

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Introduction

In looking through this section, students will discover many ways in which the MPCC campuses can assist them in preparing for a specific occupation along with developing an appreciation for a liberal education. The educational possibilities are many and varied. Students may want to develop a plan of study that allows sampling from several technical and academic areas before making a career choice. One of the benefits of attending a community college is the opportunity to explore a range of possibilities.

The following services, together with personal guidance from college faculty and advising staff, are offered to provide students with information for making decisions.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend classes regularly, arrive punctually, and complete all assigned work for each class. Attendance is a privilege and a responsibility represented not only by the student's investment but also by a significant investment by taxpayers.

Official Grades

The instructor, at the conclusion of each term, assigns official course grades. Students go to CampusWeb (<http://campus.mpcc.edu>) to view their final grades. Access to grades and transcripts may be withheld if students have not met financial obligations to the college.

Grading System

Coursework attempted at Mid-Plains Community College is evaluated according to the following letter grading system:

A+	4.0
A	4.0
B+	3.5
B	3.0
C+	2.5
C	2.0
D+	1.5
D	1.0
F	0
P	Passing
NP	Not Passing
IP	In Progress
I	Incomplete
W	Withdraw
AU	Audit
CE	Credit by Exam

"P" (Passing), "NP" (Not Passing), "I" (Incomplete), "WIP" (Work In Progress), "AU" (Audit), "W" (Withdrawal), CE (Credit by Exam) grades are not included in the GPA (Grade Point Average). GPA is calculated by multiplying the semester hours of credit for each course by the grade point value to determine quality points, then dividing the sum of the quality points by the total number of GPA credits. Classes numbered below 1000 are not included in the GPA.

Incomplete Grade

The temporary grade of "I" is a faculty prerogative and may be issued when a student has completed a majority of the course requirements but is unable to complete the remainder due to circumstances clearly beyond his/her control (i.e., serious illness or an emergency). An incomplete grade request must state the requirements to remove the "I" and a date by which the remaining requirements must be completed. If approved, an "I" must be completed by the date specified on the Incomplete Form, but never more than one term after the course has concluded (i.e., Fall/Spring, Spring/Fall, Summer/Fall). If coursework is not completed during this time, the "I" will be changed to an "F" on the student's permanent transcript.

Academic Honors

Students taking 12 or more credit hours that calculate into a GPA and achieving a 3.5-3.89 GPA in a semester will be listed on the Dean's Honor Roll; those achieving at least a 3.9 GPA will be listed on the President's Honor Roll.

Academic Probation and Suspension

A student will be placed on academic probation whenever the student's academic performance falls below MPCC's established minimum requirements. The minimum requirements currently are as follows: a 1.5 cumulative GPA through the first 15 GPA hours, a 1.75 for 16-30 GPA hours, and a 2.0 for 31 GPA hours or more. Any student placed on academic probation who fails to meet the academic standards stated above by the end of that probationary semester will be suspended. After a student has received an academic suspension, the student may not re-enroll for a period of one academic year. Students who have extenuating circumstances may appeal suspensions by notifying the Vice President of Student Affairs in writing within five days after receipt of the suspension letter.

Academic Amnesty

A Mid-Plains Community College (MPCC) student may petition the Vice-President for Academic Affairs to have a maximum of two semesters of courses removed from the calculation of grade point average and degree credit provided the following conditions apply:

- A student may receive academic amnesty only once, and it is irrevocable.
- At least three years have elapsed since the time of the semester(s) being petitioned during which time the student may or may not elect to take classes.
- A student may choose only courses with a grade of D+ or lower to be renewed (based on the MPCC Catalog).
- The time frame allowed for amnesty will be a maximum of two consecutive semesters.
 - Fall, Spring, or Summer. (Summer sessions are composed of Summer I and Summer II.) Two summer sessions are equivalent to one regular semester. Thus, for instance, a student could include both summer sessions and a subsequent fall semester to fulfill this requirement.
- The student must first complete 12 credit hours at MPCC or any other regionally accredited institution of higher education with no grade below a C.
- The academic amnesty must be requested prior to completion of the MPCC diploma or degree requirements.

