

# NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

## UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE

### BULLETIN FOR 2006-2007

Nicholls State University is a Member of the University of Louisiana System

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## ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

### ACADEMIC SESSIONS

#### The University Year

The university or academic year is divided into a summer session of about seven weeks and fall and spring semesters of about 16 weeks each.

#### Exceptional Sessions

Courses not offered during the regular semester or the summer session schedule may be designated as an Exceptional Session. Intersessions held before spring semesters and summer sessions are exceptional sessions. Admission requirements and academic standards are the same as for regular terms. These sessions may be offered in the fall, spring, or summer sessions and vary in length.

#### Intersessions

These sessions are generally held between semesters for a three week period. Students may enroll in two courses only (one day and one evening) during such sessions. Students should contact the Office of Academic Affairs concerning the schedule of intersessions.

### STUDENT CLASSIFICATIONS

Students are classified as follows:

**Freshman** (0-29 hours) - A student who has earned fewer than 30 semester hours of credit.

**Sophomore** (30-59 hours) - A student who has earned at least 30 semester hours of credit.

**Junior** (60-89 hours) - A student who has earned at least 60 semester hours of credit.

**Senior** (90+ hours) - A student who has earned at least 90 semester hours of credit.

**Graduate** - A student who has received a baccalaureate degree and has been officially admitted to graduate studies.

**Full-time** - An undergraduate student who is taking at least 12 semester hours during a semester or at least six semester hours in a summer session, or a graduate student who is taking nine semester hours of credit, or its equivalent of scheduled work (thesis research or other work certified by the student's academic dean or graduate coordinator to be a full load), during a semester, or six semester hours, or its equivalent, in a summer session. Generally, in academic matters requiring that students carry twelve semester hours to be a full-time student, a disabled student presenting documentation, appropriate to the specific disability, of a need to take fewer than twelve hours may be declared full-time. The decision will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**Part-time** - An undergraduate student who is taking fewer than 12 semester hours in a regular semester or fewer than six semester hours in a summer session. Part-time students are subject to the same university rules as full-time students. The rules governing students in scheduling required courses also apply to part-time students. Graduate students are classified as part-time if enrolled for fewer than nine hours of credit during a semester or fewer than six hours during a summer session.

Classifications of graduate students appear in the section of the *Bulletin* devoted to GRADUATE STUDENTS.

## CREDITS AND SEMESTER HOURS

Course work at Nicholls is measured in terms of credits or semester hours. The value of each course of instruction and the requirements for graduation are stated in terms of semester hours. A credit or semester hour generally represents one hour of class work a week. For example, three-hour courses require the student to attend class three hours a week and also to do out-of-class assignments and preparation to earn three credits. Exceptions exist, especially in regard to laboratory courses which may require more clock hours than do lecture courses.

## COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM

In general, courses numbered below 100 are developmental, or remedial offerings at the pre-freshman level and are not acceptable for credit toward graduation. Freshman courses are numbered in the 100 series, sophomore courses in the 200 series, junior courses in the 300 series, and senior courses in the 400 series. **Admission to courses numbered 300 or above requires sophomore standing and completion of six semester hours of non-developmental English and three semester hours of non-developmental mathematics.** Courses in 400 series offered for both undergraduate and graduate credit are indicated with an asterisk in this *Bulletin* in the COURSES OF INSTRUCTION section. A freshman or sophomore cannot register for a course for graduate or undergraduate credit if a graduate student is enrolled in the course for credit. Courses in the 500 series are for graduate students only.

## STUDENT LOAD

The number of semester hours required for the completion of each year of a curriculum is established by the academic college. Only with the written permission of the student's academic dean will a student be permitted to register for more than 21 credit hours for the fall or spring semester, or more than 12 credit hours for the summer session. A student whose work is unsatisfactory because of an inability to carry a full schedule of classes may be required by the academic dean to drop one or more courses.

