

# PAWS/PAUSE for Undergraduate Academic Policy (copy 02)

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Dear << Test First Name >>,

The beginning of each semester is a great time to review several key resources including the [Undergraduate Catalog](#), the [UMBC Policy website](#) and the [Academic Calendar](#). It is important to be familiar with each of these resources because they contain the answers to many of the questions that students may ask. As you offer guidance to students that relates to undergraduate academic policy, it is good practice to cite the resource(s) in which the written policy is outlined to avoid any misunderstanding.

It is also important to remind students that policy and procedures are in place so that there are options available when things do not go as planned. For example, UMBC's course withdrawal policy allows a student to withdraw from a course mid-semester if a serious illness or family emergency prevents continued participation. Another example includes the maximum credits policy that allows very strong students to enroll in excess credits if a justification is provided.

Policy should be presented as a positive resource on campus. Knowing what policies are available at UMBC will help our students to make informed decisions that are timely. Failure to become familiar with undergraduate academic policy does not provide a basis for an exception. The more we can point students to the written resource(s) the more likely they will know how to handle a situation if/when necessary.

As part of our ongoing campaign in which we are asking everyone to ***PAWS/PAUSE for Undergraduate Academic Policy***, there are a number of important reminders and updates that we would like to bring to your attention:

[Late-Add](#) (Adding a course(s) after the end of the schedule adjustment period)

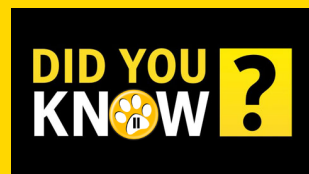


**Did you know that it is against university policy for a student to attend and/or participate in a course for which they are not on the course roster after the end of the schedule adjustment period (February 7, 2014)?**

Should you be approached by a student who has not gained a seat in a course by the end of the schedule adjustment period please keep the following factors in mind:

- A student should not be encouraged to submit a late-add petition unless, failure to enroll was for a reason outside their control.
- Failure to pay an overdue balance or having a registration block is not out of a student's control and does not provide basis for approving a late-add petition.
- Having access to Blackboard or having a spot on the waitlist does not constitute formal registration in a course and does not provide basis for approving a late-add petition.
- Courses added after the end of the schedule adjustment period (even with OUE approval) may not be considered for the student's financial aid eligibility due to federal regulations.
- Students may incur additional charges for late registration.
- UMBC's State funding is based in part on the total course enrollment that is reported at a selected date after the start of the semester. As such, it is imperative that students register for classes by the official deadline to ensure that our university reporting is as accurate as possible. We receive no compensation from the state for increased enrollment credits not reported.

## Incomplete Grades



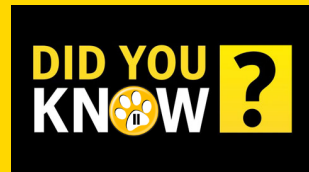
**Did you know that a grade of "I" may not be awarded unless specifically requested by a student?**

Should a student ask questions about an incomplete grade option please keep the following factors in mind:

- An incomplete grade should only be considered under exceptional circumstances for course work that has been qualitatively satisfactory but, for reasons beyond the student's control, cannot be completed on time.
- Generally, an incomplete grade is granted when only a small portion of work is remaining to complete the course.
- An incomplete grade should not be granted early in the semester. If an incomplete grade is requested up through the 10th week of the semester, the student should be advised to consider a course drop or course withdrawal depending on the timing.
- If an incomplete grade is granted, the student should not re-register for or participate unofficially in the course in a later term as a means to makeup the incomplete work.

- If an incomplete grade is granted, it is good practice for the instructor to put the incomplete agreement (deadline to submit the incomplete work, list of missing requirements, etc.) in writing such that there is record of the incomplete arrangement should an issue arise at a later date.
- The outstanding course work must be completed under the guidance of the original instructor by the date specified, even if the course is not offered again, the instructor is not in residence, or the student is not enrolled in the university.
- If a grade change has not been submitted by the date grades are due at the end of the regular semester following the one in which the “I” was issued, a grade of “F” will be awarded automatically, unless the instructor requests a **one-time, one semester extension** of the “I” grade by submitting an RT Help Ticket to the Registrar’s Office.

