptable standards)
2.5	2.5 (Meets minimum standards)
2.0	0.0 (Unacceptable, no credit)
1.5	0.0 (Unacceptable, no credit)
1.0	0.0 (Unacceptable, no credit)
0.5	0.0 (Unacceptable, no credit)
0.0	0.0 (Unacceptable, no credit)
FN	0.0 (Unacceptable, no credit)

FALL 1966 to FALL 1972		PRIOR TO FALL 1966	
Grade	Grade Points	Grade	Grade Points
A	4.0	A	3.0
B	3.0	B	2.0
C	2.0	C	1.0
D	1.0	D	0.0
F	0.0	F	-1.0

RELEASE OF INFORMATION: Pursuant to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, information contained on this transcript may not be released to a third party without written consent of the student.

## Appendix C - Current Catalog Copy

### *Undergraduate Policy (Current)*

#### **Explanation of Grades**

The official delivery of end-of-term grades to students is online via AugNet Records and Registration.

Student achievement in courses is measured by final examinations, shorter tests, written papers, oral reports, and other types of evaluation.

Most courses are offered with grading options—traditional grading on a 4.0 to 0.0 scale or the Pass/No Credit grading system.

The following is an explanation of undergraduate grades:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
4.0	Achieves highest standards of excellence
3.5	
3.0	Achieves above basic course standards
2.5	
2.0	Meets basic standards for the course
1.5	
1.0	Performance below basic course standards
0.5	
0.0	Unacceptable performance (no credit for the course)
FN	Unacceptable performance (no credit for the course), student stopped attending
P	Represents work at 2.0 or higher (not counted in grade point average)
N	No credit (not counted in grade point average)
V	Audit
W	Withdrawn
I	Incomplete
X	In progress, extended beyond term of registration

## **Graduate Policy (Current)**

### **Evaluation and Grading**

Evaluation of academic performance in each program will be based on number grades using a 4.0 point scale, where 4.0 achieves highest standards of excellence. See each program for details of field study and special projects. Students must achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA in order to graduate; Physician Assistant students must consult the PA Program Progression Standards Policy. Grading option cannot be changed from traditional (0.0 - 4.0) to Pass/No Credit.

Explanation of grades for Graduate Studies:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
4.0	Achieves highest standards of excellence
3.5	Achieves above acceptable standards
3.0	Meets acceptable standards
2.5	Meets minimum standards
2.0–0.0	Unacceptable performance
FN	Unacceptable performance, student stopped attending
P	Represents work at 3.0 or higher (not counted in grade point average)
N	No credit (not counted in grade point average)
V	Audit
W	Withdrawn
I	Incomplete
X	In progress, extended beyond term of registration

## Appendix D - Proposed Catalog Copy

### *Undergraduate Policy (Proposed)*

#### **Explanation of Grades**

Evaluation of academic performance is based on letter grades using an A-F scale.

Student achievement in courses is measured by final examinations, shorter tests, written papers, oral reports, and other types of evaluation.

Most courses are offered with grading options—traditional grading on an A - F scale or the Pass/No Credit grading system.

Explanation of undergraduate grades:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Grade Points</b>
A	Excellent	4.0
A-		3.67
B+		3.33
B	Good	3.0
B-		2.67
C+		2.33
C	Satisfactory	2.0
C-		1.67
D+		1.33
D	Poor	1.0
D-		0.67
F	Failure	0.0
P	Pass*	0.0
N	No Credit	0.0

\* The letter grade equivalent of a P grade is a C- / 1.67 or higher for undergraduate courses and a B / 3.0 or higher for graduate courses.

## **Graduate Policy (Proposed)**

### **Explanation of Grades**

Evaluation of academic performance is based on letter grades using an A-F scale.

Explanation of grades for graduate grades:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Grade Points</b>
A	Excellent	4.0
A-		3.67
B+		3.33
B	Good	3.0
B-		2.67
C+		2.33
C	Satisfactory	2.0
C-		1.67
D+		1.33
D	Poor	1.0
D-		0.67
F	Failure	0.0
P	Pass*	0.0
N	No Credit	0.0

\* The letter grade equivalent of a P grade is a C- / 1.67 or higher for undergraduate courses and a B / 3.00 or higher for graduate courses.

### **Pass/No Credit Grades**

In graduate courses, the grading option cannot be changed from the traditional A - F grading scale to the Pass/No Credit grading system.

Some graduate courses only use the Pass/No Credit grading system. In order to receive a grade of P, students must achieve at least a grade of B.