If approved, the courses and grades of the semester(s) affected will appear on the transcript with the notation that academic amnesty was granted. Since academic amnesty may affect financial aid awards, a student receiving financial aid should contact Financial Aid prior to applying for amnesty.

Academic Integrity

Mid-Plains Community College is committed to academic integrity and honesty as an essential component of MPCC as an academic institution. All members of MPCC's academic community (administrators, staff, faculty, and students) share the responsibility of maintaining that integrity. Violations of academic integrity include acts such as plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, obtaining unauthorized materials from the internet, allowing others to write or compose your work, using the work of other students, not citing the original sources, facilitating misconduct, and/or assisting others in actions that are related to these violations of academic integrity. Students who partake in violations of academic integrity at MPCC are subject to sanctions as described below. Students are granted due process and the right to appeal any decision regarding an academic integrity violation.

The Academic Integrity policy will be referenced on all MPCC course syllabi. The reference will include information regarding the location of this policy. It is the responsibility of the student to know and follow MPCC Academic Integrity standards. Ignorance of the MPCC Academic Integrity standards and/or unintentional violations of the standards does not excuse the violation.

Students who have questions about Academic Integrity or the MPCC Academic Integrity policy may direct their questions to any faculty member, any division chair, or the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Up-to-date contact information for individuals in these positions is available on the MPCC website under faculty and staff contact.

Definitions

Instances of academic integrity violations could include actions such as, but not limited to, those referenced below.

- **Cheating** – Copying or attempting to copy from an academic test, examination, or exercise from another student; using or attempting to utilize unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, or other devices for an academic test, examination or exercise; engaging or attempting to engage in the assistance of another individual in misrepresenting the academic performance of a student; or communication of information in an unauthorized manner to another person for an academic test, examination, or exercise.
- **Fabrication or Falsification** – Falsifying or fabricating any information or citation in any academic exercise, work, speech, research, test, or examination. Falsification is the alteration of information. Fabrication is the invention or counterfeiting of information.
- **Plagiarism** – Presenting another person's work as one's own (without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting examinations, reports, speeches, drawings, laboratory notes, or other academic works in whole or in part as one's own when such work was prepared by another person or was copied from another source. Plagiarism may apply to materials such as but not limited to text, video, audio, images, photographs, websites, electronic materials, or other intellectual property.
- **Complicity in Academic Dishonesty** – Helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Including instances such as, but not limited to, assisting another student

to commit an academic integrity violation or attempting to offer MPCC faculty, staff, or administrators bribes or favors as a means of influencing academic standing and/or grades for themselves or another student.

- **Impermissible Collaboration** – Collaborating on any academic exercise, work, speech, test, or examination unless expressly authorized by the faculty member. It is the student's obligation to know if collaboration is permitted.
- **Misrepresentation to Avoid Academic Work** – Misrepresentation by fabrication or an otherwise justifiable excuse such as illness, injury, accident, etc., in order to avoid or delay timely submission of academic work or to avoid or delay the taking of a test or examination.
- **Other** – MPCC faculty may maintain additional academic integrity standards of conduct, such as a policy regarding self-plagiarism, within particular courses or programs. In the case that faculty have additional standards of conduct students will be given prior written notice.

For further information, you can visit the Academic Integrity (<https://catalog.mpcc.edu/course-catalog/academic-instructional-information/academic-honesty/>) section of the College Catalog.

Grade Appeal Procedure

End-of-Term Grades

Students are responsible for meeting the standards established for each course taken and the end-of-term grade they receive. Faculty are responsible for establishing the criteria for grades and evaluating students' academic performance. Within one week following the end of the term, final course grades are posted to the Student Information System (Jenzabar). Students can access their grades online using their login ID and password. Students can contact Student Services for more information. Once submitted, course grades are considered final and become part of the student's permanent record.

It is the student's responsibility to review their grade(s). If they are not in agreement regarding a grade, they must follow the Grade Appeal process within fourteen (14) calendar days following the start of the next term. Students must obtain the Grade Appeal Form from the Academic Affairs Office.

