

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

College Year

The college year is comprised of three standard terms of instruction, Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and Summer Semester. Fall and Spring Semesters are approximately fifteen weeks in length. Summer Semester consists of periods of instruction which begin after the completion of the Spring Semester and end prior to the start of the Fall Semester. Students may enter at the beginning of any semester, including half terms.

Unit of Credit

Gordon State College (GSC) adheres to accepted policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for courses and the credit hours required to complete degree programs. As a unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (BOR), GSC adheres to the BOR definition of semester hours, which stipulates that, "A minimum of 750 minutes of instruction or equivalent is required for each semester credit hour." [Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (BOR) Policy Manual Section 3.4.4] Each credit course offered by Gordon State College is designated in this catalog by a three digit code to indicate the number of semester hours associated with the course. For example, ENGL 1101 is designated with the code (3-0-3). The first digit (3-0-3) indicates the number of semester hours per week the course meets in a lecture; the second digit (3-0-3) indicates the number of semester hours per week the course meets in a laboratory or practicum setting; and the third digit (3-0-3) indicates the total number of semester hours the course receives. Laboratory science courses are designated **in this catalog** with the letter K (e.g., Principles of Chemistry I is designated CHEM 1211K Principles of Chemistry I).

Class Load

A student scheduling 12 or more semester hours of credit is classified by the College as a full-time student. This classification given by the College does not necessarily coincide with Selective Service, Veterans Administration, Financial Aid, or Gordon State College Foundation Scholarship classifications.

The standard class load for full-time students is 16 hours per semester, which may include a course in physical education. Most transfer programs of study require students to complete 60-64 semester hours of course work. Therefore, students must complete an average of 16 semester hours of course work per semester to complete degree requirements in two years.

Students may not register for more than 18 semester hours in any given semester without approval through the Academic Request process for a course overload.

In general, a student must have been at Gordon State for at least two semesters and have achieved a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 before requesting an overload of 19 or more semester hours for Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters. To request an overload, students must complete an Academic Request. Learning Support students may not register for more than 18 semester hours. Overloads will not be approved.

Academic Advisement

Upon entering the College, each student is assigned an advisor who will assist the student in selecting classes appropriate to that student's program of study. All new, transfer, or readmitted students will have a schedule pre-made for them by professional advisors. Returning

students will be required to meet with either a professional or faculty advisor for advisement for the next semesters(s) and if applicable, have their advisement hold lifted during that meeting so that they can self-register. **Students are responsible, however, for knowing and fulfilling the graduation requirements of the College and the requirements within their programs of study.**

Class Schedule

Gordon State offers both daytime and evening classes along with hybrid and online formats. Daytime classes typically meet two days a week, three days a week or four days a week. Evening classes meet twice a week or once a week. Prior to the beginning of each semester, Class Schedules showing course offerings for that semester will be made available to students on the Gordon State College website at <https://www2.gordonstate.edu/schedule/>.

Registration

Registration procedures are posted on the Gordon State College website at www.gordonstate.edu/departments/schedule/registration-information/index.html (<https://www.gordonstate.edu/departments/schedule/registration-information/>) each semester. Students have the responsibility to see that they do not have conflicting classes and to report to the courses and sections indicated on their schedule forms.

Late Registration

If a student cannot register during the official registration period, late registration will be permitted during the official late registration period on the Academic Calendar. Although students may be allowed to register for classes during late registration after classes have already begun, they should be aware that missing classes may negatively impact their ability to complete all course requirements successfully.

Change of Schedule—Drop-Add

After classes begin each semester, students may alter their schedules during the official drop-add period by dropping and adding courses. The procedures for drop/add and the dates for the official drop-add period are posted on the Gordon State College website at www.gordonstate.edu (<https://www.gordonstate.edu>) each semester under Drop/Add and Withdrawal Information.

Dropping Courses

The student's class schedule which is in effect following the drop-add period in any semester becomes the student's official class schedule. Any courses dropped prior to the end of the official drop-add period are removed from the student's academic record and are not shown in the official student record.

