

Some FAQs about Grade Forgiveness

How common are grade replacement policies in higher education?

Ninety-one percent (91%) of undergraduate and 80% of graduate and/or professional institutions allow students to repeat courses to improve a grade.¹ However, specific replacement policies such as this one vary across institutions. Those with policies in place similar to this draft policy include CU Boulder, CU Denver, CSU Fort Collins, University of New Mexico, University of Arizona, University of Nebraska, University of Utah, Arizona State University, Oklahoma State University, Utah State University, and a number of our peer institutions, among others.

How would this policy benefit our students?

- Students currently repeat courses they've failed or not achieved a required minimum grade to advance to the next level or count a course toward a major. This would allow students to retake key courses while also raising their GPAs to support timely graduation, or for application to graduate school

What are some identified best practices?

From EAB:

- Allow students to repeat a course once, with an option to appeal for a second repeat
- Calculate GPA based on most recent repeat grade
- All grades should appear on transcripts to accurately reflect students' experiences²

How would this affect student transcripts?

- In this policy draft, transcripts will include all courses taken and grades received. For example, if students retake a course they've failed, the original grade of F remains on the transcript but would no longer be part of the GPA.

How would this work with Federal Financial Aid?

Students may receive Federal financial aid to repeat a course once when they are repeating to improve a course grade. See the policy document, Appendix A, for more information about Financial Aid implications.

How would this work with VA funding?

The VA will pay for a failed course and there is no limit to how many times a student can fail a course and get the same course paid for.

Other considerations:

¹ Wendy Kilgore, "2017 Grades and Grading Practices in U.S. Higher Education: A Cross Survey Perspective of Practice," AACRAO, p. 45

² EAB Best Practice for Course Repeats (EAB "Academic Policy Audit" p. 28)

- Can keep more credit hours at UCCS. Currently, there is no incentive for students to retake a course at UCCS since it doesn't make a difference where the course is taken. With grade forgiveness, students will be more likely to retake classes at UCCS since it can help their GPA rather than take classes elsewhere, including PPCC
- Provides an alternative to retroactive withdrawal to support students, without having to wipe out a semester of grades from a student's record (courses become a W when a retroactive withdrawal is approved and this may not always be appropriate)
- Include forgiveness for grades beyond D/F grades: Academic Advising notes that many students have to repeat courses where they have earned above a D but still do not meet the grade requirements to advance to the next course (such as needing above a C- in College Algebra to advance to Pre-Calculus)
- Include all undergraduate levels (for example, not just 1000/2000 courses): due to our transfer student population and concurrent HS work that is brought in, upper division courses may be appropriate for this policy
- Consider timing if requiring a petition process, especially between fall-spring semesters, due to a potential influx of petitions in a compressed time and students needing to make time-sensitive decisions about course schedules
- Could instead have a form such as the late add form, to be signed by advising, financial aid, and the Veterans office (when appropriate), to confirm that students have had conversations about how this might affect them
- Students have asked for this policy in the past; in 2012, the grade forgiveness question was on the ballot of the Student Body Elections and over 1,000 students voted Yes (93 percent of the students who voted). These results were brought to EPUS at that time.