

Assessment of Student Academic Achievement and Placement Testing

Northwest College is dedicated to improving the academic achievement levels of students. Following the "Assessment Plan," the college collects a variety of data to measure how well students succeed in the classroom. Our aim is to improve the ways in which students learn and professors teach.

As part of this assessment effort, Northwest College requires new students to arrive with an ACT score *and/or* to take the COMPASS test. A fee is charged for the COMPASS test. ACT or COMPASS scores are used to place students in the correct level of English, mathematics, and reading courses.

- ACT composite below 18–English placement test required
- ACT composite below 19–Reading placement test required
- ACT Math sub-score below 23–Math placement test required

In order to graduate with a degree from NWC, a student must take and pass a designated "Capstone Course." This course may be completed any time after the student has accumulated 30 hours of college credit.

Interested students may obtain a copy of Northwest College's "Assessment Plan" from the Instructional Offices.

Registration Procedures

The *Semester Class Schedule* contains detailed instructions about registration procedures and time lines. Copies are available each semester at Enrollment Services one week prior to early registration.

AUDITING CLASSES

The privilege of auditing a course is extended to those who want to explore subject matter for which they are prepared without completing all requirements of a course. Auditors have full rights of class participation but don't receive credits or grades.

Students enrolled in 12 or more

credit hours may, with permission of the instructor, audit a course and pay only the fees. Students enrolled in 11.5 or fewer credit hours will pay tuition and fees.

The Academic Calendar in the *Semester Class Schedule* notes dates students may switch from credit to audit or vice versa.

CLASS LOAD

The typical course load for full-time students is 16-18 credits.

Student Overload Policy. Students who want to take more than 20 hours must have a cumulative NWC grade point average of 3.0 or higher and approval of advisor. An overload fee will be charged for each credit above 20. This fee will be the per credit hour tuition and instructional fee in accordance with the student's residency classification.

COURSE CHANGES & WITHDRAWALS

Students wanting to change their original registration, either by adding or withdrawing courses, must obtain Change of Registration forms from Enrollment Services. No change in registration is made until a student returns a completed form, with necessary signatures, to Enrollment Services. Forms must be returned on or before specified dates, or they will not be processed. See additional information in Refund Policy, Dropping Courses, page 9.

Students who add a class to their original enrollments may do so for eight class days after the day of registration. Exceptions are – (1) courses which give one hour credit may be added upon the request of the instructor and with the approval of the division chairperson up to midterm of the course; and (2) instructors within a particular subject area are authorized to transfer students from one level to another within that particular subject area.

A student may withdraw from a course up to five class days following midterm.

Students wanting to terminate enrollment at the college must request, complete, and return an official Withdrawal Form and the Exit Survey available at the Student Success Office. See the academic calendar dates to withdraw from college without penalty.

Final Examinations

Final examinations are scheduled at the end of each semester. Instructors have the option of giving an exam, evaluation, critique, or review, but classes will meet at the time scheduled. A student who has three or more exams falling on the same day may petition one of his or her instructors to change the day of the exam.

Repeating Courses

Students may repeat a course in an attempt to improve their grade. However, the grade earned the second (or most recent) time will be the grade of record. The most recent grade stands even if it is worse. The grade point average is adjusted accordingly, with only the latest attempt counted in the cumulative grade point average. The original grade remains on the transcript but is not applicable to degree requirements or computation of the grade point average.

Variable credit courses are not considered "repeats," unless the instructor provides written certification that the course content was, in fact, repeated.

Credit by Examination

Northwest College participates in testing programs that include the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement Examination (AP), and credit by examination. Students may earn up to 15 hours of college credit by demonstrating competency in particular college courses. Only the academic division concerned may initiate an exception to the limit of 15 credit hours.

To qualify for these options, students must register as certificate or degree candidates at Northwest College during the semester in which they apply for the credit.

Students may not earn credit by examination in a course if they have earned credit previously in a higher level course in the subject area. Nor may a student challenge a course to remove a failure or to raise a passing grade he or she received in the course.

Students must earn all credit by examination before midterm. For challenge examinations, the college assesses an administrative fee for each credit earned. The Registrar notes

successfully earned credit on the student's transcript by listing the course, the credit earned, and a grade of "S."

ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMINATIONS (AP)

Northwest College grants college credit to those students who have completed Advanced Placement Examinations (AP) of the College Entrance Examination Board. To receive AP credit, students must earn the equivalent of a "C" or better (AP scores of 3, 4, or 5). The college assesses a non-refundable fee for each examination.

Contact the Registrar for more information.

CHALLENGE EXAMINATIONS

Challenge Examinations—In

General. Students may petition for examination in any lower division course not carrying prerequisites, except for wellness education activity courses. The college allows credit based on the testing procedure acceptable to the academic division concerned, subject to review by the Dean of Instruction. For more information, students should consult with their academic advisors.