Following the drop-add period, a student may drop a course or withdraw from all courses by the last day to withdraw with a 'W' date posted on the Gordon State College academic calendar at <https://www.gordonstate.edu/academics/studentresources/approved-calendars/index.html> (<https://www.gordonstate.edu/academics/studentresources/approved-calendars/>) and receive a grade of W (withdrawal passing) for the course(s). To drop courses, a student must submit an appropriately completed Schedule Change Form to the Registrar's Office. To withdraw from all classes, submit an appropriately completed Student Withdrawal Form. The W is not computed in the student's grade point average, but it will appear on the official student record. A student may not exercise this right to drop a course or

withdraw from all courses to avoid sanction for academic dishonesty (also see **Academic Dishonesty Policy**).

Students who withdraw from part of their schedule after midterm will automatically receive a WF (*withdrawal failing*) in each class. If the student has experienced a personal hardship or crisis that *occurred after midterm* and the student had a reasonable chance of passing the course at the time of the hardship, the student may file an *Academic Request Form* and supply documentation that confirms the hardship or crisis. If the appeal is successful, the student will be assigned a grade of W (withdrawal passing) rather than the WF (*withdrawal failing*). Such academic requests for a hardship/crisis withdrawal should be processed before the end of the semester and in no circumstance will be considered when filed after midterm of the following semester. Requests for spring semester hardship/crisis withdrawals must be filed by midterm of the following full summer session.

Academic requests for a hardship/crisis withdrawal cannot be filed for a course if the student has taken the final examination in the course. The *Academic Request Form* is available on the Gordon State College Registrar's webpage under Registrar Forms.

Any student who stops attending a course without appropriately processing a *Schedule Change Form* will receive a grade of WF (*withdrawal failing*) in the course. Schedule Change Forms will not be processed after the last day of class for the semester.

Student Withdrawal

Should it become necessary to withdraw from all classes for the semester, a student **must** complete and submit a Student Withdrawal Form from the Registrar's Office.

Students must withdraw by the close of the official drop-add period to remove courses from the academic record and to receive a full refund of tuition and fees. Dates for the official drop-add period are posted on the Gordon State College Academic Calendar at <https://www.gordonstate.edu/academics/studentresources/approved-calendars/index.html> (<https://www.gordonstate.edu/academics/studentresources/approved-calendars/>). Following the drop-add period, a student may withdraw from all courses by the last day to withdraw with a W on the Gordon State College Academic Calendar and receive a grade of W (withdrawal passing) for the courses. W's are not computed in the student's grade point average, but will appear on the official student record. A student may not exercise this right to withdraw from all courses to avoid sanction for academic dishonesty (also see **Academic Dishonesty Policy**).

Students who withdraw from their entire schedule after midterm will automatically receive a WF (*withdrawal failing*) in each class. If the student has experienced a personal hardship or crisis that occurred after midterm, and the student had a reasonable chance of passing the course at the time of the hardship, the student may file an *Academic Request Form* and supply documentation that confirms the hardship or crisis. If the request is successful, the student will be assigned a grade of W rather than the WF. Such requests for a hardship/crisis withdrawal should be processed before the end of the semester. Academic requests will be considered when filed before midterm of the following semester. Appeals for spring semester hardship/crisis withdrawals must be filed by midterm of the following full summer session. Academic requests for a hardship/crisis withdrawal cannot be filed for a course if the student has taken the final examination in the course. The *Academic Request Form* is on the Gordon State College Registrar's webpage under Registrar Forms.

In accordance with BOR Policy 07.03.05.03 and Academic & Student Affairs Handbook 02.05.03, students called to military service may withdraw with a military withdrawal. A student must officially withdraw and present official orders to the Registrar's Office to qualify for a military withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees. Elective fees are pro-rated according to the date that the student officially withdraws. A student who withdraws and receives a full tuition refund will receive a grade of "WM," military withdrawal, for all courses. A grade of WM entails no penalties that would ordinarily apply for federal or state aid. For example, the student does not have to pay back money already spent for books and fees, and a WM does not count against attempted hours for HOPE.

