

Student Placement Testing

Northwest College is dedicated to helping students increase their levels of academic achievement. As part of this effort, the College staff and faculty want to be sure that students start their college work in English and mathematics at the most appropriate level. Also, many students need to build their reading comprehension skills in order to be successful with college work.

As part of our placement effort, Northwest College requires new students to arrive with an ACT score and/or to take the COMPASS Placement Test. A fee is charged for the COMPASS Placement Test. ACT or COMPASS scores are used to place students in the correct level of English, mathematics, and reading courses. Students with an ACT score may take the mathematics or English COMPASS Placement Tests if they believe the ACT scores do not adequately reflect their abilities. If a student has an ACT composite below 19, the reading COMPASS Placement Test is required.

The COMPASS Placement Test is a computerized multiple-choice assessment instrument that provides information to help advisors register students in the most appropriate classes. The three tests in the COMPASS assessment are: reading, mathematics, and English. Students may retake the COMPASS Placement Test if they believe the scores do not adequately reflect their abilities. Regardless of whether a student is taking one, two or all three of the tests, a \$10 fee is charged to individuals taking the COMPASS Placement Test for the first time and a \$3 fee is charged to students retaking the COMPASS test. Students arrange to take these tests through the Student Success Center.

Registration Procedures

The *Semester Class Schedule* contains detailed information on course offerings, instructions about registration procedures, and time lines. Copies are available each semester at Enrollment Services prior to early registration.

STUDENT PORTAL

Current students may view class schedules, register for classes, add classes, drop classes, view grades, check grade point average, update mailing address, review financial aid package, request an official copy of their transcript, or pay fees online. Connect through the student portal, *MyNWC.northwestcollege.edu*.

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 14-18 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 their advisor. First semester freshmen must have a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher and approval of their advisor. An overload fee will be charged for each credit above 20. This fee will be the per credit hour tuition in accordance with the student's residency classification.

COURSE CHANGES & WITHDRAWALS

Students wanting to change their original registration, either by adding, dropping, or withdrawing from courses, must obtain Change of Registration forms from Enrollment Services or online at *MyNWC.northwestcollege.edu*. 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 and Dropping Courses, page 12.

Students who add a class to their original enrollments may do so for seven days from the first day of classes. 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 mid-term 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 drop a full-term course up to five class days following mid-term.

Students wanting to terminate enrollment at the College must request, complete, and return an official Change of Status Form available at Enrollment Services. See the academic calendar for 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 and total credits earned. 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 accepts credits from testing programs such as the Advanced Placement Examination (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), 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. Students may not challenge a course to remove a failure or to raise a passing grade he or she received when taking the course earlier.

Students must earn all credit by examination before mid-term. For challenge examinations, the College assesses an administrative fee for each credit earned. See Alternative Credit Charges page 11. The Registrar notes successfully earned credit on the student’s transcript by listing the course, the credit earned, and a grade of “S” (satisfactory).

ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMINATIONS (AP)

Northwest College grants college credit to those students who have successfully 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).

Contact the Registrar for more information.

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. 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 Vice President for Academic Affairs. 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 mid-term*. 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 a Challenge 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 reviews the portfolio, interviews the student (if necessary), and assigns appropriate credit.

The College assesses an administrative fee for each credit earned by examination. See Alternative Credit Charges on page 11. The Registrar notes successfully earned credit on the student’s transcript by listing the course, the credit earned, and a grade of “S” (satisfactory).

Students may obtain specific information on credit for self-acquired competencies by contacting the Academic Affairs Office.

Grading Policies

Grades for transcripts 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
UF	Unassessed Failure	0.0 point
U	Unsatisfactory	0.0 point
S	Satisfactory	0.0 point
W	Withdrawn	
I	Incomplete	
N	No Grade Reported	
AU	Audit	

See course syllabi for the grading system used in each class.

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 must notify the faculty member before the absence. Students are directly responsible for promptly making up all assignments, written lessons, labs, quizzes, tests, and exams. 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 26.

