

## DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**CHANGES IN POLICIES CONCERNING  
GRADES AWARDED WITH CREDIT BY EXAMINATION**

Robert A. Duke (Music), Chair of the Educational Policy Committee for 1998-99, has filed with the Secretary of the Faculty Council the recommendation from the Educational Policy Committee on changes in policies concerning grades awarded with credit by examination set forth below. The Secretary has classified this recommendation as *general* legislation. The 10-day circulation rule for general legislation will be satisfied on November 12, 1999.

**Notice is hereby given that this legislation will be presented to the Faculty Council for action at its meeting on November 15, 1999.**

John R. Durbin, Secretary  
The Faculty Council

## **CHANGES IN POLICIES CONCERNING GRADES AWARDED WITH CREDIT BY EXAMINATION**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That the University of Texas at Austin continue to award credit by examination either with letter grades or with the symbol *CR* but that letter grades for credit by examination not be counted in a student's UT Austin grade point average.
2. That the catalog and other official publications of UT Austin be amended to reflect this change in policies.

### **BRIEF RATIONALE:**

This proposal is based on the premise that a student's UT Austin grade point average should be a record of accomplishment in coursework completed at the University. But current UT Austin policies concerning grades awarded with credit by examination permit a student to elect to have examination credit recorded either with a letter grade (*A*, *B*, or *C*) or with the credit-only symbol (*CR*), a choice that the student may make after learning of his or her performance on a given examination.

UT Austin grade point averages are used primarily to determine whether a student's academic progress is satisfactory and whether a student is eligible for academic honors, decisions that should be based on a student's performance in coursework taken at UT Austin. A grade point average computed only for courses taken at the University would also aid academic advisers by reflecting more accurately a student's performance at the University.

### **NATURE OF CREDIT BY EXAMINATION:**

At UT Austin credit by examination is used to validate and recognize college-level learning that has not occurred under the direction and supervision of UT Austin faculty members, and this seems entirely appropriate. Knowledge and skills that are comparable to those taught in college-level courses and are documented by student performance in rigorous examinations should be awarded credit that appears on a student's transcript. But credit earned by examination does not reflect a student's performance in coursework at UT Austin. This fact was recognized when the UT Austin faculty enacted legislation in 1974 stating that credit by examination is not credit earned in residence.

**CREDIT BY EXAMINATION AT UT AUSTIN:**

TABLE 1  
 NUMBER OF 7,085 FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN WHO WERE ELIGIBLE FOR CREDIT BY EXAMINATION  
 (CBE) IN EACH COURSE AS A RESULT OF A QUALIFYING SCORE ON A TEST:  
 SUMMER AND FALL 1997-1998

UT Austin Course	No. of Freshmen Eligible for CBE	No. of Semester Hours for which eligible	UT Austin Course	No. of Freshmen Eligible for CBE	No. of Semester Hours for which eligible	UT Austin Course	No. of Freshmen Eligible for CBE	No. of Semester Hours for which eligible
ARH 302	27	81	HEB 506	6	30	PHY 103M	8	8
ARH 303	6	18	HEB 507	7	35	PHY 103N	3	3
ART 302K	41	123	HIN 604	6	36	PHY 309K	2	6
BIO 302	426	1,278	HIN 612	4	24	PHY 309L	2	6
BIO 303	150	450	HIS 309K	108	324	PHY 316	74	222
BIO 304	426	1,278	HIS 309L	109	327	PHY 116L	74	74
C S 304P	127	381	HIS 315K	448	1,344	PHY 317K	1	3
C S 315	50	150	HIS 315L	447	1,341	PHY 117M	1	1
CH 301	232	696	I B 350	1	3	POR 604	1	6
CH 302	138	414	ITL 506	2	10	POR 612	1	6
CH 204	28	56	ITL 507	2	10	PRS 506	2	10
CH 304K	4	12	ITL 312K	1	3	PRS 507	2	10
CH 305	1	3	ITL 312L	1	3	PRS 312K	2	6
CHI 506	163	815	JPN 506	16	80	PRS 312L	2	6
CHI 507	153	765	JPN 507	12	60	PSY 301	112	336
CHI 412K	141	564	JPN 412K	5	20	RUS 506	21	105
CHI 412L	129	516	JPN 412L	3	12	RUS 507	20	100
E 306	2,414	7,242	KOR 506	23	115	RUS 312K	14	42
E 316K	1,613	4,839	KOR 507	22	110	RUS 312L	13	39
E E 302	1	3	KOR 412K	19	76	RUS 218A	14	14
ECO 304K	113	339	KOR 412L	18	72	RUS 218B	13	13
ECO 304L	305	915	LAT 506	39	195	RUS 324	2	6
EDP 371	55	165	LAT 507	34	170	RUS 325	2	6
FIN 354	1	3	LAT 311	32	96	RUS 326	2	6
FR 506	336	1,680	LAT 312K	22	66	RUS 327	2	6
FR 507	210	1,050	LAT 316	12	36	RUS 228A	2	2
FR 312K	144	432	M 301	19	57	RUS 228B	2	2
FR 312L	104	312	M 305G	3,466	10,398	SOC 302	19	57
FR 320E	10	30	M 408C	843	3,372	SPN 506	1,778	8,890
FR 120M	6	6	M 408D	1	4	SPN 507	1,212	6,060
FR 322E	2	6	M 308K	299	897	SPN 312K	966	2,898
FR 326L	1	3	M 308L	299	897	SPN 312L	750	2,250
GER 506	112	560	MAL 506	1	5	SPN 315N	38	114
GER 507	47	235	MAL 507	1	5	SPN 319	324	972
GER 312K	32	96	MAL 312K	1	3	SPN 325K	3	9
GER 312L	17	51	MAL 312L	1	3	SPN 326K	2	6
GER 328	7	21	MIS 310	7	21	SPN 327	203	609
GK 507	1	5	MUS 605A	3	9	SWE 604	1	6
GK 310	1	3	PHY 302K	429	1,287	SWE 612	1	6
GK 310K	1	3	PHY 302L	350	1,050	T D 412C	2	8
GK 311	1	3	PHY 102M	429	429	T D 212F	5	10
GOV 310L	773	2,319	PHY 102N	350	350	T D 212G	1	2
HEB 312K	6	18	PHY 303K	8	24			
HEB 312L	5	15	PHY 303L	3	9	TOTALS	22,168*	74,313

