

## **STUDENT GRADING GUIDELINES**

### Introduction

Grades earned by students are an important and integral part of the instructional programs of the Fullerton Joint Union High School District (District). Academic or course grades reflect student achievement and performance consistent with learning expectations described in Board-approved course outline goals and objectives. Citizenship and work habit grades are also used to reflect student performance consistent with appropriate standards. Grades describe the status of student achievement as of a designated time in the school year. Grades for student achievement are based solely upon evidence of performance on teacher of record initiated and graded assignments. Exception to “the teacher initiated and graded” assignments must be approved by the Principal. This evidence is evaluated by the teacher with the use of appropriate criteria and assessment techniques.

Grading procedures and practices are the teacher’s professional tools. These procedures and practices are used to appraise, record, and report student achievement and performance. Student grades are also used to allow teachers to adjust instruction to maximize student academic performance. These procedures and practices are designed and implemented in a way that is appropriate for teacher and school use and as well as being practical and understandable for communication. This care is necessary in order that students, parents/guardians, school staff members, prospective institutions of higher learning and advanced training, and/or prospective employers will have accurate information upon which to determine achievement and progress and to make decisions for instructional placement or employment.

The following student grading guidelines, line of responsibility, review procedures, and definition of terms are provided so that the practices used within the District will have sufficient common criteria and purpose to provide grades accurately representing student performance.

## **SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Grading Practices

The following grading practices are to be used by all persons responsible for determining and assigning student grades:

1. Three types of grades are earned by students:
  - a. Academic (course) grades describe only the academic achievement of a student based on evidence of performance in response to teacher initiated and graded assignments. Academic grades are to reflect cumulative student progress and achievement consistent with District Board-approved course outlines, policies, and District/school/teacher standards.

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- b. Citizenship grades and comments describe only personal behavior related to how a student behaves in class. These grades are to reflect citizenship standards of the District, school, and teacher. Citizenship grades and comments are to be reported separately from academic (course) and work habit grades.
  - c. Work habit grades and comments describe only the way a student organizes, conducts, and completes course assignments. These grades are to reflect work habit standards established by the District, school, and teacher. Work habit grades and comments are to be reported separately from academic (course) and citizenship grades.
2. Grades are to be assigned in a fair, consistent, and accurate manner based on evidence of student performance demonstrated by the student and evaluated with the use of appropriate and reliable assessment techniques.
  3. Grades are to be assigned on a criterion-referenced basis as contrasted to norm-referenced methods. Criterion-referenced grades are based solely on student-demonstrated mastery (making it possible for all students to receive the same grade) whereas norm-referenced grades (based on the traditional bell-shaped curve) predestine that some students will do well while others will fail.

Grading Communication

The communication of grades is critical to the success of a grading system. The five communication elements are as follows:

1. Grades are considered confidential and will be made available only to the individual student, parent/guardian, and other authorized persons or organizations.
2. Grades are to be communicated to students and parents/guardians in a timely and efficient manner. All assignments and tests are expected to be graded in a timely manner and posted on the District-provided electronic grade book program. The current electronic grade book program is Aeries Browser Interface (ABI) and students and parents are provided password-protected access. ABI grade book or the current District-provided electronic Grade Book program will be utilized by all District teachers to provide timely feedback throughout the school year.
3. One required progress report and one final report will be provided for all students to the parents/guardian each semester for semester courses, and one final report will be provided to all students for quarter classes. Additional progress reports will be provided to students receiving a D or F two times for each semester class and one time for each quarter class. The frequency is outlined below:

AFTER 5 WEEKS OF A COURSE	Students earning a D or F will receive a graded progress report. Teachers have the discretion for providing grades to additional students.
AFTER 10 WEEKS OF A COURSE	All students receive a cumulative grades progress report for semester classes or a final grade for quarter classes. Additional comments should be used as needed to communicate the situation.
AFTER 15 WEEKS OF A COURSE	Students earning a D or F will receive a graded progress report. Teachers have the discretion for providing grades to additional students.
AFTER 19 WEEKS OF A COURSE	All students receive a cumulative final grade for semester and quarter classes. Additional comments should be used as needed to communicate the situation.

Progress reports may be provided at any time a student is in danger of failing. (The District defines an F as failing and a D as in danger of failing.) Education Code requires a conference with or a written report by the teacher to the parent/guardian of the student whenever it becomes evident to the teacher that the student is in danger of failing a course. The 5-, 10-, and 15-week reports as described above meet this requirement.

