

Academic Requirements and Regulations

This chapter describes UMBC's standards and policies on academic matters from registration and degree requirements to grading, academic honesty and graduation.

The academic policies found in this section are intended to support the primary purpose of a university — the acquisition of knowledge — by establishing standards of performance and acceptable conditions for attending UMBC.

As such, these policies represent the values of the university as developed over time and customarily are enforced vigorously. The uniform application of policy affords equitable treatment of students and, further, by holding them to high standards, enhances the stature of UMBC and its degrees.

Accordingly, exceptions to policy are granted only in rare instances — not because the university is unfeeling toward individual needs, but because it cares about the integrity of its academic standards and believes that by maintaining that integrity, the university ultimately provides a greater service to the entire community.

This section deals with the specifics of acquiring a degree, the regulations governing academic performance, registration, grading, academic honesty, graduation and other matters pertaining to academic life on campus.

Student Responsibility

As a matter of UMBC policy and procedure, students are responsible for the management of their academic

careers. They are expected to familiarize themselves with the undergraduate catalog and to keep informed of all published degree requirements and deadline dates. Failure to do so does not provide a basis for exceptions to academic requirements or policies.

It is expected students will receive assistance from academic and faculty advisors, but students must assume responsibility for completing published degree requirements.

Students are responsible for their own course registration. This includes following established procedures for enrolling in courses for which they want to receive credit, as well as dropping courses or withdrawing from terms they do not intend to complete.

Unless specifically notified otherwise, students are not enrolled in any class without having completed the registration transaction themselves according to the established procedures. Students are not automatically enrolled in classes via hold lists or waiting lists maintained by departments. Students who have been de-registered from UMBC or from a specific class will be notified in writing via e-mail sent to their UMBC e-mail address.

Students are expected to maintain communication with the university. As e-mail is the

university's primary medium of official communication with students, students are responsible for reading messages sent to their UMBC e-mail addresses. Students are also expected to maintain their current postal address and telephone number in the UMBC Directory.

Undergraduate Degree Requirements

UMBC confers bachelor's degrees on undergraduate students who successfully complete a course of study as outlined below. The university reserves the right to change any provision or requirement at any time within a student's period of enrollment. However, if a change is made, the student has the option of following the requirements in the catalog in effect at UMBC when he or she began public higher education within the state of Maryland for the first time, provided no significant interruption has occurred in the student's enrollment. This option applies to major as well as to general requirements.

To receive an undergraduate degree, students must complete a minimum of 120 academic credits with a cumulative UMBC grade point average of 2.0 or better.

Institutional credit, such as remedial course work and physical education activity courses, does not count toward the 120 credits required for graduation. Without exception, all students must complete at least 30 credits of course work at UMBC (referred to as resident credit) to receive a UMBC degree. Furthermore, bachelor's degree candidates are expected to complete their final 30 credits on campus.

A maximum of two courses (up to eight credits) within the final 30 credits may be approved to be completed at another institution.

If students wish to enroll in a combined degree program in medicine, law or dentistry at

the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), they must satisfactorily complete 90 credit hours at UMBC, including all general education and major requirements, prior to entrance to the professional school. After completing the first year at UMB and on the recommendation of the dean of the professional school and the provost at UMBC, students will be awarded the bachelor's degree from UMBC. If a student is seeking a second bachelor's degree from UMBC, he or she may apply up to 90 credits of his or her first degree toward the second and must complete a minimum of 30 additional credits at UMBC.

Multiple Major and Minor Programs

Students may elect to complete the requirements of multiple major, minor, certificate and degree programs:

Multiple Major Programs

Where the programs result in the same bachelor's degree, the student must complete requirements of all the programs and a minimum of 120 degree credits. All requirements of all programs must be completed at the time of graduation.

Multiple Degrees

A student electing to concurrently complete programs resulting in different bachelor's degrees must complete all program requirements, all general education requirements applicable to all degrees, and a minimum of 30 credits above the 120 credit minimum for each additional degree.

Second Degrees

Students who have graduated and wish to complete an additional degree program are required to complete all requirements of the additional degree program and a minimum of 30 additional degree credits.

Minor Programs

Minor programs are recognized only when completed concurrently with a degree program.