Challenge Examinations—Foreign

Languages. To obtain credit in foreign languages for previous study, a student should enroll in the highest level course appropriate to the student's skill. The student determines this by consulting with the instructor or by self-placing according to the prerequisite guidelines for each course. The college will grant credit for a lower level course automatically to a student who achieves a "B" or above in the course in which the student enrolls, *provided the student has filed a petition and paid the applicable fees by midterm*. A student may not earn more than 12 hours of petitioned credit in any foreign language.

Students who have previous foreign language experience but do not want to enroll in a language course at Northwest College may petition for foreign language credit through alternate means, such as Self-Acquired Competency or a CLEP examination.

CLEP

Northwest College accepts the Subject Examinations of the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) of the

College Entrance Examination Board. The college awards credit for CLEP scores at or above the minimum scores established by the college, as follows:

<u>TEST</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>NWC Course</u>
American Literature Analysis & Interpretation of Literature	55	ENGL 2310 or 2320
English Literature	55	ENGL 2210 or 2220
Freshman English	55	ENGL 1010
College Composition	55	ENGL 1010
American Government	55	POLS 1000
Western Civilization I	50	HIST 1110
Western Civilization II	48	HIST 1120
US History I	49	HIST 1210
US History II	49	HIST 1220
Biology	49	BIOL 1010 & 2020
General Chemistry	50	CHEM 1020
General Psychology	50	PSYC 1000
Introductory Sociology	56	SOC 1000
French, German, Spanish	See Faculty	Levels I & II only
College Algebra	48	MATH 1400
Introductory Calculus	49	MATH 2200
Trigonometry	54	MATH 1405
Algebra/Trigonometry	50	MATH 1450

Students must apply for the examination(s) one month before they wish to take the examination(s). Contact the Student Success Office for more information and for copies of CLEP Policy and current cost of CLEP tests. The college assesses a non-refundable fee for each examination.

Self-Acquired Competency Credit

Students may apply up to 15 hours of credit based upon self-acquired competencies toward a Northwest College associate's degree. The college may award this credit either as

- equivalent NWC courses; or
- general credit in an academic area.

To earn credit for self-acquired competencies, a student petitions for credit in a particular course and submits a portfolio supporting the petition. A team of faculty identifies the contents of the portfolio, reviews the portfolio, interviews the student (if necessary), and assigns any credit they feel is appropriate.

The college assesses an administrative fee for each credit earned by examination. The Registrar notes successfully earned credit on the student's transcript by listing the course, the credit earned, and a grade of "S."

Students may obtain specific information on credit for self-acquired competencies by contacting the Instructional Offices.

Grading Policies

Grades are recorded by letters and computed to grade averages by points.

A	Excellent	4.0 points
A-		3.7 points
B+		3.3 points
B	Above Average	3.0 points
B-		2.7 points
C+		2.3 points
C	Average	2.0 points
C-		1.7 points
D+		1.3 points
D	Below Average	1.0 point
D-		0.7 point
F	Failure	0.0 point
U	Unsatisfactory	0.0 point
S	Satisfactory	0.0 point
W	Withdrawn	
WD	Withdrawal	0.0 point
<i>(Does not appear on transcript.)</i>		
I	Incomplete	
N	No Grade Reported	
AU	Audit	

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Northwest College has an attendance policy: one clock hour of unexcused absence for each credit offered (for example, a three credit course = three clock hours of unexcused absences allowed). After the allowed absences have been taken, the instructor has the prerogative to reduce the student's grade by one grade per absence beyond the number allowed.

Students who miss class while officially representing the college are directly responsible for seeing that all assignments, written lessons, labs, quizzes, tests, and exams are made up promptly. Such authorized absences merely give the individual who missed the class an opportunity to make up the work and in no way excuse the student from work required by the instructor.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

The grade point average is found by weighing the grades of A through F, by the points assigned to each grade, and multiplying the number of credit hours by the weighted grade of each course. To determine the average, the sum of all of these courses is divided by the total number of hours attempted by the student. Satisfactory grades, marked "S," are not used in computing grade point averages. A student may repeat a course

to raise a grade. Only the repeat course counts in the cumulative grade point average. The original grade remains on the transcript but is not averaged. See page 18.

GRADE REPORTS

Final grade reports are prepared by the Registrar at the close of each semester and distributed as soon as possible. Copies are available to the students and persons they designate.

Mid-term progress reports give students an opportunity to check their enrollment as listed by the Registrar. Grades of “S” and “U” are usually reported at this time, although instructors have the option of giving letter grades; students are given warning of any deficiencies. These grades are temporary and are not posted to any records.