## [Grade Change Procedures - Revisions for Summer 2014](#)



### **Did you know that several revisions to the grade change procedures were approved on December 9, 2013?**

We are pleased to announce that several revisions to the grade change procedures were approved by the Council of Deans on December 9, 2013. The revisions, which **will not take effect until summer 2014**, include the following:

**Revision #1)** Any reference to a transcript being “locked” once a degree is posted will be removed from the catalog. In past years, the strict enforcement of the “locked transcript” procedure has resulted in inaccuracies on the academic transcript, and other administrative errors going uncorrected. Inaccurate transcripts can lead to any number of negative consequences for a student as they pursue employment and/or future educational opportunities. Since 2012, the practice of locking the transcript following graduation has shifted such that exceptions have been considered, and in rare instances, granted. The revised procedures will make clear that if there is an institutional error on file resulting in an inaccurate student record, we have an obligation to correct it.

**Revision #2)** Grade changes must be submitted within one year from the grade posting deadline for the semester in question. Grade changes should only be submitted if there is an exceptional circumstance that is documented. Grade changes within the one year period will require approval by the original course instructor and the department chair. Approval from the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education for grade changes within the one year period will no longer be required.

**Revision #3)** Grade changes submitted after the one year period, post-degree, or in the absence of the original course instructor require additional approval of the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education. Such grade changes should only be submitted if there is an exceptional circumstance that is documented.

### **The three revisions that were approved are significant for a number of reasons.**

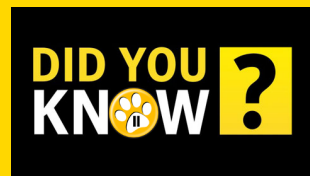
First, the revised procedures reflect a campus that is committed to improving processes and procedures with the best interests of students in mind. In this case, the Academic Standards Executive Committee, which is comprised of faculty from across the colleges, staff and administrators, stewarded a review of the grade change procedures in consultation with the Undergraduate Program Directors, the Undergraduate Council and the Council of Deans. Through the collegial work of all involved, a number of limitations to the existing procedures were identified and action was taken to make improvements.

Second but most important is that the revised grade change procedures will benefit students by making the process more efficient. With fewer signatures required, student records will be updated in a more timely fashion. While paper grade change forms will continue to be used in the short run, there are efforts underway to further streamline the grade change process and make it available in an online format.

Finally, the revised grade change procedures will allow for added flexibility in unpredicted situations such as an error being identified post-degree or in the absence of the original course instructor. In this respect, students will not be penalized for matters out of their control.

Again, the revisions to the grade change procedures will not be fully implemented until summer 2014. For now, grade changes will continue to be handled as they always have been, however, stay tuned because the Office of Undergraduate Education will be reaching out to all Department Chairs and Program Directors in February and March to schedule grade change meetings. In these meetings, the new grade change procedures will be discussed in detail and training will be provided to ensure that all grade changes, regardless of course, department, or college, are handled in a consistent and fair fashion.

## [Course Repeat Policy](#)



**Did you know that success rates for students who petition for a course repeat are now available as a report in REX [Guided Reports/Student Records/Enroll Student Enrollment/Details/OUE Course Repeat Summary]?**

A few features of the course repeat summary report include:

- The report can be generated in various ways such that comparisons can be made between terms or by variables.
- There are a number of variables that can be assessed including gender, ethnicity, admit type, academic level, reporting by college, reporting by major, and reporting by course.

**[Should you have any questions, comments or suggestions please contact:](#)**

**[Amanda M. Knapp, Ph.D.](#)**

**"PAWS/PAUSE for Academic Policy"**

**Academic Standards & Policy Specialist**

**University of Maryland, Baltimore County**

**Office of Undergraduate Education**

**Sherman Hall (formally Academic IV Building, A Wing) Room 114C**

**1000 Hilltop Circle**

**Baltimore, MD 21250**

**Phone: 410.455.3874**

Phone: 410-455-3674

Fax: 410-455-1198

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