

Academic Policies

Academic Standing and Academic Assistance

Southern Oregon University requires students to maintain satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion and provides resources to assist students with successful completion of their coursework. All students are encouraged to seek this help when needed. Students may contact major departments, individual professors, or the Advising Center for assistance.

At the conclusion of each term enrolled, term and cumulative grade point averages (GPAs) are computed and academic standing is determined (see criteria below). Students are expected to maintain good standing. Students who are not in good standing will be notified of their academic standing and requirements to return to good standing. Students are encouraged to seek help and identify resources to support their academic improvement from their academic advisors or Advising Center advisors.

Good Standing

Students who earn a term GPA of at least 2.0, have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0, and are making satisfactory academic progress as defined below are in good standing.

Academic Warning

Students in good standing who earn a term GPA of less than 2.0 will be placed on academic warning.

Students on academic warning who earn a term GPA of at least 2.0 but have an SOU cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 will remain on academic warning.

Students who fail to achieve satisfactory academic progress by earning at least 50 percent of the attempted hours in two consecutively enrolled terms in which they attempted a minimum of six hours each term will be placed on academic warning.

Academic Probation

Students on academic warning who earn a term GPA of less than 2.0 will be placed on academic probation.

Students on academic probation who earn a term GPA of at least 2.0 but have an SOU cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 will remain on academic probation.

Students who fail to earn at least 50 percent of the attempted hours in three consecutively enrolled terms in which they attempted a minimum of six hours each term will be placed on academic probation.

Academic Suspension

Students on academic probation who earn a term GPA of less than 2.0 will be placed on academic suspension.

Students who fail to earn at least 50 percent of the attempted hours in four consecutively enrolled terms in which they attempted a minimum of six hours each term will be placed on academic suspension.

Academic suspension is recorded on the student's academic record. Students who are academically suspended are denied all the privileges of the Institution and of all organizations in any way connected to it, including University-organized living groups.

Reinstatement to Southern Oregon University

Suspended students will be considered for reinstatement to the University after a one-year suspension. Under exceptional circumstances, students may be considered for early reinstatement. To resume studies, students must petition the Academic Standards Committee through the Enrollment Services Center. The petition should include evidence of a change in the circumstances, attitudes, or goals that led to the initial academic suspension. In unusual circumstances or cases in which clear evidence of positive change is provided before the passage of a full year, the Academic Standards Committee has the right to reduce the suspension period. In determining reinstatement, the Academic Standards Committee will consider documented evidence of the completion of credits of transferable college-level work, with a GPA of 2.5 or higher, from another accredited institution. For more information regarding reinstatement, contact the Enrollment Services Center or the ACCESS Center.

Overload Limitations

Students may take a maximum of 18 credits per term, including correspondence and extension courses.

This limit may be extended for undergraduate students under the following conditions: Students may take up to 21 credits, providing they received a 3.0 GPA during the preceding term or they have a 3.0 cumulative GPA. To enroll for more than 18 credits, students must obtain special approval from their academic advisor. During the eight-week summer term, students may take up to 15 credits.

Application for Degree

Students planning to graduate should apply for graduation at least two terms in advance of the term they plan to complete the degree requirements.

While a student may graduate at the close of any term, formal commencement exercises are held only at the end of spring term. Degrees and diplomas are not awarded until the student has fully met graduation requirements and fulfilled all financial obligations to the Institution.

Students planning to complete degree requirements during Summer Session may participate in the June commencement ceremony, providing their degree application has been approved.

Graduation Honors

Undergraduate students graduating with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher are eligible to receive graduation honors. The honors are listed on students' transcripts and diplomas.

Graduation honors are based on SOU GPA only. Honors are as follows:

Cum Laude: 3.50

Magna Cum Laude: 3.75

Summa Cum
Laude: 3.90

Catalog Option

Students must meet all degree requirements from one SOU catalog. The catalog may be chosen from the year students are first admitted and enrolled or from any subsequent year of enrollment. However, at the time of graduation, the catalog chosen may not be more than eight years old.

Requirements in Major

Students must meet all requirements for the major, including supportive coursework from the catalog chosen. However, departments that make significant changes in major requirements may establish alternative courses to meet those requirements.

Classification of Students

Undergraduate

Freshman: Has accumulated fewer than 44 credits applicable toward a scholastic objective at the time of the last enrollment.

Sophomore: Has accumulated at least 45 credits, but no more than 89 credits.

Junior: Has accumulated at least 90 credits, but no more than 134 credits.

Senior: Has accumulated at least 135 credits toward the scholastic objective but has not yet been awarded the baccalaureate degree.

Graduate

Postbaccalaureate: Pursuing a program not leading to a master's degree.

Postbaccalaureate nongraduate: A holder of an accredited baccalaureate degree who has not been admitted to a graduate degree program and who submits an official application for admission to pursue a second baccalaureate degree or enroll in coursework not to be used for graduate credit.

Grad-master: Admitted to a master's degree program.

