Nebraska Wesleyan University

Graduate Academic Policies and Procedures

Catalog

2019-2020

Registration

Graduate students will be notified of dates and procedures for registering for courses. Once a student registers for a course, it is the student's responsibility to cancel if he or she needs to drop the course. [Refer to deadline for dropping courses for each term.]

Payment Policy

Students pay or make arrangements for payment of tuition and fees at the beginning of each class.

Withdrawal Policy

A student who withdraws from a course after the drop deadline but before the withdrawal deadline receives a "W" (Withdrawal). A Withdrawal is not computed in the grade point average. After the withdrawal deadline, a student may not withdraw and a grade is recorded. If extenuating circumstances dictate withdrawal from a class after the withdrawal deadline, a student may petition for consideration of a late withdrawal.

A student wishing to withdraw from his or her master's program must declare his or her intentions in writing to the program director and advisor. A student withdrawn from a program who wishes to re-enter the program must reapply for admission, send a new application fee and follow all other required application procedures in place at the time of reapplication. (If the re-entry is within one year from the withdrawal, the program director may waive the need for reapplication.) The original time limit to complete degree requirements remains in effect unless a petition to grant an extension is submitted and approved.

Course Load

A graduate student must carry 6 credit hours per semester to be considered full-time.

Definition of the Credit Hour

Nebraska Wesleyan University follows the Federal Credit Hour Definition. Because courses are offered using a variety of delivery models at Nebraska Wesleyan (e.g., face-to-face, accelerated, hybrid, or online), a "credit hour" at NWU is defined as 1) verifiable instructional time and/or activity leading to the achievement of expected learning outcomes for a given course, and 2) learning activities judged by the faculty to be the equivalent of the 45-hour time commitment for one-credit course.

Therefore, credit hours at NWU may be awarded for a combination of classroom instruction, student work outside of class, or other approved educational activities including, but not limited to: creation of and reflection on a learning portfolio; engaging in clinical education or field experience; participating in and building upon knowledge gained through a practicum; completing a work of performance art, such as original musical scores or artwork; development of a formal presentation or other project related to the discipline.

No credit is earned for a course if a grade of "F" is received. For additional information, contact the Academic Affairs Office.

Graduate-Level Course Differentiation

Aligning with principles and requirements from the Higher Learning Commission is the foundation of Nebraska Wesleyan University's policy for differentiating graduate and undergraduate offerings. Significantly different goals and methods are apparent in the various programs, courses, and assessment plans of the graduate and undergraduate offerings at NWU. However, the following common, primary components guide the norms and expectations of graduate courses at Nebraska Wesleyan University:

- Graduate courses are taught at a level that assumes students already possess content knowledge and understanding commensurate with a bachelor's degree in a relevant field.
- Graduate courses require greater knowledge of the discipline or field as demonstrated by student reading and analysis of the most relevant and important scholarly monographs and journal articles written by and for professionals in the discipline.
- Graduate study requires firsthand research experience appropriate to the discipline or specialization.
- Graduate courses place consistent emphasis on translating and applying knowledge that strengthens connections to the professional environment. Faculty are expected to be current with the most recent developments, professionally and academically.
- Graduate courses emphasize methods, trends, and analysis.
- Graduate courses emphasize communication, both written and oral, at a professional level. Publication and presentation at professional meetings will be strongly encouraged.

Nebraska Wesleyan University Course Delivery Methods

- **Standard Direct (face-to-face) Instruction**: Minimum instructional time is verified for each course section, regardless of term length. Courses may use a combination of in-class and directed out-of-class learning activities that amount to no less than 45 hours per credit hour.
- **Accelerated Direct (face-to-face) Instruction**: Course sections normally meet once per week for 4 hours, with sufficient work outside of class such that each credit hour represents not less than 45 hours of student work.
- **Online or Hybrid**: Courses offered fully online (75-100% online) or in a hybrid format (25-75% online) must meet the course description, learning objectives, and credit hour standards.

Graduate-Level Courses Toward Bachelor's Degree

A student may count no more than 12 graduate-level credits toward her or his bachelor's degree. Students may enroll in and count graduate courses toward their bachelor's degree via one of following methods:

- Be admitted to a program designed specifically for early enrollment in graduate courses. See program admission requirements.
- Be granted permission by both the graduate program director and undergraduate department chair. Permission should be granted only after the program director/department chair consult with each other regarding space availability and curricular/pedagogical appropriateness, as well as confirming that the student meets the following standards: senior standing; a 3.25 or higher NWU GPA; and completed all necessary course prerequisites.

Graduate-level coursework completed by an undergraduate student will count as undergraduate credit and be calculated in the student's undergraduate GPA, as well as count as graduate credit and calculated in the graduate GPA.

