

Incomplete Grade Policy

The “incomplete” grade policy as stated here is effective for incompletes assigned Fall 2007 forward. To reference the incomplete policy for prior years consult [archived](#) copies of the general catalog. Refer to [Academic Regulation 17](#) for more information.

Requesting an Incomplete

A student may request that an incomplete (for a course that has not been completed) be granted by an instructor, if the reasons for the incomplete are acceptable to the instructor, and the student is passing the course at the time of the request. It is recommended that when an incomplete is granted the instructor and student complete a [Contract for Completion of I Grade](#) to define the terms under which the incomplete course work will be completed.

The Incomplete/Alternate Grade

The incomplete that is filed by the instructor at the end of the term must include an alternate/default grade to which the incomplete grade defaults if the student does not make an effort to resolve the incomplete course work within one year of recording the incomplete. Examples of the incomplete grades are I/A, I/A–, I/B+, I/B, I/B–, I/C+, I/C, I/C–, I/D+, I/D, I/D–, I/F, I/P, and I/N. Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grade options are converted after the “I/Alternate Grade” is submitted by the instructor. For example, if the student requested an incomplete and opted for an S/U grade, the instructor will submit an “I/Normal Grade” (e.g., I/B+) at the end of the term. The Office of the Registrar will subsequently convert the “I/Normal Grade” to an “I/S” or “I/U” in accordance with the grading option chosen by the student.

Calculating the Alternate/Default Grade

Calculation of the Alternate/Default Grade is determined by the work to be completed for the course over the entire term. For example, while a student may be passing at the time the incomplete request is granted, the Alternate/Default Grade is **NOT** what the student has earned up to the point of the incomplete request. The instructor must submit the grade the student will earn if the missing work is not completed. That alternate grade will become the default grade if the missing work is not completed.

Example

A student has earned a “B” through the eighth week of the term, but requests an incomplete for the rest of the term. The remaining work would comprise 50% of the final grade. Without completing the remaining work the earned grade would have been an “F”. The student, consequently, would have an “I/F” filed by the faculty/instructor at the end of the term when grades are reported to the Office of the Registrar.

Outcomes:

- A. If the student does not complete the assigned work within one year’s time or within the time allotted by the faculty/instructor, the instructor can change the grade to an “F” or the grade would default to an “F” after a year.
- B. If the student completes the work, the instructor will submit the appropriate grade the student earned.

Secure Submission Guidelines for Removal of Incomplete Forms After One Year

All Removal of Incompletes over one year require that a form be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The form must be signed by an instructor of record and the department chair. An instructor of record is defined as an individual who delivers instruction for a course and is listed as an instructor on the section of the course in Banner screens SSASECT or SYASECT. The departmental grade contact is not considered an instructor. Incorrect or missing information on the form will cause a delay in processing.

The form may be submitted via one of the following methods:

- **In Person:** Forms signed by the instructor and department chair may be brought to the Office of the Registrar. The instructor, departmental grade contact or department chair may deliver the form in person. Photo ID will be verified. Verification of the instructor, instructor signature, and grade mode listed on the form will also be verified at the time the form is turned in.
- **Campus Mail or US Postal Service:** Forms signed by the instructor and department chair may be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar via campus mail or US Postal Service. All signed forms must be received in a sealed departmental envelope with the signature of the instructor, or departmental grade contact, or department chair across the seal. Once received by the Office of the Registrar, all information is verified including the grade mode. If any information is incorrect the form is sent back to the department to be corrected and resubmitted.
- **Departmental Fax:** Forms signed by the instructor and department chair may be faxed to the Office of the Registrar accompanied by a departmental fax cover sheet signed by the instructor, or departmental grade contact, or department chair. Once received by the Office of the Registrar, all information is verified including the grade mode. If any information is incorrect the form is sent back to the department to be corrected and resubmitted.