Inherent in the traditional concept of academic freedom is the right of the professional faculty member to be the sole judge of the academic standards employed in the student's classes to evaluate the quality of the student's work. While a student has the right to an informal review and explanation of the grade by the instructor, and the instructor has the obligation to provide such a review, an assigned grade may not be formally appealed unless there is evidence that one or more of the following conditions is present: a mistake in the assignment of the grade or in the process of its recording, or fraud, or bad faith, or incompetence.

WHEN TO FILE A GRADE APPEAL:

You may only appeal the final grade for a course when you are able to provide evidence that an inappropriate grade was assigned as a result of prejudice or other improper conditions.

WHEN YOU SHOULD NOT FILE A GRADE APPEAL:

- If you feel the course was poorly designed or you received poor instruction. These may be legitimate concerns but are more appropriately addressed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

- If you feel the students were graded too severely, provided that all the students in the class were graded in the same fashion. These, too, may be legitimate concerns but are more appropriately addressed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

FILING A GRADE APPEAL:

To file a Grade Appeal, the following steps must be completed in the order described:

STEP 1— The appeal must be filed within fourteen (14) calendar days following the start of the next term. The student must first consult with the instructor in an effort to provide a satisfactory resolution to the contested grade. If the instructor reviews the grade and finds a mechanical error or agrees the grade is inaccurate, he or she is free to change the grade as resolved.

STEP 2— If, however, the matter is not resolved in Step 1, the student may present the complaint in writing (e.g. email, written documentation, etc.) within fourteen (14) calendar days following the start of the next term to the Academic Dean in which the course was offered. Included in the petition, the student should attach the appropriate materials described above, and if available, the instructor's written explanation for the assigned grade. The Academic Dean will attempt to resolve the complaint in consultation with the instructor and the student. The Academic Dean will provide a written response to the student (e.g. email) within five (5) calendar days from the time the written complaint has been received. If the Academic Dean was the instructor of the course, the student may proceed directly to Step 3.

STEP 3— If the complaint is not resolved at the division level, the student may appeal further by presenting a written petition to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, along with a copy of the materials presented at the previous step and any written responses received from the program. The petition should be presented within five (5) calendar days after the Academic Dean's response. Within five (5) calendar days of the date the complaint was received, the Vice President for Academic Affairs may use any resources available to resolve the conflict and will provide the results of their finding in writing to the student.

STEP 4— If the student still contests the grade after the previous steps, the student may present a Formal Grade Appeal Form to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee who serves as the steward of the Grade Appeal Procedure. Copies of the written materials and petitions presented at the previous steps, along with any written responses received from the program or division, must be included with the petition at the time of submission. This step must be completed within five (5) calendar days of the decision made in Step 3.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee, who is Chair of the standing Grade Appeal Committee, will forward the formal grade appeal along with the attached materials to the Grade Appeal Committee for review. The committee members shall review the petition and the attached materials. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will convene and chair a Grade Appeal Hearing Committee.

The Grade Appeal Committee consists of three to five (3-5) faculty members, an Academic Dean from a different division, and a student-support person. Only the faculty members have the sole discretion to vote.

GRADE APPEALS COMMITTEE HEARING:

If a hearing is convened, first the student and then the instructor will each have the opportunity to present their cases orally and to present any other written materials they deem appropriate. The Grade Appeal Committee members shall have the opportunity to ask questions to both the student and instructor. At the end of the meeting, the student and then the instructor shall be given the opportunity for brief closing statements.

The Chair of the Committee should inform the student, the instructor, the Academic Dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the committee's decision in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the hearing. If a majority of the Committee agrees that the grade should be changed, the Chair will notify the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the Committee's decision. Otherwise, the grade shall remain as recorded. The decision of the Grade Appeals Committee shall be final. Per the decision of the committee, the faculty member is expected to change the grade. When the appeal process concludes, all documentation is forwarded to the Registrar's Office, which will maintain such documentation in accordance with the appropriate retention schedules.

The only option to appeal the final decision of the Grade Appeals Committee comes with any new or additional information that was not available or known at the time of the hearing. This information, and all preceding information, shall be presented to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for review and determination.

