

## Proposal to Eliminate the “Y” Grade

### Context

The UO currently has a “Y” grade which means “No basis for grade (recorded by the instructor)” or “There is no basis for evaluating the student’s performance.” It is intended to be used only in the very specific situation in which a student registers for a course but never attends or participates in any part of the course (see Attachment for Federal definition of participation and attendance). When used correctly, it serves the function of helping Financial Aid accurately report on students’ academic progress to the Department of Education. When a “Y” is given, Financial Aid returns federal financial aid to the Department of Education.

In practice, the “Y” grade is not always used for that specific purpose. In many cases, the “Y” grade is given when a student does attend and participate in at least some of a course but for various reasons does not complete the course. Because the “Y” grade is used for other than its intended purpose, sometimes students lose financial aid when they should not have or students are confused about why they lost financial aid. This drives students to the registrar to dispute the Y grade.

In addition, a “Y” grade, because it has no effect on student GPA, does not provide the student or the institution information to prompt intervention when it might be needed.

The registrar and director of advising both report that most institutions they are aware of use an “F” for any scenario in which a student registers for a course and either never attends or participates, or attends and participates in only part of the course but doesn’t complete the course. In our system, when an “F” is recorded in the grade roster, a last date of attendance must be recorded. For Financial Aid reporting purposes, if a student registered but never attended or participated in the course, the last date of attendance would need to be prior to the first day of classes, or we need some other mechanism to indicate no attendance or participation.

In either case, a student who receives an “F” for lack of attendance or participation, has the ability to petition to have the grade changed.

### Proposal

The Undergraduate Council proposes to eliminate the “Y” grade as an option in the University of Oregon grading system. Instead, a grade of “F” will be recorded when a student registers and either never attends or participates, or attends and participates in part of the course but does not complete the course requirements.

The Council further recommends that when a grade of “F” is recorded in the online grade roster, the user would be given two options. These would appear something like below, depending on the capabilities in Banner 9 once we upgrade:

1. If student never attended or participated in course, check box
- OR
2. Input date of last attendance or participation: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_

This policy change is to take effect Fall 2017 and be recorded in the 2017-18 UO Catalog. Because we are in the early stages of an upgrade to Banner, it may take some time to program these new options in our information systems. In addition, we may find that Banner 9 provides new features that will help with this scenario.

In addition, faculty should receive clear guidelines about when to use which grading option. For instance, the following describes when an "I" should be used (from UO Catalog):

*"A mark of I may be issued when the quality of work is satisfactory but a minor yet essential requirement of the course has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor. Faculty and students should develop a contract outlining the requirements and specific deadlines for making up the incomplete. Contracts should be filed in the faculty member's departmental office."*

An "I" would not be appropriate in the situation where a student registers and never participates or attends the course. An "I" would also not be appropriate in the situation where a student registers and only attends or participates in part of a course as described above. In both of these cases, an "F" should be recorded.

Finally, up to this point, when a student has an open academic misconduct case past the grading deadline, faculty have been instructed to record a "Y" for that student's grade. With the elimination of the "Y" grade, we suggest that in that situation, faculty record the grade the student would have if they are found not responsible for academic misconduct. This approach is in line with a principle of due process. Faculty can change this to a different grade if warranted by a finding that a student is responsible for academic misconduct.