Nonadmitted Student

An undergraduate or graduate student who is not admitted to SOU, not working toward a degree or certification, and not enrolled for more than 8 credits.

Course Prerequisites Policy

[^Top](#)

Course prerequisites are designed to ensure that students registered for a course have the required minimum background for study of the course content. This background may be obtained through courses equivalent to the listed prerequisites or through other educational experiences. In such cases, students should consult the instructor. Instructors have the authority to admit into their courses students with backgrounds equivalent to the listed prerequisites.

Minimum Class Size

Classes with fewer than ten students may be cancelled.

Double Major

An undergraduate student may earn a double major if all of the requirements for the two majors are met. This includes University Studies, school, and departmental requirements of the curricula represented by the majors.

Students seeking double majors should contact both departments and must secure written approval, which is to be placed in students' department files. Students must complete a capstone in each major. Each department must approve requirements for its capstone, and students must communicate these requirements in writing to the collaborating department. A double major does not qualify students for a second baccalaureate degree unless they have earned the additional credits required.

Grading System

The University uses letter grades and the four-point maximum grading scale. The grade of A is the highest possible grade. Plus (+) or minus (-) symbols are used to indicate grades that fall above or below the letter grades. For purposes of calculating grade points and averages, the plus (+) is equal to the grade point +0.3 and the minus (-) to the grade point -0.3 (e.g., a grade of B+ is equivalent to 3.3, and B- is equivalent to 2.7). The following grades are used at SOU.

Grade Points

A 4.0 (Exceptional accomplishment)

A- 3.7

B+ 3.3

B 3.0 (Superior)

B- 2.7

C+ 2.3

C 2.0 (Average)

C- 1.7

D+ 1.3

D 1.0 (Inferior)

D- 0.7

F 0.0 (Failure)

Other grades are:

E: Final exam not taken. The E is assigned when a student fails to take a final examination. Unless the grade is changed by the instructor, it automatically changes to an F at the end of the next regular term.

I: Incomplete. When the quality of work is satisfactory but the course has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor, a report of I is made. The student has a maximum of one calendar year to complete the course requirements. An I grade automatically changes to an F after twelve months.

M: Missing. Instructor has not yet entered a grade. No credit or grade points.

P: Pass (equal to C- or above).

NP: No pass.

W: Withdrawn. Appears on the grading register when the student formally withdraws from school during the first four weeks of the term and is not responsible for a grade.

WP: Withdrawn passing. Assigned if the student withdraws after the fourth week and by Monday of the week prior to finals, and if the quality of work is sufficient to warrant a grade of D- or higher.

WF: Withdrawn failing. Assigned if the student withdraws after the fourth week and by Monday of the week prior to finals, and if the quality of work warrants a failing grade. A WF is not counted when determining grade point average.

NC: No credit. May be used if the student has not come to class for a long time (e.g., only took the first exam) but is still on the roster at the end of the quarter.

Grade Change Limitation

The primary instructor enters grades at the end of each term. This person also makes any changes to E (missed final exam), I (incomplete), and M (missing) grades. If an error is made in calculating a grade, a written course or department/program policy has been misapplied, or a grade has been affected by extraordinary circumstances, an instructor has through the end of the following term to change other grades without the chair or program director's approval. After the following term has passed, other grades may be changed for a period of up to two years and only with the chair or program director's approval. Under exceptional circumstances, a school dean, college dean, or the the provost may consider granting a short extension of this deadline.

Southern Oregon University students may also grieve an assigned grade under certain circumstances (see the Grading Grievance Policy for details). If a student is unable to work out an informal resolution with the instructor, the student may file a formal grievance.

Grades on the final transcript may not be altered thirty days after a student's degree is awarded.

Grade Point Average

Grade point average (GPA) is computed by dividing grade points earned by the number of credits attempted. Grades of E, I, P, NP, W, WP, WF, and NC do not carry grade points, and the credits are not calculated into the GPA. Credits attempted for F grades are calculated into the GPA. Only grades earned at SOU are used to calculate quarterly or cumulative GPAs. The following example illustrates computation of the GPA:

Course	Cr ed its	Gr ade	Grade Points
WR 122	4	A	16.0
BI 103	4	C-	6.8
SOC 204	4	B+	13.2
MTH 112	4	B	12.0
PE 180	1	P	0.0

Credits with grade points (16) divided into total grade points earned (48) = GPA (3.0). Total credits earned = 17.

Repeating a Course

Students who fail to perform satisfactory work are required to repeat the course if credit is desired. When a course is repeated, the most recent grade is used for computing the cumulative GPA, regardless of earlier grades.

Pass/No Pass Grades

1. A student is permitted to enroll in one course a term that is graded Pass/No Pass (P/NP). A course is a subject or an instructional subdivision of a subject offered during a single term.

The definition of one course (as stated in the catalog) may include two courses normally taken concurrently to produce an integrated treatment of the subject, such as a lecture course on principles coordinated with a laboratory course on applications. A specific example is CH 201 with CH 204. Such pairs are considered for P/NP grading only when taken concurrently.