The maximum course load for a graduate student is 12 hours in a regular semester and 6 hours in a summer session. Exceptions must be approved by the dean of the college granting the degree.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Class attendance is regarded as an obligation as well as a privilege, and all students are expected to be punctual and to attend all classes in which they are enrolled. Failure to do so may jeopardize a student's scholastic standing and may lead to suspension from the university.

Faculty members (instructors) are required to include descriptions of their attendance policy in their course syllabi. These descriptions shall be orally explained to the students on the day syllabi are distributed. Students are responsible for adhering to the attendance policy in each of their classes and for knowing the consequences that may result from excessive absences.

For all students enrolled in the class, absences shall begin to accrue on the first official class day. For students who enroll in the class after the first official day, absences shall begin to accrue on the first class day following enrollment. Each instructor shall keep a permanent attendance record for every class taught. These records are subject to inspection by appropriate University officials.

In addition, further regulations exist for the following categories of student: (1) Students regardless of student classification who are receiving V.A. educational benefits (including veterans, dependents of veterans, and war orphans) should be aware of additional regulations set by the V.A. (2) Students receiving financial aid should consult with a financial aid counselor to determine the impact of any change in their enrollment upon their financial aid eligibility.

Tardiness is treated as an absence, unless satisfactory explanation is made to the instructor at the end of the class period. Students should seek information concerning penalties for excessive tardiness within the published guidelines of course syllabi.

Absences for authorized trips from the university or to special duties or activities at the university may be excused by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Faculty and staff members in charge of these trips and activities must submit a list of student participants to the vice president at least two days prior to the trip or activity. Authorized activities include athletic events, music events, student conventions, religious meetings, field trips, rallies, music festivals, and similar activities. It is the responsibility of each student to make up necessary course work missed and covered by an excused absence.

A student who desires to be absent from the university for reasons not covered herein should apply for leave of absence, which must be approved by his or her academic dean.

## **STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENT**

The university regularly and systematically measures the effectiveness of its programs and services. In the process, it depends upon the cooperation and assistance of many students. Before they graduate, students are required to complete a nationally-normed general education competency examination. Each degree candidate must also successfully complete competency examinations in English and mathematics which are administered by the departments of English and mathematics, respectively. Students may also be required by their department to complete other general examinations or assessments prior to graduation. Students are often selected to participate in inventories, tests and surveys, the results of which allow administrators and faculty to make needed improvements.

# GRADES AND GRADING PROCEDURES

## Grading Procedures

The university uses a 4-point grading system. Grades are assigned as follows: **A** - superior; **B** - above average; **C** - average; **D** - below average; **F** - failure; **I** - incomplete; **X** - in progress (course based, not for individual students); **S** - satisfactory; **U** - unsatisfactory. The grade **AU** means the course has been *audited*. A **W** indicates *withdrawal* of the student from a course through the last day to drop a course as listed in the current university calendar. Once a **W** has been entered on a student's permanent record, it cannot be changed or removed from the record.

Grades of **AU**, **I**, **S**, **U**, **X**, and **W** are not used in the computation of a grade-point average because those grades do not carry quality points.

Exceptions to the grading system for graduate students are explained in the GRADUATE STUDIES section of this *Bulletin*.

## Quality Points and Average

Quality points are the numerical value assigned to letter grades of **A**, **B**, **C**, **D**, and **F**. A student passing a course with a grade of **A** will receive four quality points for each semester hour of credit; a grade of **B**, three quality points; a grade of **C**, two quality points; a grade of **D**, one quality point. A grade of **F** carries no quality point. A grade of **I** is not computed in the grade-point average until it is resolved into a final grade. Grades of **AU**, **S**, **U**, **X** and **W** are not counted in the computation of the student's overall average and carry no quality points.

A ratio of 2.000 between quality points earned and semester hours carried is interpreted as a **C** average. The grade-point average of a student is computed by dividing the number of quality hours earned (hours earned in all courses completed in which the grade of **A**, **B**, **C**, **D**, or **F** is received) into the number of quality points earned.