Credit Earned Outside Regular Classes - Credit by Examination

A student who wishes to earn credit for a Nebraska Wesleyan University course may apply for Credit by Examination. The department chair/program director must approve that the course is appropriate to earn via credit by exam, the student must be in good standing, and the requested course cannot be a prerequisite for an advanced course in which the student is currently enrolled or has previously earned credit. Credit by examination may not be earned for Selected Topics, Directed Readings, Independent Study, Special Projects, or Capstone courses. A student who has been enrolled in a course must wait at least six weeks following completion, failure, or withdrawal from a course before applying for credit by examination in the same course.

To pursue credit by examination, the student completes the Credit by Examination Application and pays the application fee. Within 30 days, the department chair/program director, or her/his designee, directs the administration of an examination or other appropriate discipline-based method for examining skills, knowledge, and competency of the course content.

Satisfactory performance for credit by examination, signified by a grade of "PX," is the equivalent to a grade of "C-" or higher for undergraduate credit or a grade of "B-" or higher for graduate credit. Students who wish to receive a grade other than "PX" for credit by examination must declare this intent prior to the exam, including department chair/ program director approval, on the Credit by Examination Application. Courses passed by examination and listed with a grade of "PX" on the student's transcript are not computed in the student's grade point average; neither are they considered pass/fail hours. Courses passed by examination with a grade other than "PX" are computed in the student's grade point average. (The department chair/program director must approve the use of a course with a grade of "PX" toward the major or program.)

Transfer of Credits

For a master's degree, graduate credit with a grade of "B-" or better may be transferred from other institutions, with the approval of the Registrar and the specific graduate program at Nebraska Wesleyan. The transferring institution must be regionally

accredited.

Students in the MSN program are limited to a maximum of nine transfer nursing credits. Students in the MSN/MBA program are limited to a maximum of nine transfer nursing credits and a maximum of three transfer business credits.

Transfer credits count toward the total number of hours earned but are not included in GPA calculations. No graduate transfer credits are given for courses with a grade of “C+” or lower or the equivalent.

Evaluation of Academic Work

Graduate Grading System

The following grades factor in the Grade Point Average (GPA):

Excellent	A/A+	4.00 grade points
	A-	3.67 grade points
Good	B+	3.33 grade points
	B	3.00 grade points
Satisfactory *Minimum grade for course prerequisite and to meet graduate degree requirement*	B-	2.67 grade points
Unsatisfactory *Grade not acceptable toward course prerequisite or to meet graduate degree requirement*	C+	2.33 grade points
	C	2.00 grade points
	C-	1.67 grade points
Failure	F	0.00 grade points

The following grades are not counted in the Grade Point Average (GPA):

AU - Audit
I - Incomplete
I* - Permanent Incomplete
NC - No Credit
P - Pass: Grade of "B-" or better earned; course designated as Pass/Fail Only or Pass/Fail Oriented
PX - Passed by Examination
W - Withdrawal
WA - Administrative Withdrawal

Incomplete
An “I” (Incomplete) may be given only when work is left incomplete due to extenuating circumstances such as illness, military service, death in immediate family, or personal/family hardship. Students are eligible for an incomplete grade only if they have already completed 75% of the coursework. The percentage of completion is determined by the instructor. A student requests an incomplete grade from the instructor.

If the instructor and program director approve the request, the student must fill out an Incomplete Agreement form (available from the Registrar's Office) prior to the end of the semester with the instructor and program director. The work for an Incomplete must be finished within the time allotted by the instructor (maximum of one year from the close of the term in which the student is enrolled*). The instructor stipulates what the final grade will become if the work is not completed.

If the work is completed within the allotted time, the instructor determines the final grade according to the quality of the student's performance. If the work is not completed, the Registrar assigns the final grade stipulated on the Incomplete Agreement form. The final grade is entered on the student's transcript in place of the "I."

A Permanent Incomplete is allowed only in cases resulting from a catastrophic event in the life of a student, such as an incapacitating illness or other problems beyond the control of the student, which prevent the student from completing the work. In such cases, the student, his or her proxy, or the instructor can petition the Executive Committee for a Permanent Incomplete.

**The maximum time limit for Incompletes in graduate courses numbered 5990 or 5991 is the degree completion deadline.*

Audit

A student may register for a course on an audit basis if space is available after first obtaining permission of the instructor. A student will earn no credit for a course taken on an audit basis. The designation of "AU" requires attendance of at least 75% of the class sessions. Should the student not fulfill this obligation, the instructor will indicate so on the final grade report, and the course will not be recorded on the student's transcript.