Course Information

Auditing Courses

Students who wish to attend a course without taking examinations or receiving credit for a course may request to audit from an instructor during the first week of class only. Students who audit a course pay the regular tuition rate and fees. Audited courses do not count toward graduation requirements nor do they satisfy prerequisite requirements for other courses. A student may only change their course status from an audit to a credit status prior to the course's first class meeting. Audited courses are not considered when establishing the full-time or part-time status of a student receiving financial aid or veteran's benefits.

Change of Grade

Final grades are unalterable except when an explanation is made in writing by the faculty member involved that shows that a grade was reported incorrectly as the result of an error in recording or computing. Changes must be recorded before the next semester ends.

Transfer of Credit

Courses from regionally accredited institutions in which grades of "A," "B," or "C" (or their equivalent) have been earned will be considered for transfer credit to Mid-Plains Community College. College courses in which grades of "D" or "F" (or their equivalent) have been earned will not be considered for transfer credit. Note: *Grades and courses taken at other institutions will not replace grades in equivalent courses taken at MPCC.*

Repeating Classes

Students may repeat courses. Only the credit hours and the highest grade earned in any course are used in the computation of the cumulative GPA, except when a grade of "W" has been assigned. Grades in courses taken at other institutions will not replace grades in equivalent courses taken at MPCC. For most scholarships, repeat courses have no impact, unless it is an athletic waiver. For additional information, contact finaid@mpcc.edu.

Withdrawing From Classes

Students should meet with their advisor when they feel unable to complete a course satisfactorily. An "F" (failing) grade may be awarded when students stop attending without formally withdrawing. The last day to withdraw for each course section is posted on the CampusWeb homepage under Add/Drop & Withdrawal Deadlines. Registration change forms are available from any MPCC Welcome Center.

Withdrawing From College

A student desiring to withdraw from the college must contact their advisor. Financial obligations to the college must be paid before the formal withdrawal procedure can be completed. Upon withdrawal, the student forfeits all privileges as a student of the college. If a student fails to formally withdraw from all courses, they may receive an "F" for each class.

Specially Arranged Courses (SAC/Independent Study)

A specially arranged course can be created and is intended to give the student the same experiences and knowledge that would be received in the normal classroom setting.

Visiting Classes

A student may have the privilege of visiting up to two sessions of any class with the approval of the student's advisor and the instructor.

Program Violations Statement for Applied Technology

Students enrolled in Applied Technology programs should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner while in classrooms, labs, and off-site college-sponsored activities. Conduct violations outlined below could result in an Applied Technology student being dismissed from the program they are enrolled in. Conduct violations include:

- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Fighting
- Repeated disruptive behavior that affects the learning environment
- Classroom safety issues

Faculty members are responsible for reporting such violations to the Academic Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Reporting Process/Resolution

Once a report is made to the Academic Dean and the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, they will begin to investigate the incident in question (typically within two days). If the incident does not pertain to any of the violations listed above, there will be no further investigation.

If the incident does violate one of the items listed above, a formal investigation will occur followed by a meeting with the Conduct Violations Committee. This could include interviews with other students, faculty members, and staff.

Once a violation has been confirmed by the Academic Dean and the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the following procedure takes effect:

1. The Conduct Violations Committee consists of a Academic Dean outside of the division in which the conduct violation is in question, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or Campus Vice-President, two faculty members from within the division, one faculty member from another division, and the Dean of Student Life (or representative) will meet to consider the violation.
2. At the meeting of the Conduct Violation Committee:
 - a. The instructor shall be given the opportunity to personally explain the violation of the student and its sanction in relation to the program.
 - b. The student shall be given the opportunity to personally present their behavior and its relation to the Conduct Violation statement and its sanction in relation to the program.
 - c. The chair of the division in which the conduct violation has occurred may also be present to provide any relevant information.
 - d. The committee shall thereafter confer privately to reach a decision which shall be either to uphold the original sanction by the faculty member or to allow the student a different sanction as determined by the committee.
3. The decision of the Conduct Violation Committee is final.