A student who stops attending all courses for the semester without appropriately processing a Student Withdrawal Form will receive grades of WF (*withdrawal failing*) in all courses. Student Withdrawal Forms will not be processed after the last day of class for the semester.

Class Attendance

Class attendance is expected of all students enrolled at Gordon State College. Being prepared for class in advance and participating on a regular basis is a vitally important ingredient for academic success. Research continually shows that poor attendance and/or limited participation usually results in low grades. However, because the delivery mode, content, assignments, and other particulars for each class section vary so widely, Gordon State College does not specify an official campuswide attendance standard. Nonetheless, students who are absent with the approval of the Office of Academic Affairs will be permitted to earn credit for work missed during their absences. In addition, with the prior approval of the Academic Affairs office, dual enrollment students who are absent will also be permitted to earn credit for work missed during their absences. Approval of such activities will be granted by the Academic Affairs Office and posted online at <https://www.gordonstate.edu/academics/academic-affairs/absences/index.html>. Such excused absences are reserved for situations in which students are representing their school or the college. All students are responsible for contacting instructors prior to all excused absences in order to arrange to make up any missed work.

Instructors will determine reasonable accommodations for missed coursework that best fit the circumstances of their course. Examples of reasonable accommodations might include, but are not limited to:

- Rescheduling of an individual's quiz or exam;
- Revising the deadline for any out-of-class assignment at the instructor's discretion;
- Creating an alternate assignment with an equivalent grade.

At the beginning of each semester, every instructor will distribute a course syllabus and clearly state his or her attendance policy. It is the student's responsibility to inquire of the instructor if there are questions.

See Enrollment Verification Section below for additional information.

A WF will be assigned as the final grade if the student stops attending class after mid-term.

The instructor will notify the Registrar's Office in writing if a student receiving veteran's benefits is absent from a class three consecutive weeks in a fall or spring semester, two consecutive weeks in a half-session spring or fall semester or full session summer semester, or one week in a half session summer semester.

Field trips and extracurricular activities which require a student's absence from class must be approved by the Provost; however, final approval for class absences remains with the individual instructor.

Enrollment Verification

Every semester, faculty will provide electronic verification of class attendance for each student on each official class roll following procedures outlined by the Registrar. Class rolls become official at the close of the drop-add period each semester. Faculty enrollment verification is due on the tenth calendar day of fall and spring semesters and as announced for summer semester. **Students reported as never attending a class by this date will be removed from the official class roll.**

- For students who do not receive financial aid, loans or scholarships, tuition and fees will be recalculated after the class is removed from the schedule. If appropriate, a refund will be issued to the student.
- For students receiving financial aid, loans or scholarships, tuition and fees will be recalculated after the class is removed and financial aid, loans or scholarships will be adjusted accordingly. This adjustment could result in a reduction of aid awarded or loss of loan or scholarship funds.
- No student will be enrolled in a class after the close of the drop/add period unless approved by the Dean of the School, Office of Financial Aid, and Bursar's Office.

Final Examinations

All instructors are expected to give a final exam or alternative assessment in each of their courses unless exceptions are approved by the Department Head and Dean on an individual or program basis. The final examination schedule must be followed as published on the GSC website here. Any change from the schedule must be approved by the Office of Academic Affairs by submitting an Academic Request Form to the Academic Assistant of the school for the course. All students are expected to take the final examination.

Grading System and Grade Point Average

Every course listed on a student's official semester schedule will be listed on the student's permanent record and will include an appropriate grade or symbol designation (even if the student has not completed the semester's work). The following grades are used in the determination of the grade point average:

| Letter Grade | Numerical Grade Equivalent | Description |
|--------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A | 4.0 | Excellent |
| B | 3.0 | Good |
| C | 2.0 | Satisfactory |
| D | 1.0 | Passing |
| F | 0.0 | Course completed with failing grade |
| WF | 0.0 | Withdrawn Failing |

A student's semester grade point average is computed by dividing the number of credit hours in the courses attempted for the semester in which a grade of *A, B, C, D, F, or WF* was received into the number of quality points earned on those hours. The number of quality points associated with each grade is determined by multiplying the numerical grade equivalent by the number of credit hour for the course. That is, Quality Points = (Numerical Grade Equivalent) x (Credit Hours).