4. Student work assignments and tests used as a basis for establishing a grade are to be evaluated and returned and/or reviewed with the student by the teacher of the course in a timely manner so that students can benefit from the ongoing and continuous evaluation of performance.
5. Course expectations and grading practices used by each teacher for each course are to be summarized in writing and made available to students and parents/guardians during the first week of a student's attendance by the teacher of the course. A copy of all course expectations and grading practices distributed to students and parents are to be provided to the Principal or designee no later than the fourth week of the course. Students and parents/guardians are to be advised in writing if there are subsequent changes in expectations or grading procedures.
6. District grading guidelines are to be communicated to each student and parent/guardian by a process determined by the Principal of the school.

## STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

The success of any student academic grading plan is dependent upon the cooperation, interest, and assumption of responsibilities by the three major parties. These parties include school staff members (primarily the teacher), the student, and the student's parent/guardian. Guidelines for parent/guardian and student responsibilities are provided below:

1. Parents/guardians and students are to review the information on course expectations and grading practices provided by the teacher and obtain clarification from the teacher in the event the content is not clear.
2. The student is to assume the responsibility to keep informed of his/her progress and grade status throughout the duration of a course. The student has the responsibility of advising the parent/guardian of grade status, especially if there is a significant decline.
3. Parents/guardians have the responsibility to periodically communicate with the student with regard to how well things are going at school and, in particular, the status of performance as determined and reported by grades. In the event the student is unable to satisfactorily explain the status or if the status does not meet family standards, the parent/guardian has the responsibility to initiate communication with the teacher requesting additional information, clarification, or help, as necessary.

## LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. **Criterion-referenced grades** are grades determined by how well students master the content consistent with a Board-approved course outline. Criterion-referenced grades are based solely on student-demonstrated master (making it possible for all students to receive the same grade, whereas norm-referenced grades (based on the traditional bell-shaped curve) predestine that students will earn grades along a predefined curve or distribution, assuming some students will earn A's and others will earn F's.
2. **Academic (Course) grades** are grades earned by a student as a result of providing evidence of the quality, quantity, and timeliness of performance as assessed by the teacher consistent with the content of a specific Board-approved course outline.
  - a. **Letter grades** are used for most courses and have the following grade values when used to compute the GPA (grade point average):

A = Excellent	(grade value = 4 for GPA)
B = Above Average	(grade value = 3 for GPA)
C = Average	(grade value = 2 for GPA)
D = Below Average	(grade value = 1 for GPA)
F = Failing	(grade value = 0 for GPA)
I = Incomplete	(no grade or credit assigned; reverts to an "F" if not made up within six weeks)

- b. **Credit/No Credit grades** are used under some circumstances in place of letter grades as follows:

CR = Credit and denotes passed/passing the course

NC = No credit and denotes failed/failing the course

- c. **Weighted grades** are used under some circumstances in place of letter grades as follows:

A = Grade value of 5

B = Grade value of 4

C = Grade value of 3

D = Grade value of 2

F = Grade value of 0

I = Incomplete (no grade or credit assigned; reverts to an “F” if not made up prior to the end of the quarter following the incomplete grade)

3. **Citizenship grades** are grades earned by a student as a result of personal behavior exhibited while attending a specific class as assessed by the teacher consistent with district, school, and teacher standards. Citizenship grades are as follows:

O = Outstanding

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

4. **Work habit grades** are grades earned by a student as a result of the methods and processes used to complete school work in a specific class as assessed by the teacher consistent with District, school, and teacher standards. Work habit grades are as follows:

O = Outstanding

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

5. **Grade Point Average (GPA)** is an arithmetic computation providing a number to represent average achievement. It is derived by:

$$\frac{\text{Sum of (Total credits earned per course) x (grade value for each course)}}{\text{Total number of credits attempted}}$$

6. **Progress grades** are used at designated times and upon special arrangement to advise those interested as to the current cumulative performance level of an individual student (see No. 8 below for timelines).
7. **Final grades** are earned at the conclusion of a course, usually at the end of a semester (for semester and year courses) but in some cases, at the end of a quarter (for quarter courses). The timing of final grades for special situations such as independent study may vary from semester or quarter timelines (see No. 8 below for timelines).
8. **Grade reporting timelines** are as follows:

<u>Semester Courses</u>		<u>Quarter Courses</u>	
5 weeks	Progress Report (required for students earning a D or F; optional for all other students)	5 weeks	Progress Report (required for students earning a D or F; optional for all other students)
10 weeks	Progress Report*	10 weeks	Final Report*
15 weeks	Progress Report (required for students earning a D or F; optional for all other students)		
19 weeks	Final Report*		

\* Graded report for all students

9. **Grade of *incomplete*** shall be given only when a student's work is not finished because of illness or other excused absence. If not made up within six weeks, the incomplete shall become an F.