English Composition

Students must complete, with a grade of "C" or better, ENGL 100: Composition, or an equivalent course taken at another institution. Incoming freshmen will take a UMBC placement test to determine writing ability. Those who do not qualify must pass a non-credit composition course before enrolling in ENGL 100.

Freshmen whose SAT verbal scores are above 670 may register for English 100H: Argument and Exposition. Students may not receive credit for both ENGL 100 and 100H. It is recommended that students complete the English composition requirement within the first 30 credit hours. English composition should be completed within the first 60 credit hours.

Physical Education

To graduate, students must pass two activity courses in physical education. Exemptions are made if a student reaches his or her 30th birthday prior to the first day of classes for the semester in which the student initially enrolls at UMBC, if the student is a military veteran, or if he or she is physically disqualified, for which he or she must receive a waiver from the physical education department.

Credit for these physical education courses is considered institutional credit, and as such, it does not count toward the 120 credits required for graduation.

General Requirements

As part of the foundation of a liberal arts education, UMBC requires a set of general education courses intended to facilitate breadth, as well as depth, within the baccalaureate degree.

GEP Requirements

Students beginning or resuming higher education (following high school graduation) in summer 2007 or later and have maintained continuous enrollment (without a two-year break) will

follow the General Education Program (GEP) requirements. These requirements will be outlined in the *2007 Supplement to the 2006-2008 UMBC Undergraduate Catalog*.

GFR Requirements

Students who, following high school graduation, began higher education the summer of 1996 through the spring of 2007 and who have maintained continuous enrollment since that period may choose to satisfy General Foundation Requirements (GFRs) in effect during that time. These requirements are detailed in the GFR Worksheet, which can be found in the Appendices.

Cross-listed Courses

Cross-listed courses bear a particular significance within the general requirements. A cross-listed course is listed with more than one disciplinary designation; therefore, carries two or more disciplinary prefix (e.g., HIST 273: History of the Jews in Modern Times, From the Middle Ages to 1917 is also listed as JDST 273 and RLST 273). However, a cross-listed course is, in fact, a single course taught with a multidisciplinary approach by a specific faculty member. A cross-listed course will be indicated in the *Undergraduate Catalog* with a note that the course is "also listed as" the course (or courses) with which it is cross-listed. For the purposes of general requirements, a cross-listed course is considered any one of its assigned disciplines, no matter under which departmental disciplinary the course is taken. Therefore, HIST 273 can be considered either a history course, a Judaic studies course or a religious studies course. This has important implications for fulfilling the general requirements, and it is recommended that students note cross-listed courses carefully when choosing courses to satisfy general requirements.

Upper-Level Requirement

At least 45 of students' 120 credits must be in courses

designated as upper-level; at UMBC, this is indicated by a 300- or 400-level course number. Transfer students from four-year institutions may have a course counted as upper-level if the course was considered upper-level by that institution. Community and junior college courses are never counted as upper-level, even if the course transferred is considered equivalent to a UMBC upper-level course.

Major Requirements

In addition to the above requirements, students must satisfy the requirements of a major program. They should declare a major by the beginning of their junior year by filing a form in the Office of Academic Services. Students may choose to major in an established discipline within one of the available major curricula or develop a self-designed program within the framework of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program. Students may change their major at any time by filing a new form in the Office of Academic Services.

Application for Graduation

At UMBC, students must file a formal application for graduation with the Office of Academic Services during their final semester. **The deadline for applying for May graduation is February 15; for August graduation, June 15; and for December graduation, September 15.**

UMBC commencement ceremonies are held in December and May. Students will be eligible to participate in the December commencement ceremony if they have been granted an undergraduate degree for the previous August graduation period or if they are enrolled for the fall semester in all coursework needed to fulfill a bachelor's degree.

Students will be eligible to participate in the May commencement ceremony if they have successfully completed all

graduation requirements or are enrolled for the spring semester with all coursework needed to fulfill a bachelor's degree.

Students should review their progress toward completion of graduation requirements in consultation with their academic advisors on a regular basis. In the first semester after a student has earned 90 credits, the student will be given access through myUMBC to an updated Undergraduate Progress Report, assessing the student's status with respect to completion of the general requirements for the bachelor's degree. Student should consult with an advisor in the appropriate academic departments with regard to the completion of program requirements.