For example, consider a student receiving an "A" in a three semester hour class, a "B" in a three semester hour class, and a "C" in a four semester hour class. The student's grade point average is calculated as follows:

| Letter Grade | Numerical Equivalent | Credit Hours | Quality Points |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------|------------------|
| A | 4.0 | 3 | (4.0) x (3) = 12 |
| B | 3.0 | 4 | (3.0) x (3) = 9 |
| C | 2.0 | 4 | (2.0) x (4) = 8 |

Total Credit Hours: 10

Total Quality Points: 29

Grade Point Average: $29/10 = 2.9$

The cumulative grade point average is computed by dividing the total number of credit hours in all courses attempted in which a grade of A, B, C, D, F, or WF has been received into the number of quality points earned on those hours. Grades earned in courses numbered below 1000 are **not** included in the computation of a student's grade point average. Effective fall 2024, a student who repeats a course will have the cumulative grade point average calculated using the highest grade attained from all attempts. The grade of any other attempts that are excluded from the GPA will remain on the student's official permanent record. When adjustments are made to the cumulative grade point average based on repeated courses and Academic Renewal, the result is considered a cumulative adjusted grade point average. (See **Academic Renewal** section for details on this policy.)

The symbols listed below are used in the cases indicated and are not included in the determination of the grade point average.

I: In courses numbered 1000 and above and only with the approval of the Dean of the school or Department Head, this symbol indicates that a student was making satisfactory progress but, for non-academic reasons beyond the control of the student, was unable to meet the full requirements of the course. An "I" must be satisfactorily removed within 12 calendar months; however, at the instructor's discretion, the time may be reduced as specified in the chart below. If an "I" is not satisfactorily removed within the time allowed, the "I" will be changed to a grade of "F".

| Semester during which the grade of Incomplete was assigned | Semester by the end of which course requirements must be completed |
|--|--|
| Fall | The immediately-following spring semester |
| Spring or Summer | The immediately-following fall semester |

W: This symbol indicates that a student was permitted to withdraw without penalty. Withdrawals without penalty will not be permitted after the official mid-term date posted on the Gordon State College website at www.gordonstate.edu (<https://www.gordonstate.edu>) each semester under Class Schedules and Registration Information except in approved cases of extenuating personal hardship.

V: This symbol indicates that a student registered to audit the course.

K: This symbol indicates credit earned through an appropriate examination program.

NR: This symbol indicates that a grade was not reported by the instructor at the time grades were processed.

WM: This symbol indicates that a student was permitted to withdraw without penalty under the Board of Regents policy for military service refunds. The use of this symbol indicates that the student was permitted to withdraw without penalty at any time during the term.

S: This symbol indicates satisfactory completion of a course graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

U: This symbol indicates unsatisfactory work in a course graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

The following additional symbols may be used with any of the grades or symbols listed in this section:

℅: Institutional Learning Support course. Not included in hours earned or academic GPA.

*: Through summer semester 2014, course used to satisfy a Required High School Curriculum (formerly College Preparatory Curriculum) foreign language, natural science, or social science deficiency. Included in hours earned and academic GPA but not applicable to graduation.

§: Effective fall semester 2014, course used to satisfy a Required High School Curriculum (formerly College Preparatory Curriculum) foreign language, natural science, or social science deficiency. Included in hours earned, academic GPA, and applicable to graduation.

*#: Institutional Learning Support course used to satisfy a Required High School Curriculum (formerly College Preparatory Curriculum) English or math deficiency. Not included in hours earned or academic GPA.

#: Academic Renewal (Forgiveness) Policy applied to course. A#, B#, and C# are included in hours earned, but not in academic GPA. D#, F#, and WF# are not included in hours earned or academic GPA.

@: Institutional course. Not included in hours earned or academic GPA.

~: External program grade. Included in hours earned; not included in academic GPA.

T: When preceding a grade, designates transfer credit.