\*This total is the number of courses for which the 7,085 first-time freshmen were eligible.

TABLE 2  
 NUMBERS OF COURSES FOR WHICH 7,085 FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN WERE ELIGIBLE FOR  
 CREDIT BY EXAMINATION AS A RESULT OF QUALIFYING SCORES ON TESTS:  
 SUMMER AND FALL 1997-1998

<u>Types of Courses</u>	<u>Number of Courses</u>	<u>Semester Hours of Credit</u>
Humanities and Fine Arts	11,426	43,001
Natural Sciences and Engineering	8,244	23,818
Social and Behavioral Sciences and Business Administration	<u>2,498</u>	<u>7,494</u>
TOTAL AMOUNTS	22,168	74,313
AVERAGE (MEAN) AMOUNTS	3.13	10.49

TABLE 3  
 EFFECTS OF CREDIT BY EXAMINATION (CBE) ON U.T. AUSTIN GRADE POINT AVERAGES  
 OF 6,890 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WHO WERE GRADUATED IN CALENDAR 1994

How CBE was recorded:

	Some CBE was recorded <u>with CR symbol</u>	Some CBE was recorded <u>with letter grades</u>
Number of graduates	2,392 (35%)	3,381 (49%)
Average (median) amounts of CBE	5 semester hours	8 semester hours

Effects of CBE on cumulative grade point averages over all coursework:

	With CBE letter grades <u>excluded from GPAs</u>	With CBE letter grades <u>included in GPAs</u>
Highest GPA	4.0	4.0
Median GPA	2.9	3.0
Lowest GPA	1.6	1.9
Number of students with GPA less than 2.0	59 (1%)	1 (less than 0.1%)

**POLICIES AT OTHER MAJOR UNIVERSITIES:**

Credit by examination policies published in recent catalogs of the following 44 major public and private universities were examined:

U. Arizona	Louisiana State U.	U. Pittsburgh
Calif. Inst. of Tech.	U. Maryland	Princeton U.
U. Calif. at Berkeley	Mass. Inst. of Tech.	Purdue U.
U. Calif. at Los Angeles	U. Michigan	Rice U.
Carnegie-Mellon U.	Michigan State U.	Rutgers U.
U. Colorado at Boulder	U. Minnesota	Stanford U.
Cornell U.	U. Missouri	State U. of New York at Buffalo
Duke U.	U. Nebraska at Lincoln	Texas A&M U.
U. Florida	U. North Carolina at Chapel Hill	U. Toronto
Harvard U.	Northwestern U.	Tulane U.
U. Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	U. Oklahoma	U. Virginia
Indiana U.	Oklahoma State U.	U. Washington
U. Iowa	Ohio State U.	U. Wisconsin
Iowa State U.	U. Oregon	Yale U.
U. Kansas	Penn. State U.	

The policies at those 44 major universities are summarized in Table 4 below:

TABLE 4  
HOW MUCH CREDIT BY EXAMINATION CAN BE AWARDED WITH LETTER GRADES, AND ARE THOSE LETTER GRADES INCLUDED IN GRADE POINT AVERAGES?

	<u>Public Universities</u>	<u>Non-Public Universities</u>	<u>Total</u>
None with letter grades	25	13	38 (86%)
Some with letter grades that <u>are not</u> in GPAs	2*	0	2 (5%)
Some with letter grades that <u>are</u> in GPAs	1**	0	1 (2%)
All with letter grades	0	0	0
No information in catalogue	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u> (7%)
TOTAL	30	14	44(100%)

\* Indiana University (only if test score was high enough for a grade of A) and University of Kansas (only if departmental tests were used).

\*\* University of Maryland (only if departmental tests were used).

In summary, none of those 44 universities record letter grades for all credit by examination courses, only three of them record letter grades for any CBE courses, and only one of those three includes the CBE letter grades in students' grade point averages.