Repeated Courses

When a student repeats a course, both grades remain on the student's transcript, but only the last grade earned (whether higher or lower) and the associated credit(s) are used to determine hours earned and the student's grade point average. Students who repeat a course and do not earn a passing grade lose any credits previously earned for that course.

Calculating the Grade Point Average

The grade point average (GPA) is calculated according to the following steps:

1. Total all hours taken at Nebraska Wesleyan in courses where traditional grades are earned (A, B, C with +'s and -'s, and F but not W, WA, P, PX, I, or AU),
2. Add all grade points, and
3. Divide the sum of grade points by the sum of hours graded.

A semester GPA is computed each semester in addition to the cumulative GPA.

Transfer credits and grade points are not computed in the Nebraska Wesleyan University GPA. Transfer credits are recorded as a unit and count toward the total number of hours earned.

Minimum Grade Requirements

Any prerequisite course must be completed with a grade of "B-" or better.
A grade point average of 2.67 is required for earning a master's degree. A minimum grade of "B-" is required for graduate courses counting toward degree requirements.

Academic Standing and Satisfactory Progress for Graduate Students

Academic Satisfactory Progress
Graduate students must be making satisfactory progress in his or her master's program, as determined by the program. Each graduate program has the discretion to put the student on notice and provide the student parameters that must be met in order to continue in the program. A grade lower than a "B-" in a graduate level course indicates that the student may not be progressing satisfactorily through the program.

Academic Standing
Any student with a semester GPA of less than 2.50 or a cumulative GPA of less than 2.67 will be placed on Academic Probation.

Academic Dismissal terminates a student from his or her master's program. Academic Probation may or may not have occurred prior to Academic Dismissal, which occurs under these circumstances:

- a semester GPA below a 2.50 at the end of a probationary semester or a cumulative GPA below a 2.67 at the end of a probationary semester
- earning a grade of "F" in the master's capstone course(s) in his or her program
- earning a grade lower than "B-" twice in the same credit-bearing course in the graduate program.

Students academically dismissed from their programs who wish to return after waiting a minimum of one semester, must seek and be approved for readmission. Students approved for readmission are readmitted on academic probation.

Grade Reports

Students view grades online on WebAdvisor, normally within two weeks following the completion of the term.

Grade Change/Appeal Policy

At the beginning of each term, the instructor provides students his/her course syllabus that includes the grading policy for that course. A copy is also submitted to the Academic Affairs Office, which will be on file and available for review.

At the end of the term, if a student has a question about the grade he or she received in a course, or believes an instructor has violated the grading policy of the class, the student should arrange to discuss the grade with the instructor. This discussion between the instructor and student may lead to an agreement that the grade will remain as reported, or that the instructor will submit a change of grade. Note that academic policy prohibits extra work being done in a course after the term has ended. A change in a student's grade for a course is only possible if an error has been made by the instructor in the determination of the grade or in the reporting of the grade to the Registrar's Office. (A student who desires a higher grade for a course has the option of repeating the course by registering for the class during a subsequent term. Both grades will show on the student's transcript; however, the last grade earned is used to determine the GPA.)

If an error has been made by the instructor in the determination of the grade or in the reporting of the grade to the Registrar's Office, the instructor may submit a change of grade form to the Registrar's Office. Any error not reported within four months after the end of the term must have the approval of the Dean of Graduate Programs before it will be accepted by the Registrar's Office. A changed grade replaces the original grade reported on the student's transcript and automatically changes the cumulative GPA.

If the discussion between the student and instructor does not resolve the issue to the student's satisfaction, the next step is for the student to have a conversation with the Department Chair/Program Director. The Department Chair/Program Director will attempt to mediate between the instructor and the student in order to resolve the dispute.

After speaking with the instructor and Department Chair/Program Director, a student who wishes to pursue further action will file a **formal grade appeal**. The formal grade appeal must be filed within two months from the end of the term. Students should contact the Academic Affairs Office for the complete Grade Appeal Policy or with any questions about the policy.

Course Numbering System

The University's courses are numbered and classified as follows:

1000-1999	Lower-level undergraduate courses primarily designed for freshman students
2000-2999	Lower-level undergraduate courses primarily designed for sophomore students
3000-3999	Upper-level undergraduate courses primarily designed for junior students
4000-4999	Upper-level undergraduate courses primarily designed for senior students
5000-5999	Graduate-level courses

Transcripts

The Registrar's Office will release transcripts only after the student has granted permission in writing or through the secure online request system. Students whose accounts are paid in full are entitled to an official transcript of their academic record. A fee is charged for each copy of a student's transcript. Contact the Registrar's Office for details regarding transcript requests.

Student Petitions

Graduate students who desire to waive a University requirement must petition for approval. For additional information, contact the Registrar's Office or an academic advisor.