Repeating Courses and Financial Aid implications

A student who repeats a course will have the cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) calculated using the highest grade attained among all attempts. The grade of all other attempts that are excluded from the GPA will remain on the student's official permanent record. Students receiving Federal Financial Aid should be aware that federal regulations only allow for one repeat attempt. A student may choose to repeat a course more than once; however, the cost of the second and any subsequent attempts would have to be covered out-of-pocket. In addition, financial aid requires both courses be counted as attempted courses, which may impact a student's financial aid eligibility. Financial aid cannot use grade forgiveness by regulation.

Maintaining the Standard of Academic Performance

Students are responsible for maintaining the standard of academic performance established by the faculty for each course in which they are enrolled. Professors have a responsibility to (1) advise students of course expectations, (2) state criteria for grades clearly, and (3) make themselves

available for conferences with individual students who seek counsel and advice regarding their progress in the course.

Double Credit

No course a student takes will provide credit for more than one academic requirement or elective. **Courses may not be used to satisfy requirements in more than one Area in the Core Curriculum.** "Double credit" is not allowable.

Academic Renewal

Academic Renewal allows University System of Georgia (USG) degree-seeking undergraduate students who earlier experienced academic difficulty to have a one-time fresh start. Academic difficulty is defined as a situation in which a student's cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) is less than or equal to a threshold set by their institution. Students granted Academic Renewal receive a new GPA to be used for determining their academic standing.

I. Overview of Academic Renewal

A. Academic Renewal allows University System of Georgia (USG) degree-seeking undergraduate students who earlier experienced academic difficulty to have a one-time fresh start.

B. Academic difficulty is defined as a situation in which a student's cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) is less than or equal to a threshold set by their institution.

C. Students granted Academic Renewal receive a new GPA to be used for determining their academic standing.

II. Eligibility for Academic Renewal

Gordon State College requires a minimum Period of 3 year Absence for Academic Renewal. For returning students, the period of absence refers to the duration of time they have been away from the institution and impacts their eligibility for Academic Renewal. Refer to Section A below for additional information.

For returning and transfer students applying for Academic Renewal with transfer credit, the period of absence also refers to the duration of time since the coursework was completed and impacts coursework eligibility for Academic Renewal. Refer to Section B below for additional information.

A. Student Eligibility for Academic Renewal

1. Students returning to a previously attended USG institution and students transferring into a USG institution may be eligible for Academic Renewal.
2. Returning students must have been absent from the institution for at least the institution's Minimum Period of Absence to be considered for Academic Renewal. The student's period of absence is calculated based on the period of time between the date of last enrollment at the institution and the date of return to the institution.
3. Only undergraduate degree-seeking students may be eligible for Academic Renewal.
4. Students who have already earned a bachelor's degree are not eligible for Academic Renewal.

5. Students who have earned an associate degree may be eligible for Academic Renewal if they are now seeking a bachelor's degree. Students pursuing a second associate degree are not eligible for Academic Renewal. Please see the "Coursework Eligibility for Academic Renewal" section below for additional information.

6. Institutions shall set a GPA threshold to consider students for Academic Renewal at 2.5 or lower. No institution may consider Academic Renewal for students with a GPA higher than 2.5. GSC is requiring a GPA of 2.0.

7. A student shall only be granted Academic Renewal one time in the USG.

8. If a student previously granted Academic Renewal by one USG institution is admitted or readmitted to another USG institution, the receiving institution shall honor the earlier Academic Renewal. Please see the "Coursework Eligibility for Academic Renewal" section below for additional information.

B. Coursework Eligibility for Academic Renewal

1. Only coursework completed prior to the institution's Minimum Period of Absence is eligible for Academic Renewal. If Academic Renewal is granted, all eligible coursework completed prior to the institution's Minimum Period of Absence is renewed.

Transfer coursework taken during the institution's Minimum Period of Absence is ineligible for Academic Renewal. Please see the "Impact of Academic Renewal Approval on Academic Credit" section below for additional information.