HONOR ROLLS

Students who have earned 12 credit hours (in college-level course work — see list of Below College-Level Courses on page 26), with at least a 3.5 grade point average are eligible for honor roll listing; those who have achieved a 4.0 on 12 hours are eligible for the President’s Honor Roll.

GRADUATING WITH HONORS

Students who meet the following criteria will graduate from Northwest College “with honors.”

- Complete a minimum of 30 hours at Northwest College.
- Have a minimum, cumulative NWC grade point average of 3.5 (college level credits only).

Identification of students graduating “with honors” at spring commencement is based upon meeting the qualifications the previous fall semester. “With honors” notation on students’ permanent records is based upon final transcripts.

INCOMPLETE POLICY

The “I” notation is used only when the student, for reason beyond the student’s control, is unable to finish the work of the course, and in such instances only when the student would otherwise have had a passing grade. An “I” must be accompanied by an “Incomplete Request Form” prepared and signed by the instructor and the student.

A student who has received an incomplete must arrange with the instructor for completion. The course

must be completed by a date mutually agreed upon by the instructor and the student, but no later than one year from the date received. A student making up an incomplete grade should not reregister for the course. If the course is not completed by the deadline, it will default to an “F” grade. An incomplete cannot be changed to an audit or withdrawal.

The “Change of Grade” form will be submitted to the Registrar by the instructor when the course is completed.

General Code of Student Conduct

The General Code of Student Conduct prohibits misconduct on college premises (buildings or grounds owned, leased, operated, controlled, or supervised by Northwest College) or at any college sponsored event or activity whether it be on or off campus. The code may also address off campus conduct at non-college sponsored events when the behavior or the presence of the individual, in the college’s judgment, impairs, obstructs, or interferes with the mission, processes, or functions of Northwest College.

Firearms, explosives, and weapons are prohibited from being carried on campus. These include, but are not limited to, guns, firecrackers or other explosives, live ammunition, flares, large knives, and swords. The residence halls provide gun lockers for students living on campus. All target and hunting weapons and ammunition must be checked in with residential life staff.

Northwest College has regulations covering possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances (including marijuana) on the campus. The campus area is extended to cover academic, athletic, or recreational trips sponsored by the college.

Students who are in any way financially indebted to the college, or who have failed to account for college property placed in their possession, may be denied any services until they have made satisfactory settlement.

Other behaviors which may result in disciplinary action include academic dishonesty, extortion, intimidation, physical abuse, misappropriation or destruction of institutional or personal property, and activities which inhibit the rights of others or bring discredit to the institution and its

members. The official campus body for hearing appeals in disciplinary cases is the Student Appeals Board.

More details on standards of conduct and disciplinary process and procedures are found in the Student Handbook available in the Dean of Students’ Office.

Academic Code of Conduct

Northwest College is committed to creating and maintaining an environment of academic honesty. It is the faculty’s responsibility to affirm the importance of academic integrity and to try to educate students as to standards of academic behavior. **Northwest College expects each faculty member to**

- foster a respect for learning,
- treat students with individual attention and consideration,
- provide an environment of trust in the classroom,
- clarify expectations for students,
- develop fair and relevant forms of assessment,
- reduce opportunities to engage in academic dishonesty,
- challenge academic dishonesty when it occurs, and
- help define and support campus-wide academic integrity standards.

Students, too, bear the responsibility for academic integrity. **Northwest College expects each student to**

- learn and comply with academic expectations,
- display appropriate conduct in classroom situations,
- accept Northwest College’s “Student Academic Rights” and “Student Academic Responsibilities,” and
- preserve academic integrity by upholding the spirit and letter of the Academic Code of Conduct.

Violations of academic integrity include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating, trafficking, and copyright infringement.

Breaches of the Academic Code of Conduct may result in a failing grade for the assignment, failure in the course, or other disciplinary actions as established by the college.

More details on Academic Code of Conduct are found in the Student Handbook available in the Dean of Students’ Office.

Student Appeals

The Student Appeals Board hears students' appeals on actions by the Dean of Students in student conduct matters and by the Dean of Instruction in academic conduct matters. The Appeals Board will also hear appeals regarding residency reclassification, exceptions to academic policy, decisions on academic suspension, and other such matters.

Only after the student has pursued appropriate channels in disciplinary matters (see the Dean of Students) or academic matters (see faculty first, then the division chairs, then the Dean of Instruction) and remains dissatisfied with the results, may the process of appealing to the Student Appeals Board be initiated.

Academic Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal Policy

Students in *good standing* maintain a cumulative GPA (CumGPA) of at least 2.0.

Academic probation is notice that a degree-seeking student is not making satisfactory progress. The Academic Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal Policy of the Admissions, Standards, and Awards Committee (ASA) places students on probation when their cumulative GPAs fall below 2.0. When the college places a student on probation, the student and his/her academic advisor receive a letter from the Registrar explaining the student's status. Students may restore themselves to good standing by raising their CumGPAs to at least 2.0 in the following semester.

