

Faculty of Fine Arts

Grading Policy

Draft

June 23, 2025

Effective July 1, 2025

All instructors in the Faculty of Fine Arts must follow these general policy guidelines as well as conform to current grading policies at the unit level.

1. All Faculty of Fine Arts course syllabi must include the following: an up-to-date link to the applicable Academic Calendar grading policies and grade scale; it must also include the following statement: ‘grades are not official until they have been approved by the chair, director or designate.’
2. All syllabi in the Faculty of Fine Arts should also include a link to this policy.
3. Effective and fair grading practices involve clear expectations, consistent application of criteria, providing timely and constructive feedback, and recognizing student achievement.
4. As per Calendar guidelines, bell curve grading is not permitted. A bell curve grade is based on the notion of a pre-determined percentage of students receiving a specific grade. All grading should be an accurate reflection of the student’s performance.
5. Take regular breaks when grading to avoid fatigue.
6. If you suspect that a student has plagiarized some part of an assignment, but you can find no proof in your investigation, ensure that you return to an unbiased mindset when considering the evidence for any grade.
7. The Calendar provides grade descriptions that must be followed by all instructors when designing course syllabi.
8. Instructors must link the grading keywords in the Calendar to associated grade ranges. As examples, the undergraduate grading rubric associates the keywords ‘superior; showing mastery of the subject matter; offering original insight...’ for a grade of A+. For the range of B grades, the keywords, ‘good comprehension of course material or good command of skills’ must be used by instructors in their comments. When writing commentary on students’ work, always refer to the associated keywords in the Calendar grading scale.
9. Given concerns over grade inflation, in undergraduate classes, A-range grades are normally achieved by a **minority** of students.

10. All grades for every assignment must be based on clear and transparent criteria. This includes participation / attendance grades. Participation / attendance grades should be carefully broken down based on the students coming to class, demonstrating preparation for class, as well as contributing to the classroom discussion.
11. The course design used to create assessment schemes must allow for a varied and wide range of student activities.
12. Alternative assessment design is permitted, if it adheres to the Calendar and the policies in Fine Arts.
13. All instructors must link the learning outcomes for their courses to questions based on the different levels of grading. Provide clear direction for assessment standards based on learning outcomes. These must be provided in advance of the start of the course and not adjusted while the course is in progress.
14. Units in Fine Arts will explain the process for the review of proposed grades with instructors in advance of grade submission.
15. Units in Fine Arts will explain the process when grades are submitted but are not consistent with grading policies or regulations.
16. Units in Fine Arts will provide regular curriculum review and renewal to support emerging professional needs and standards.
17. In approving grades, the unit leader must consider principles of fairness and consistency across sections of the same course, across the unit, and when possible, across the faculty.
18. Any grades submitted for review that appeared to be inconsistent with the Calendar or this policy should be reviewed by the unit leader. The discrepancy should be discussed with the instructor. If, after discussion with the instructor, the unit leader concludes that the grades are inconsistent with university standards, they will not approve grades but will return the grades to the instructor for adjustment. It may be necessary for the unit leader to arrange for an appropriately qualified instructor to re-grade assignments and amend the assigned grades.
19. Grades will normally be submitted no more than 7 calendar days past the date of the final examination or the due date of the final assignment (whichever is latest).
20. If a teaching assistant is unable to meet the grading deadline, the instructor is responsible for completing the grading. They may request support from the unit leader.
21. Every year the Dean will provide unit leaders in the faculty with the grading report for the university and review grading trends in the Faculty. Instructors will be given the grading report for the faculty and review grading trends in the unit.

Reviewing grading trends for courses in Fine Arts:

All instructors, including teaching assistants involved in conducting or supporting marking, will be provided with training and information about grading policies, regulations and expectations within each unit in Fine Arts.

All instructors will be provided with information regarding grading trends for courses in the unit.

Late submission of grades:

When grades are not submitted by official deadlines, or are submitted but are not consistent with grading policies or regulations, the following will occur:

If the instructor is unable to meet the final deadline for the entire class but able to submit all grades within a few days, grades for graduating students will be prioritized and be submitted on an auxiliary grade sheet by the grading deadline. The instructor will inform the unit leader of the delay and will agree on a date within one week by which all grading will be complete.

If an instructor is unable, because of extenuating circumstances, to meet the final grading deadline, the instructor will inform the unit leader as soon as possible and hand over all materials to enable a qualified instructor to complete the grading and submit the grades.

If the instructor can complete the grading but has not done so by one week past the final grading deadline, the unit leader will notify the Dean. An appropriately qualified individual may be asked to grade student work, in lieu of the instructor, to facilitate the submission of grades. These arrangements will be made in consultation with the unit leader, Dean and the appropriate person in Faculty Relations.

In the cases of delayed grades, the unit leader will inform the Office of the Registrar and Enrollment Management (OREM) and the Dean of the Faculty. They will provide a clear plan of how the grading will be done and the date at which the grades will be submitted.

When grades are submitted that are not consistent with grading policies or regulations, the academic unit leader may arrange for an appropriately qualified individual to re-grade the student work and provide for amended grades to be submitted. This will be done in consultation with the Dean and a designated person from Faculty Relations.

Grade appeals:

All instructors must be aware of the policy statement, and related set of instructions for a grade appeal, within the unit or when warranted, within the Faculty of Fine Arts. These

policy documents must be clearly signaled for all students. There are also guidelines for student appeal of grades at the university level. Instructors and students should engage in a respectful, calm, and reasonable discussion for the possibility of a grade appeal process.