GRADE REPORTS

NWC does not mail grade reports. Students may view and print their grades (final or mid-term) online through the Student Portal at *MyNWC.northwestcollege.edu*.

Mid-term progress reports give students an opportunity to check their progress and 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. These grades are temporary and are not posted to any records.

HONOR ROLLS

Students who have earned 12 credit hours (in college-level coursework — see list of Below College-Level Courses on page 37), 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. Students should be aware that Northwest College reserves the right to review and take disciplinary action based on conduct occurring off campus or between academic periods.

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 Residence 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, misuse of computers and the Internet, physical abuse, misappropriation or destruction of institutional or personal property, and activities which inhibit the rights of others, compromise or interfere with the learning of other students, or bring discredit to the institution and its members. The official campus body for hearing appeals in disciplinary cases is the Student Appeals Board.

Details on standards of conduct and disciplinary process and procedures are found in the Student Handbook available in the Vice President for Student Affairs 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. Students are obligated to learn the rules related to plagiarism and appropriate citations.

Violations of academic integrity include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating, trafficking, and copyright infringement. These are serious offenses and are treated seriously by the College.

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 Vice President for Student Affairs Office.

Student Appeals

The Student Appeals Board hears students' appeals on actions by the Vice President for Student Affairs in student conduct matters and by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in academic conduct matters. The Appeals Board will also hear appeals regarding residency reclassification, exceptions to academic policy, decisions on academic dismissal, financial aid, suspension, and other such matters.

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

Academic Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal Policy (Applies to degree seeking students only.)

A student in *good standing* maintains a cumulative GPA (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 on academic probation fails to raise the CumGPA to at least 2.0 but maintains a semester GPA of 2.0 or better.

Academic suspension occurs when

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

Academic suspension is not appealable. Available options are: a full-time student (12 or more credits) may either enroll in not more than six (6) credit hours until restoring the CumGPA to at least 2.0 or sit out one academic semester. A part-time student (less than 12 credits) may either enroll in three (3) credit hours (or **one** course that may exceed three credits) or sit out one academic semester. If the student chooses to sit out one academic semester he/she would enroll the subsequent semester as "returned on probation."

Returned on probation occurs when

- a student enrolls after sitting out a semester due to academic suspension.

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 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.")

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 Registrar. The petition shall specify the semester(s) for which amnesty is requested and such other relevant data as the student deems necessary. The student and other appropriate individuals will be notified of the decision.

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 transcript including an indication of exactly which portion of the record or transcript is being forgiven; 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, regulation, or requirement of the College. Division chairpersons may sign for a course waiver or substitution. 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. Students are strongly encouraged to work closely with their academic advisors to select NWC courses that will meet requirements at the transfer institution. Students are also encouraged to contact the Registrar or Transfer Counselor/Advisor at the transfer institution to confirm requirements and determine if pre-approval of transfer courses is permitted and/or if dual enrollment is an option. Typically, all college-level courses at NWC in which a student receives a grade of “C” or better will transfer to an accredited institution. Depending upon the student’s program of study and the transfer institutions own requirements, credits may transfer as electives. Here’s how the process works.

- Investigate transfer options on the Northwest College transfer Web site www.northwestcollege.edu/Transfer.
- As soon as possible, inform your NWC academic advisor of your transfer choice(s).
- Apply for admission at the school to which you wish to transfer.
- Go to the Enrollment Services Office and fill out a transcript request form. You may also request an official copy of your transcript online at www.northwestcollege.edu. Your transcript will be sent 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 First Year Experience and Articulator Coordinator, Open Door Office’s staff, or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for assistance. Many problems can be resolved by submission of supporting material such as transcripts.

Transfer guides and catalogs are available online at www.northwestcollege.edu/Transfer or in the Student Success Center.

The AAS degree is not typically designed for transfer. Students who wish to transfer after completion of an AAS degree should work closely with a faculty advisor to maximize transfer options. Students should also investigate transfer institutions offering Bachelor of Applied Science degrees.

NOTE: At some out of state institutions completion of an AA or AS degree will constitute completion of general education requirements at the transfer institution.