## Precision of Grade-Point Averages

For all academic purposes, grade-point averages shall be specified to four significant figures (three decimal places), with the last figure to reflect rounding from a five-significant-figure (four decimal places) average where such is available. If the fourth figure after the decimal point is at least a five, upward rounding shall occur. In the consideration of the relative rank in class, a student's average may be carried to four decimal places. Regardless of the results of rounding, no student shall be deemed to have graduated with a 4.0 average if any grade other than **A** or **S** for courses completed appears on the transcript including repeated courses.

Any grade-point average cited to only one decimal place (as 2.0) shall be construed to mean a figure accurate to three decimal places (as 2.000) regardless of the text.

## Change of Grade

After a grade is recorded in the Office of Records and Registration, it can be changed only upon certification by the instructor on the proper form obtained from the instructor's academic dean. The change of grade must be approved by the dean of the instructor's college and the Office of Records and Registration. Once the form is completed and turned in to the Office of Records and Registration, the instructor must sign the official grade book indicating the grade change. Once the grade of **W** has been entered on a student's permanent record, it cannot be

changed or withdrawn from the record. An instructor cannot change a grade to **W**.

## I Grades

A grade of **I** may be given for work which could not be completed because of circumstances beyond the student's control and will not be given to a student doing unsatisfactory work. A grade of **I** is not counted in the grade-point average until it is resolved into a final grade. The same procedure is used to change an **I** grade as stated in Change of Grade. However, a grade of **I** must be resolved within one calendar year following the semester in which the **I** grade was received, or the **I** grade will automatically be changed to **F** (or **U** where applicable).

## Final Examinations and Grades

Examinations are administered at the end of each semester and summer session. If there should be an error on a final grade, the Office of Records and Registration should be notified immediately.

## Academic Honors

Honor Roll - A full-time undergraduate student enrolled for at least 12 hours who makes at least a 3.000 grade-point average in any semester.

Dean's List - At the end of each semester, the office of the dean of each undergraduate academic unit publishes in an appropriate form the names of all full-time undergraduate honor-roll students who earned a semester average of at least 3.200.

President's List - At the end of each semester, the office of the dean of each undergraduate academic unit publishes in an appropriate form the names of all full-time undergraduate honor-roll students who earned a semester average of at least 3.500.

Honors at Graduation - (See Degrees with Honors.)

## REPEATING COURSES

Effective with summer 1997, all grades for each course appear on a student's transcript and all hours attempted and total quality points earned are used in calculating the **official cumulative (external)** grade-point average. This is the official GPA posted on the transcript and used to determine academic honors, class standing, and academic probation and suspension. In all cases of repeated courses, the hours earned can only be credited once.

An **adjusted (internal) average**, which is used for determining graduation eligibility, some program admissions, and eligibility for participation in extra- and co-curricular activities, is computed by subtracting the quality hours and quality points earned in all previous attempts in a repeated course from the overall number of hours and quality points.

## COURSE DROP AND RESIGNATION POLICY

A student may drop a course or courses with a grade of **W** or may resign from the university with a grade of **W** prior to the date specified in the university calendar. After that date a student may not drop a course or resign from the institution without receiving **F's** in all courses taken. In extraordinary circumstances the student's academic dean may authorize resignation with grades of **W** or dropping a course with the grade of **W**. Extraordinary cases do not include dissatisfaction with an anticipated grade or the decision to change a major.

# PROBATION AND SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

## Academic Probation

A student, including a first time entering freshman, will be placed on academic probation whenever the official cumulative (external) average is 10 or more quality points below a 2.0 average (**A** = 4.0); that is, when the total number of quality hours completed, multiplied by two, exceeds quality points earned by 10 or more.

A student on academic probation will be suspended from the university at the conclusion of any semester or summer session in which he or she fails to earn a semester grade-point average of 2.0.