Impact on Degree Conferrals:

Another aspect of the revised Incomplete Policy in Academic Regulation 17 affects the degree audit completed for students who have applied to graduate from Oregon State University. Since Fall 2007, all pending applications for graduation include a review of any incomplete grades with an alternate/default grade. If an “I/Alternate Grade” is currently outstanding at the time a pending graduate’s file is being reviewed for graduation (*which happens after grades are processed for the term in which the student is graduating*), that review will take into account the automatic default of the incomplete to the Alternate/Default Grade. This automatic default may impact a student’s ability to graduate, if by its inclusion, the student’s GPA (major GPA or institutional GPA) or other major/institutional requirements are altered. This encourages the student to ensure that all “I/Alternate Grades” are resolved with their instructor prior to the last day of Dead Week for the term in which they are graduating. *Note: Academic Regulation 17 specifically states: “Under no circumstances shall a student who earns an A–F grade or an N or U grade have their grade changed retroactively to an I grade.”*

Extension of Time to Remove Incomplete Grade

A student may petition via the Office of the Registrar for an extension of the one calendar year deadline with the concurrence of the faculty. **An approved petition will grant an extension of a single additional term, with a maximum of three total extensions being possible. An approved petition for an extension of time to remove an incomplete will be voided at the time of degree conferral.** The petition must be submitted before the one-year deadline is reached.

To request an extension complete the [Petition Extension of Time to Remove Incomplete Grade](#) form. Instructor and departmental approval is required. Submit the completed petition and a completed [Contract for Completion of I Grade](#) to the Office of the Registrar. If all documents are provided, and the instructor and department approve, and the student is eligible, an extension of a single term will be granted. To

request an additional term extension the process must be repeated.

Incomplete Grade FAQs

Q: When is the last point at which an incomplete grade can be resolved by the student?

A: Typically, it is within a time period established by the instructor. If the instructor has not established a deadline, then the student has until the last day of Dead Week before finals begin, to submit the required work to the faculty a year after the term in which the student received the incomplete. For example, if a student received an “I/Alternate Grade” in Fall 2016 without any specified deadline by an instructor, they have until the last day of Dead Week of Fall 2017 to turn in the completed work to the instructor to complete the “Incomplete”. The instructor has until the last day of term (normally Friday of Finals Week) to submit the removal of an incomplete to whatever grade the student earned to the Office of the Registrar.

Q: What happens if the instructor is no longer at the institution a year after the “I/Alternate Grade” was recorded?

A: The student should meet with the department chair who offered the course to reinstate the expectations of what would need to be completed (and by when it needs to be completed) for the incomplete to reflect the earned grade for that course.

Q: What if the student requests an “I/Alternate Grade” but also intends on graduating that very same term?

A: The student should know whether the Alternate/Default Grade will impact their ability to graduate that same term. If it does, the student should withdraw the request to graduate at the Office of the Registrar before the last day of final exams for that term, until the incomplete has been resolved at some future date/term and an earned grade has been recorded. Subsequent to the earned grade replacing the incomplete, the student can then re-file to graduate.

Q: What if the student has applied to graduate, final grades have been processed for the term the student wished to graduate; and the “I/Alternate Grade” defaults to a grade that does affect their graduation status. Can the student request the Alternate Grade revert back to an incomplete?

A: No. Academic Regulation 17 specifically states: *“Under no circumstances shall a student who earns an A–F grade or an N or U grade have their grade changed retroactively to an I grade.”* Students need to pay careful attention to “I/Alternate Grades” that are clearly displayed on all unofficial (and official) transcripts and the “Grade Term Report” via the Student On-Line Services web site where a student’s grades can be accessed by the student. If the student suspects or is informed by their academic advisor or the Office of the Registrar that the “I/Alternate Grade” will negatively impact their ability to graduate, they should go to the Office of the Registrar to withdraw their application to graduate. This request to withdraw the application to graduate must be made before all grades are processed for the term in which the student wishes to graduate.

Q: What if an instructor does not turn in their grades on time, will the instructor still be able to submit an “I/Alternate Grade for the student?