Registration

Students enroll in UMBC classes online via the university's myUMBC Web portal.

The Schedule of Classes and associated policy and procedural information for each term are made available on the UMBC Web site.

In the registration process, students assume academic and financial responsibility for the courses in which they enroll. Further, students may not participate in, and will not be awarded credits or grades for, classes in which they are not enrolled. Therefore, students are advised to exercise care in the conduct of registration transactions. It is recommended that students verify completion of transactions and print their class schedule at the conclusion of each online session involving a change in their enrollment.

A student's first registration in degree-seeking status will occur during orientation preceding their first semester at UMBC. For subsequent semesters, continuing students may register for the next semester during Advance Registration (conducted on a credit-earned-priority basis) or during the General Registration Period

Retention of Registration Records

While transcript records are permanently held by the Office of Academic Services, documentation pertaining to the registration for each semester is held for a period of five years. If any questions should arise regarding documentation of enrollment more than five years beyond registration for a course, it will be the student's responsibility to produce proper documentation to support any claim for change in records. Students are urged to resolve any question regarding academic records as quickly as possible.

Grades and Academic Records

Grading System

For all courses in which a student is enrolled at the end of the 10th week of the semester, the following letter symbols will be posted to the permanent record:

"A," indicates superior achievement; "B," good performance; "C," adequate performance; "D," minimal acceptable achievement; "F," failure; and "I," incomplete work. "W" indicates a course dropped after the end of the fourth week of the semester. "NA" (non-applicable) denotes a course that does not apply to a degree program and does not enter into GPA (grade point average) calculations.

UMBC calculates grade point averages by assigning numerical values to letter symbols:

- A = 4 quality points
- B = 3 quality points
- C = 2 quality points
- D = 1 quality point
- F = 0 quality points.

The semester grade point average is determined by multiplying the credit value of each course by the numerical equivalent of each grade and then dividing total quality points by total credit hours attempted.

The same method is used to compute cumulative grade point averages. Transfer courses completed at other institutions including at other University System of Maryland campuses (with the exception of courses completed through inter-institutional registration), courses passed under the pass/fail option, zero-credit courses, grades earned for campus-administered credit-by-examination, incomplete courses and courses repeated for a higher grade are listed on the permanent record but are not included in the grade point average.

Institutional Credit

Physical education courses and courses that are remedial in nature carry "institutional" credit only. These credits are used to determine semester credit loads (full-time/part-time) but are not calculated into the cumulative GPA, nor are the credits counted toward the minimum 120 required for graduation.

Pass/Fail Courses

When students have completed 30 or more credits and are in good academic standing at UMBC, they may enroll for one pass/fail (P/F) course per semester for a total of 12 credits toward graduation.

Students may elect to take any course on a pass/fail basis except those explicitly excluded by the department or those used to fulfill general education or major/minor/certificate requirements. Students may designate a course as P/F during registration or change a course to P/F through the 10th week of the semester. They may change P/F courses to a regular grade during the first 10 weeks of the semester if approved by the instructor. These regulations do not apply to courses offered on a P/F only basis. A pass grade under the P/F option is defined as either an "A," "B," "C," or "D." **A grade of "P" is not calculated in the GPA, but a grade of "F" does impact on the GPA in the**

same manner as all "F" grades. Pass grades may not be changed to a regular grade at a later date.

Repeating Courses

Any course may be repeated, but if a grade of "A," "B," "C," "D," or "P" already has been earned for that course, the subsequent attempt does not increase the total credits earned toward the degree. Credits for repeated courses will only be counted once toward graduation requirements. Only the highest grade will be used in the computation of the cumulative grade point average; however, all grades earned remain on the permanent record. Some courses are repeatable for additional credits as specified in the course descriptions. In these instances, all credits and grades will be applied to the student's record.

UMBC has several limitations that apply to repeating courses: Students may not register for a course more than three times. They are considered registered for a course if they are enrolled at the end of the second week of classes. Additionally, students may not repeat a course for a higher grade once they have successfully completed any subsequent course of a higher level in an academic sequence (for example, students may not retake FREN 101 after successfully completing FREN 102).