Departments indicate whether the course is available for the P/NP option in the class schedule.

2. Students have until Friday of the seventh week of the term to declare a P/NP option or to change to the A-F grading method.
3. The criteria for a P are the same as those for earning at least a C- grade in the course.
4. P or NP is entered on the student's transcript and the credits successfully completed count toward graduation. However, credits recorded as P/NP are not included in the computation of the grade point average. Upon written request of the Enrollment Services Center, a student may have a P/NP replaced with the actual letter grade (A-F) earned in that course. The deadline to submit this written request to the Enrollment Services Center is thirty days from the date the original grade posted for the course. That letter grade will then be included in the computation of the student's grade point average.
5. A maximum of twelve courses taken at Southern Oregon University on the P/NP option may be applied toward requirements in a total undergraduate program. Not more than three courses may be taken P/NP in any one department or under any one prefix not in an organized department.
6. Courses required by the student's major department may be included in the P/NP option with prior approval of the major department. Each degree program publishes lists of such courses.
7. In addition to any other P/NP courses, students are permitted to enroll in one departmentally approved Activities course on a P/NP basis each academic term. Activities courses are broadly defined and include a variety of options, principally in journalism, music, physical education, speech, and theatre arts. Such courses are designated in the class schedule.
8. P/NP grading may not be used for graduate credit courses.
9. SOU courses offered only on a Pass/No Pass or Pass/Fail basis are not subject to the listed limitations.

Auditing

A student may choose to take a class for audit with instructor permission. The student is not required to do any of the coursework and does not receive a grade. Classes are often audited if they are not needed for graduation and if the student is interested in learning the course material but not in earning a grade. There is no fee reduction for auditing a class. A student must choose to audit a course by the registration deadlines listed in the Academic Calendar.

Minors

[^Top](#)

A minor normally consists of 21 to 30 credits in a subject field outside the major. The minor typically includes 12 to 18 credits of upper division coursework, in addition to any lower division courses necessary as a foundation for the upper division part of the minor program.

The total requirements for a minor depend on the structure of the academic discipline, the prerequisites for required courses, and the student's starting level in the discipline.

Students contemplating a minor should carefully study the list of required courses and prerequisites and then consult an advisor in the academic unit with jurisdiction over the minor. This advisor must approve the program for the minor and completion of course requirements with a minimum 2.0 GPA.

A minor is not required for the subject matter degree programs. Students may elect to complete one or more minors during their course of study. Students list their minors on their applications for graduation and, after certification by the appropriate academic units, minors are entered on their transcripts.

Courses that are required for a major but are outside of the department granting the major (i.e., supporting courses) may count toward a minor, as well as toward the major requirements. Courses used for a minor may also be used to satisfy the University Studies requirements.

Students must complete at least 9 credits of upper division coursework toward an optional minor while in residence at SOU.

Reserved Graduate Credit

Students within 9 credits of completing an SOU bachelor's degree at SOU may, with the consent of the school dean, enroll in approved courses for graduate credit. These students must carry a 3.0 GPA cumulatively and in the major.

This graduate credit may not be counted toward a bachelor's degree, but it may become part of an advanced degree program after the student completes the baccalaureate degree requirements (when approved by the department and school). Reserved graduate credit is limited to a total of 12 credits earned over a period of not more than three terms of enrollment. Application forms for reserved graduate credit are available in the Enrollment Services Center.

Residence Requirements

For the baccalaureate degree, students are required to complete 45 of the last 60 credits at SOU, with the last term completed on the SOU campus. (Students may appeal the last term residency requirement by contacting the Degree Evaluator in the Enrollment Services Center.) These two requirements are waived for students enrolled in selected preprofessional programs. Consult individual preprofessional advisors to determine if a particular program is approved for this waiver.

Credits earned by extension work or awarded through prior learning are not eligible for residence credit.

Students must complete at least 15 credits of upper division coursework toward the major while in residence at SOU. They must complete at least 9 credits of upper division coursework toward an optional minor while in residence at Southern Oregon University.

Second Bachelor's Degree

Students may be granted a second bachelor's degree, concurrently or consecutively, provided they meet the requirements for both degrees and complete an additional 36 undergraduate credits on campus (45 credits are required if the first degree was not granted by SOU).

If the first bachelor's degree is from an accredited institution, as determined by SOU Admissions, the University Studies requirements for the second bachelor's degree are waived.

Students interested in a second major should refer to the catalog Double Major section above. A double major does not qualify students for a second baccalaureate degree unless they have achieved the additional credits required.

Veterans

Procedures and Policies

The veterans certification officer certifies students in attendance at Southern Oregon University who are eligible for VA benefits. All students—whether new, returning, or transfer—who expect to receive benefits from the Veterans Administration must notify the veterans certification officer in the Enrollment Services Center.

In addition to the Ashland campus, SOU's Medford Campus is an approved site for eligible students.