A: Yes. While 99.7% of all grades are turned in by the required deadline for each term, if the instructor misses the cutoff for turning in grades the Office of the Registrar will be able to process these late grades (including the “I/Alternate Grade”) and ensure they are correctly attributed to the students affected.

Q: Will other incomplete (“I”) grades from terms prior to Fall 2007 also default to an alternate grade (i.e., an “F”) after a year or when a student applies to graduate?

A: No. The revised Academic Regulation 17 goes into effect for Fall 2007 and all future terms. It is not retroactive to previous terms. Incompletes for all terms prior to Fall 2007 are at the discretion of the instructor and can either be changed to an earned grade or remain as an incomplete indefinitely. These grades are clearly identified by the lack of an alternate grade. For example, an “I” denotes the incomplete was assigned by the instructor prior to Fall 2007. All incompletes from Fall 2007 on would be reflected as an “I/Alternate Grade” (I/A, I/A-...I/F, I/P, I/N, etc.).

Q: Does Academic Regulation 17 apply only to undergraduate students, or are other student populations similarly affected?

A: All students are held to the same grading systems. Academic Regulation 17 will apply equally to undergraduates, post-baccalaureates, graduate, non-degree seeking students, etc.

Q: What will we see on our unofficial and official transcripts?

A: Students will see the incomplete and the alternate grade (i.e., I/A, I/A-...I/F, I/P, I/N, etc) in the grade field. However, until the incomplete is resolved, it will retain all of the same characteristics of an incomplete grade. In other words, the incomplete will not count in credits earned or a student’s institutional GPA. This will ensure that a student will not have an incomplete grade count in their credit totals or have it affect their GPA until the incomplete is resolved or defaults to the Alternate Grade.

Q: If a student selected a grading option of Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U), will the instructor assign an “I/S” or “I/U” during the submittal of the grades for that term the incomplete was requested?

A: No. Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grade options are converted after the submission of the “I/Alternate Grade” is determined by the instructor. For example, if the student has requested an incomplete and has opted for an S/U grade, the instructor will submit an “I/Normal Grade” (i.e., I/B+) at the end of the term. The Office of the Registrar will subsequently convert the “I/Normal Grade” to an “I/S” or “I/U” in accordance with the grading option chosen by the student.

Q: What happens if a course had received an “I/Alternate Grade” the first time the course was taken, but the student retakes the course for a grade?

A: According to Academic Regulation 20 (Repeated Courses), both courses would appear on the student’s academic record (transcript), but only the second grade would be counted in the cumulative GPA and toward graduation requirements. Even if the “I/Alternate Grade” were to subsequently default to the Alternate Grade, the second taking of the course would be the one that counts.

Q: What happens if a student’s academic progress in a given term is interrupted by an emergency situation (serious illness, accident, or death of a family member)? Can the student request incompletes for all his/her courses?

A: Yes. Subsequent to the revision to Academic Regulation 17, the Faculty Senate also approved a revision to Academic Regulation 13c that allows the student to withdraw within the last four weeks of the term with incompletes in all subjects. The student (or family member), however, must submit evidence of the emergency situation to the Registrar for consideration. The Office of the Registrar is then charged with contacting each instructor and recording the individual “I/Alternate Grade” for each course the student is still enrolled for that term.

Q: Can a student petition for an extension to resolve the incomplete in excess of the one year?

A: Possibly. The instructor must be willing to provide an extension. However, if the instructor does not agree to extend the timeline, it is unlikely anyone else would supersede that decision. If the instructor is willing to extend the timeline, the student can complete the [Petition Extension of Time to Remove Incomplete Grade](#). The petition requires the signatures of the course instructor and department chair, and potentially, the approval of the Academic Requirements Committee to gain approval of the extension.

Q: Who can the student talk to for specific questions regarding the changes to Academic Regulation 17?

A: The students are encouraged to ask questions of their departmental or college advisors and/or to contact staff in the Office of the Registrar. Students are encouraged to call by phone (541-737-4331), utilize email (registrars@oregonstate.edu), or visit the office in-person, B102 Kerr Administration Building.