Permission to repeat a course at another institution may be granted by the Office of Academic Services upon recommendation by a student's faculty advisor. Students repeating a UMBC course at another institution should request that the transferred course be accepted as a repeat (with the UMBC attempt designated as non-applicable to the UMBC grade point average).

Students who wish to have a course taken at another institution applied as a repeat of a UMBC course must complete a

request for verification of transferability in the Office of Academic Services. Judgments with respect to course equivalency are made in consultation with appropriate academic departments. Appeals may be made to the dean of the appropriate college.

Auditing Courses

Students who wish to show that he or she has attended a course but does not seek academic credit, may register in a course as an auditor. The notation "AU" is listed for audited courses for which no credits are attempted or earned.

Courses may be designated as audit at any time through the end of the fourth week of fall and spring semesters, but they can be changed from "AU" to credit only during the first two weeks of the semester. Part-time students must pay tuition and fees for audited courses. Audited courses count as zero-credit toward all enrollment certifications. Faculty may set certain criteria for auditors and may ask the registrar to remove the course from a student's record if the requirements are not satisfied.

Incomplete Grades

A grade of "I" may be submitted at the discretion of the course instructor under exceptional circumstances for course work that is qualitatively satisfactory but, for reasons beyond student's control, cannot be completed. An instructor does not initiate the awarding of the Incomplete. All work must be completed before a date specified by the instructor, which, under no circumstances, will be later than the last day scheduled for final examinations during the next regular semester.

Students should not re-register for the course in the semester during which the work is to be completed. 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, the

to be in “academic jeopardy” and will be so notified by letter. Students in academic jeopardy may enroll for the subsequent semester but may be required to participate in intensive advising, counseling or tutoring activities. No notation of academic jeopardy is placed on the permanent record.

All students who are not first-semester freshmen and who earn less than 2.0 at the end of any regular semester will be placed on academic probation. Following the first occurrence of academic probation, any future semester that a student does not meet the minimum cumulative standards, as outlined in the chart below, will result in academic suspension from the university for a minimum of the next regular semester. The determination of probation, suspension or dismissal is made at the end of each regular semester and is noted on the official and permanent record.

<i>*Attempted Credits</i>	<i>Minimum Cumulative GPA</i>
0-14	1.25
15-44	1.5
45-74	1.75
75-89	1.95
90-120	2.0

**The number of attempted credits is determined by the cumulative total of UMBC attempted credits, plus total transfer credits awarded.*

Students on academic suspension who attend another institution and complete 12 academic credits with a GPA of 2.5 or above will be reinstated to UMBC upon receipt of an application for reinstatement. Students who have been reinstated and who do not meet the minimum cumulative GPA standards will be academically dismissed and, in general, will not be considered for future re-instatement.

All appeals from academic suspension or dismissal should be directed to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Orientation.

Academic Clemency

Students who are re-admitted or re-instated after a lapse of five calendar years or more may petition to have up to 16 credits of failing grades excluded from the calculation of their cumulative records. Upon approval of the petition, the specified courses will be designated as non-applicable (NA) on the transcript. These credits will not be counted toward graduation requirements. Students must file the petition through the Office of Academic Services during the first semester of return to UMBC. Courses approved for exclusion from grade point average calculations may not be changed thereafter, even if the student changes his or her major. Approval of the petition is neither automatic nor guaranteed.

Non-Applicable Semester

Students may request to declare a particular single semester, in which at least nine credits were attempted, non-applicable to their record. To qualify, the student must have earned a minimum of 90 credits, at least 45 of which were earned at UMBC, and the quality of the work for the specified semester must be clearly out of line with the rest of the student’s record. Additionally, the student must clearly have changed the focus of their academic program. A letter requesting the designation of a non-applicable semester, accompanied by a letter of support from the student’s academic advisor, should be submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Education.

If the request is approved, the semester will be marked on the permanent record as non-applicable (NA). Credits attempted, credits earned and quality points will not be used in calculating the cumulative grade point average. To receive a degree, students will have to repeat any courses required for graduation that were taken during the semester made non-applicable. Approval of the petition is neither automatic nor guaranteed.

Irregularities in Academic Work

Dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism and other irregularities in academic work are causes for appropriate disciplinary action.

Note: Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the submission of purchased term papers.