2. Students who have earned an associate degree and are now pursuing a bachelor's degree shall only be eligible for Academic Renewal for their coursework completed after the award of their associate degree. Courses completed prior to the award date of the previously awarded credential are not eligible for Academic Renewal.

3. The coursework for which Academic Renewal was granted at one institution shall also be granted Academic Renewal at any other USG institution the student subsequently attends.

III. Applying for Academic Renewal

A. Institutions shall establish criteria, procedures and deadlines for students to apply for and be awarded Academic Renewal.

B. Institutions must set a maximum period of time for students to apply for Academic Renewal upon their admission/readmission to, or enrollment/re-enrollment at, the institution. GSC is requiring 3 years minimum.

C. Institutions may elect to allow students to apply for academic renewal during the admission or readmission process so that renewed courses are omitted from the GPA calculated for determining admissibility. GSC will allow students to be granted academic renewal before even being accepted to the college. Therefore, if approved previous credit(s) will not be considered when making the admissions decision.

Please see the "Academic Renewal and Admissions" section below for additional information.

IV. Calculating the GPA after Academic Renewal Approval

A. A renewed GPA is calculated upon approval for Academic Renewal.

B. The new GPA is calculated by excluding all grades awarded prior to the institution's Minimum Period of Absence. While the credit for courses for which a grade higher than a "D" was earned is retained (see the "Impact of Academic Renewal Approval on Course Credit" section below), the retained grades are not included in the new GPA calculation. Such credit is considered in the same context as credit by examination and courses with "S".

C. The renewed GPA will be used for determining academic standing and eligibility for graduation.

V. Impact of Academic Renewal on Academic Credit

A. Academic credit for previously completed coursework will be retained only for courses in which a grade of higher than "D" has been earned. Courses with grades of "D" or "F" must be repeated if they are required in a student's degree program. Institutions have the discretion to determine how academic renewal is applied to pass/fail courses.

B. Coursework completed prior to the institution's Minimum Period of Absence cannot be used to satisfy residency requirements (the number of credit hours applied toward the degree that must be earned at the degree-awarding institution). Residency requirements must be satisfied by coursework completed after the period of approved Academic Renewal.

C. Coursework completed by students who have attended other institutions during the Minimum Period of Absence is not eligible for Academic Renewal. Transfer credit for coursework taken during the Minimum Period of Absence shall be granted in accordance with the prevailing USG and institutional policies and procedures regarding the award of transfer credit.

VI. Impact of Academic Renewal on Financial Aid

A. The granting of Academic Renewal does not supersede financial aid policies regarding Satisfactory Academic Progress.

VII. Other Academic Renewal Considerations

A. Institutions will determine the eligibility for honors at graduation for those students granted Academic Renewal status based on their institutional policies regarding honors graduation.

B. If a suspension is on the record and the student encounters subsequent academic difficulty after having been granted Academic Renewal, the student may be subject to the academic standing policies and procedures at the institution.

VIII. Documenting Academic Renewal in Student Records

A. All previously attempted courses, including those for which Academic Renewal has been granted, shall be recorded on the student's official transcript.

B. Scholastic suspensions that occurred in the past shall remain recorded on the student's permanent record.

C. Institutions must document that Academic Renewal has been granted in student records and on student transcripts.

IX. Academic Renewal and Admission or Readmission

A. Institutions have discretion to allow students to apply for Academic Renewal prior to receiving an admission or readmission decision. If an institution allows Academic Renewal prior to admission or readmission and it is granted, the renewed coursework should be omitted from consideration when evaluating an applicant's eligibility for admission or readmission to the institution.

B. Receiving Academic Renewal does not guarantee admission or readmission to an institution. All students, including those granted Academic Renewal, must meet Board of Regents and institutional admission requirements.

C. The granting of Academic Renewal does not supersede the admissions requirements of certain programs (e.g., teacher education and nursing) which require a specific minimum grade point average based upon all coursework. However, institutions have the discretion to consider Academic Renewal GPAs for admission to selective programs.

D. Some law schools, medical schools, and graduate schools calculate their own grade point averages for admission and are not subject to these rules on Academic Renewal.