Once on academic probation, a student will remain on probation until the official cumulative (external) grade-point average of 2.0 is achieved.

## First-Time Suspension

A student who is *suspended for the first time* for academic reasons may not be considered for readmission until he or she has been out of the institution for one regular semester. A student suspended at the end of the spring semester may enroll for the immediately following summer session without appeal.

If the student raises his or her official cumulative (external) grade-point average to 2.0 or higher, then the student will be placed in good academic standing and the suspension lifted in order that the student may then enroll for the fall semester without an appeal.

If the student does not raise his or her official cumulative (external) grade-point average to 2.0 at the end of the summer session, then the suspension is in effect for the fall semester. In this case, only one suspension is counted against the student.

An undergraduate student suspended from a University of Louisiana System institution **may not** enroll in another university within the System, but **may** enroll in a community college with approval of both the suspending institution and the community college. Credits earned under these conditions may be accepted for a degree at the suspending institution provided grades of **C** or higher are earned in each of the courses to be transferred.

## First-Time Suspension – Appeals Process

Students will submit their letter of appeal with documentation (if available).

Deans will notify each student if the first-time appeal is approved.

If the appeal is denied, then the University Academic Standards and Policies Committee will review the decision.

Each student will be notified of the committee's decision. The decision of the committee is final and binding.

## Two or more Suspensions

A student who has been *suspended more than once* for academic reasons must remain out of the university for at least one calendar year from the semester of suspension. However,

students suspended at the end of the spring semester may also attend summer school. To be readmitted to any semester, other than the summer session, he or she must appeal.

An undergraduate student suspended from a University of Louisiana System institution **may not** enroll in another university within the System, but **may** enroll in a community college with approval of both the suspending institution and the community college. Credits earned under these conditions may be accepted for a degree at the suspending institution provided grades of **C** or higher are earned in each of the courses to be transferred.

## Two or More Suspensions – Appeals Process

Students will submit their letter of appeal with documentation to the Office of Academic Affairs. This Office will forward the materials to the University Academic Standards and Policies Committee. Documentation must include evidence of extenuating circumstances such as serious illness or injury, death in the family, or traumatic event.

University Academic Standards and Policies Committee will decide if the appeals are approved. The decisions of the Committee are final and binding.

The Office of Academic Affairs will notify each student of the Committee's decision.

## Appeal Procedures for Graduate Students

Graduate students should refer to the GRADUATE STUDIES section of this *Bulletin* for appeal procedures.

## ACADEMIC RENEWAL

Undergraduate students who have withdrawn or have been suspended because of academic deficiencies but have demonstrated sufficient maturation may ask to be enrolled under academic renewal. The following conditions apply:

- Students must obtain an application form for academic renewal from either a dean's office or the Office of Records and Registration prior to or within twelve (12) months following entry (or re-entry) to the university.
- At least three years must elapse between the end of the semester in which the student was last registered for credit at any college or university and the start of an enrollment under academic renewal.
- No prior academic credit carries forward as part of a degree program; however, the prior record remains a visible part of the student's transcript.
- If granted, the date of academic renewal is entered upon the transcript along with a statement prohibiting use of previously earned credits and quality points to meet degree requirements, to compute the grade-point average leading toward undergraduate certificates or degrees, or to determine graduation status.
- Upon being granted academic renewal, the student has status of an entering freshman, and will begin a new record showing no credits attempted and no quality points earned.
- A student demonstrating competency in a given area may be allowed advanced standing (without credit) or a waiver of requirements just as any entering freshman, but will not be allowed credit by examination for courses lost in academic renewal.
- Academic renewal may be granted to a person only once, regardless of the institutions attended.
- Students are cautioned that many undergraduate professional curricula and graduate and professional schools compute the undergraduate grade-point average over all hours attempted when considering applications for admission.

Academic renewal does not pertain to accumulated financial aid history. Accumulated semester and award limits include all semesters of enrollment.