If a student fails to achieve good standing in the following semester, the ASA places the student on *continued probation*. The Registrar sends a letter to the student and his/her academic advisor explaining the student's status. If a student shows good progress by achieving a semester GPA greater than 2.0 but the CumGPA remains below 2.0, the student remains on *continued probation*.

If a student on continued probation fails to achieve a semester GPA of at least 2.0 in the following semester, then he/she is placed on *academic suspension*. A full-time student (12 or more credits) may "return on probation" either by enrolling

in not more than six (6) credit hours until restoring the CumGPA to at least 2.0 or by sitting out one academic semester. A part-time student (less than 12 credits) may "return on probation" by either enrolling in three (3) credit hours (or **one** course that may exceed three credits) or by sitting out one academic semester. If the student chooses to sit out one academic semester he/she would enroll the subsequent semester as "return on probation."

A student is placed on *academic dismissal* if he/she fails to achieve a semester GPA of 2.0 for the first semester he/she enrolls after being placed on academic suspension. Academic dismissal permanently ends a student's enrollment at NWC. Students on academic dismissal may appeal their status by petitioning the Student Appeals Board. (See the *Student Handbook & Academic Planner* for "Appeals Board Process and Procedures.")

SUMMARY

A student in *good standing* maintains a CumGPA of at least 2.0.

Academic probation occurs when

- a student's Northwest College CumGPA falls below 2.0.

Continued probation occurs when

- a student fails to raise the CumGPA to at least 2.0 but maintains a semester GPA of 2.0 or better, or
- a student enrolls after sitting out a semester due to academic suspension.

Academic suspension occurs when

- a student on continued probation fails to maintain a semester GPA of at least 2.0.

Academic dismissal occurs when

- a student "returned on probation" after being placed on academic suspension fails to maintain a semester GPA of at least 2.0.

Academic Amnesty

Academic amnesty is Northwest College's policy of forgiveness for a student's prior unsuccessful academic record at NWC. Academic amnesty permits students to initiate a new grade point average at NWC that is not affected

by the previous unsuccessful record.

Students must successfully complete at least 24 additional credit hours at Northwest College before applying for academic amnesty and be currently enrolled at Northwest at the time of application. "Successfully complete" means a minimum grade point average of 2.5 GPA, with no course grade lower than "C" for 24 credit hours. Once the 24 credit hour requirement has been successfully completed, students seeking academic amnesty may then petition in writing for academic amnesty to the Admissions, Standards, and Awards Committee. The petition shall specify the semester(s) for which amnesty is requested and such other relevant data as the student deems necessary. The decision of the ASA Committee shall be transmitted to the student, the Registrar, the Dean of Students, and the Dean of Instruction.

If amnesty is granted, the entire previous NWC academic record will remain intact on the student's permanent record or transcript, but that previous unsuccessful record period will not be considered for grade point average computations or for satisfying NWC graduation requirements. Students granted amnesty will have an annotation listed on their NWC permanent record or transcript concerning the implementation of this policy, to include a brief definition of NWC's amnesty policy; an indication of exactly which portion of the record or transcript is being forgiven or neutralized (precise start dates and end dates); and the date that amnesty was granted by NWC. Students may petition for academic amnesty only once.

Academic Exception Policy

Certain problems encountered by students may result in a request to have an exception made to an academic policy or regulation of the college. A student may request such an exception by writing a letter of explanation and outlining the reasons for the request. The completed letter should be delivered to the Registrar, who will then route it to the proper committee or office for consideration. The student has the opportunity to appear before the committee to answer questions relative to the request. When a decision has been reached, the student will be notified.

Transferring from Northwest

Most students seeking an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Science degree plan to transfer to a college or university and pursue a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. Typically, college-level courses at NWC in which a student receives a grade of “C” or better will transfer. Here’s how the process works.

- Apply for admission at the school to which you wish to transfer.
- Go to the Registrar and fill out a transcript request form. This form asks where you would like your transcript sent. The Registrar will send your transcript to the institution(s) of your choice. Transfer institutions require official transcripts sent directly from Northwest College.
- Upon acceptance at your transfer institution, you may request to have your Northwest College transcript evaluated. If you have any difficulties getting a course or courses transferred, call your Northwest College academic advisor and/or the Associate Dean of Instruction for assistance.

Transfer guides for many schools are available in the Student Success Office.

WICHE

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education sponsors students who are Wyoming residents as they continue their professional education out of state. Accepted applicants may attend a transfer institution for its in-state tuition rate. WICHE programs at NWC include: physical therapy, occupational therapy, optometry, architecture, and physician’s assistant. Applications are due by October 15 of the year preceding the year of transfer. Additional information is available from the Student Success Office.