Privacy of Educational Records - FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy of student education records and provides students the following rights with respect to their education records:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.
Students should submit to the Registrar, Dean, Department Chair or Program Director, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for, and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading.
Students may ask the University to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the University official responsible for the record, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
If the University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the University will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

NOTE: FERPA is not a grade-appeal law. The right to challenge grades under FERPA is limited to situations where the grade assigned was inaccurately recorded.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosures without consent.
FERPA allows the University to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

- Nebraska Wesleyan University officials with a legitimate educational interest*
- Other schools to which a student is requesting transfer or enrollment
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies

FERPA permits the University to disclose educational record information to a student's parent or guardian if the student is their dependent for federal tax purposes. (**See Parental or Third Party Access to Academic Records)

FERPA also allows the University to disclose directory information without the written consent of the student. Directory information is information that generally would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Nebraska Wesleyan University has designated the following as **directory information**:

- Name
- Addresses
- Telephone numbers
- Email addresses
- Student Level and Classification at Nebraska Wesleyan
- Degree programs, certificate programs, majors, and minors declared at Nebraska Wesleyan
- Dates of attendance at Nebraska Wesleyan, enrollment status, and anticipated graduation date
- Degrees, certificates, and awards received at Nebraska Wesleyan
- Institutions attended prior to admission to Nebraska Wesleyan
- Participation in recognized activities and sports at Nebraska Wesleyan
- Photographs taken and maintained by the University
- Weight and height of members of Nebraska Wesleyan athletic teams

Students have the right to withhold disclosure of this directory information. Students must notify the Registrar's Office in writing or via approved electronic means, if they do not wish directory information to be released without their permission.

FERPA requires the University to record the disclosure of information to third parties, except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to judicial orders and subpoenas, disclosures of directory information and disclosures to the student. Students may inspect and review the record of such disclosures.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
Phone: 1-800-872-5327

** A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including security and student health personnel); a person or company with whom the University has contracted (including attorneys, auditors, collection agency, the National Student Clearinghouse); a person serving on the Board of Governors; or a student serving on an official committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.*

****Parental or Third Party Access to Academic Records**

All academic information is sent directly to students. Therefore, parents should establish communication with their sons and daughters if they wish to be informed about their students' schedule and academic progress. Under FERPA, parents of Nebraska Wesleyan students may request in writing and receive their son or daughter's grade information if the student has granted NWU authorization or after providing proof that the student is a dependent and is claimed as a tax exemption. Also, a student may grant a parent (or other third party) access to his/her academic and financial records through his/her WebAdvisor account.

Assessment of Student Learning

As part of its stated mission regarding excellence in education, Nebraska Wesleyan University is committed to assessing the degree to which students attain the institution's educational goals. The faculty and staff may require students to participate in a variety of assessment activities that will help determine the extent to which these goals are being met. Assessment activities may include, but are not limited to, standardized testing, placement tests, surveys, portfolios of student work, group or individual interviews, or classroom research. Results are used to inform the process of teaching and learning, to shape the design and implementation of programs and curricula, and to describe and enrich the student experience at Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Student Right-to-Know Act

In accordance with the Student Right-to-Know Act of 1993, Nebraska Wesleyan's student persistence/graduation rates are available for disclosure to current and prospective students, employees, and interested community members. See the Registrar's Office for this information.

Teacher Certification Pass Rate

Title II of the Higher Education Act (HEA) requires institutions with a teacher preparation program enrolling students receiving federal assistance under the HEA to provide information regarding the pass rate of program completers on assessments required by the state for teacher licensure or certification, the statewide pass rate on those assessments, and other basic information on the institution's teacher preparation program.

Please contact the Education Department (Smith-Curtis 130) for this information.

Academic Dishonesty

The Code of Student Conduct states that students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty, which encompasses such activities as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, misrepresentation, and bribery, are subject to disciplinary sanctions. (See Article V of the Code of Student Conduct for a comprehensive listing of misconduct that is subject to disciplinary sanctions, as well as relevant terms and definitions.)

Faculty members have full authority in determining the action to be taken in cases of academic dishonesty. In addition to implementing the statements of the course syllabus addressing academic dishonesty, faculty may file a Report of Academic Dishonesty with the Registrar, or file a complaint with the Student Conduct System. If a Report of Academic Dishonesty is filed, a first report on a student prompts no further action. However, if a second report for a student is filed, a formal complaint is submitted against the student with the Student Conduct System. Any report after a second will launch another complaint. Complaints submitted to Student Conduct System prompt a formal judicial investigation.

Students should contact the Academic Affairs Office, Student Life Office, or Registrar's Office for more information.