

**Western Michigan University
Faculty Senate
Memorandum of Action**

MOA – 24/10

Revision of Graduate Catalog – Repeated Course

Name of Council(s)/Committee(s):

Graduate Studies Council

Approval Date:

26 October 2023

Implementation Date:

Upon Administrative Approval

RECOMMENDATION:

Revise the Repeated Course policy in the Graduate Catalog whereby graduate students could repeat a graduate level course and have the most recent grade be factored into their GPA. This would mirror a similar policy already in place for undergraduate students at WMU, except graduate students could only repeat a course once, while undergraduate students are allowed to repeat a given course twice.

Marcellis Zondag

08-Jul-2024

Marcell Zondag, Chair, Graduate Studies Council

Date

☐ Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action

Comments:

Amy Naugle

08-Jul-2024

Amy Naugle, WMU Faculty Senate President

Date

☐ Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action

Comments:

Julian Vasquez Heilig

Julian Vasquez Heilig (Jul 12, 2024 18:02 EDT)

12-Jul-2024

Julian Vasquez Heilig, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date

☒ Approve ☐ Disapprove ☐ Other Action

Comments:

Edward Montgomery

26-Jul-2024

Edward Montgomery, WMU President

Date

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RATIONALE/PURPOSE

For a host of reasons, some graduate students may struggle in various courses, and receive lower grades; this is especially true early in their program. Current WMU graduate policy allows them to retake a course; however, the original grade must remain and be calculated into their overall GPA. This results in some graduate students being placed on academic probation early in their program, which then becomes very difficult to overcome because any new grade in a repeated course is only averaged with the old grade. At the same time, there is a policy that they cannot receive a graduate degree unless they have at least a GPA of 3.0 at the time of graduation. This results in many graduate students not being successful.

WMU's repeat policy for undergraduates is different in that only the most recent grade for a repeated course is calculated in their GPS.

In 2021, WMU's Registrar's office surveyed some Michigan universities about their graduate repeat policy. It was found that most who responded have a similar policy for both their graduate and undergraduate students, in that only the most recent grade in a repeated course is calculated in their GPA. This included responses from Grand Valley, Northern Michigan, Central Michigan, and Eastern Michigan. Only the U of M Dearborn did not have such a policy in place and they were considering it at the time.

Given the growing number of nontraditional graduate students, which WMU is proud to support in our graduate programs, it is believed that allowing graduate students to repeat courses, and having only the last grade count within the GPA, is important for our students. It should also be noted that the proposed revisions to our current repeated courses policy for graduate students would mirror that of the existing one for our undergraduate students in that all grades would still show up on the transcript, but only the most recent for a repeated course would be used in the GPA. One major difference would remain whereby graduate students could only repeat a course once, while undergraduates can repeat a given course twice.

Also, within this proposed revision, the requirement that a student receive approval from their advisor and the graduate dean before they can repeat a course is removed. The approval by the graduate dean is not current practice, and the Registrar's office has indicated that approval by an advisor before someone could repeat a course would be impossible to enforce by their office. Individual departments could still adopt their own restrictions on the number of courses that might be repeated in a given program, as long as they notify students of such restrictions by no later than the end of the first semester of their program.

Responsible Office(s) and Responsible Enforcement Official(s):

Registrar's Office
Registrar

Graduate College Dean

STAKEHOLDERS

Graduate students, faculty, and professional staff who teach and/or advise graduate students.

HISTORY:

- a) Effective date of current version: prior to 2006-07
- b) Date first adopted: unknown
- c) Revision history: unknown
- d) Proposed date of next review: fall 2027

CURRENT POLICY MODIFICATIONS: (additions in bold and deletions with strikethrough):

Graduate Catalog-Academic Regulations-Repeated Courses

With the exception of courses that are approved by the University Curriculum Review Policy as repeatable for credit (e.g., multi-topic or umbrella courses), ~~no more than two courses may be retaken and no course may be repeated more than once during the student's graduate career (inclusive of all graduate degrees and certificates) both master's and doctoral programs~~ at WMU. **A department may place restrictions on the number of courses that could be repeated within a given program, but such restrictions must be communicated to the students no later than the end of the first semester of their program.** This number may be further limited by individual departments. ~~Permission to retake a course must be obtained from the program advisor and graduate dean before registration for the course to be repeated takes place. The original grade for the course will remain on the student's transcript, and both the original and repeated course grade will be computed into the degree program grade point average.~~

A grade must be awarded for each course, and any course first elected for a letter grade must be elected for a letter grade when repeated. If a student wishes to repeat a course taught by an overseas institution during WMU sponsored study abroad, the pre-approved WMU equivalent course may be repeated for credit if the student's department approves.

Only the most recent grade for a repeated course is used in calculating a student's grade point average. However, if a student receives a letter grade in the first enrollment and then enrolls again in the course and receives a grade of "W," "Cr," or "NC," the previous grade will remain in the grade point average. Course in which grades of "W," "Cr," or "NC" are received will not count as attempts in limiting the maximum number of times a student can register for a course. Appeals may be address to the department chairperson.

A repeated course is not removed from the student's record. All grades earned are shown on the transcript.

Many graduate and professional schools recalculate the grade point average using grades from all classes taken, including repeats, in determining eligibility for admission. This fact should be carefully considered by students who are attempting to increase their grade point average by repeating courses in which they have received a passing grade.

RELATED POLICIES

Undergraduate Catalog-Academic Regulations-Repeated Course

https://catalog.wmich.edu/content.php?catoid=43&navoid=2020#repe_cour

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