



Academic Policies

Absences

Course Assignments and Outcomes Student absences do not reduce or eliminate course requirements or outcomes.

Documentation Absences may only be excused by a student's individual faculty member who reserves the right – as appropriate – to require timely, written verification of the basis for the student's absence from class in a form acceptable to the faculty member.

Nichols College Health Services does not provide documentation for excused absences unless the student is required to leave campus or is quarantined to their room.

This policy is consistent with our goal of supporting dialogue between faculty and students. Students are responsible for promptly notifying faculty about absences. These are conversations students will have in the future with supervisors in the workplace, and these conversations will serve as an introduction to appropriate workplace behavior.

Excused Absences Those absences from class specifically approved by the faculty member upon receipt of required absences documentation.

Extended Absences Extended absences are excused absences that are projected to result, or in fact result, in cumulative or consecutive student absences of three weeks or longer during a semester. For example, extended absences can include, but are not limited to, health or injuries, court appearances, or death of an immediate family member.

Extended Absences and Course Outcomes Students who require an extended absence must complete a Request for Special Academic Adjustments Form and submit it along with supporting documents to the Assistant Dean for Learning Services.

Once the formal request has been received by the Assistant Dean, they will assemble an ad hoc review committee consisting of the Dean of Business/Dean of Liberal Arts, a faculty member/advisor, and other departmental administrators as needed.

The ad hoc committee will review the information submitted by the student and make a determination whether there is any form of reasonable academic adjustment or accommodation that may be offered that will allow the student to complete course requirements despite an extended absence during the semester. If adjustment or accommodation is deemed potentially available by the ad hoc committee, the Assistant Dean or appropriate designee will work with the student and student's faculty to attempt to reach mutual agreement on such an adjustment or accommodation.

Students should review the Nichols College Policy Relative to Absences as well as consult with the Student Financial Services office regarding Financial Aid eligibility.

Excessive Excused Absences Faculty shall determine, as an exercise of their individual discretion, whether excused student absences have materially impeded student progress or outcomes. If such a determination is made, faculty reserve the right to recommend that the student consider withdrawal from the course by the College's course withdrawal date, established each semester on or before the end of ten full weeks of classes. The decision to withdraw from the course is, however, ultimately left to the student.

Make-up work Students are responsible for communicating directly with faculty members about missed work from excused absences. Direct conversations between student and faculty member clarify how the student can fulfill their academic responsibilities and continue their academic efforts while working around an illness/injury/other challenge.

Withdrawal from a Course

Withdrawal from (or failure) of a specific course for any reason, does not entitle a student to a refund for that course.

Students **enrolled in a 15-week course** are permitted to withdraw from a course during the first 10 weeks of the semester with a grade of W. Students **enrolled in a 7-week course** are permitted to withdraw from a course during the first 4 weeks of a session with a grade of W. Students should take note of class withdrawal deadlines posted on the academic calendar and class syllabi.

The W grade has no impact on a student's GPA. Students exercising the W grade option should consult with the faculty member and their academic advisor. Full-time students should bear in mind that they may not carry fewer than 12 credits without impacting their financial aid and/or health coverage.

The W grade is **not** available after the aforementioned 10th and 4th weeks. Non-attendance does not constitute a withdrawal from a course.

Withdrawal from a course may impact a student's Financial Aid eligibility. It is strongly recommended that students meet with the Office of Financial Aid prior to withdrawing from any course to discuss Financial Aid implications, if any.

Withdrawal from the College

Students who withdraw from the College prior to the completion of a semester must do so by the last day of classes for that semester. Students must meet with a member of the Student Financial Services office to complete a withdrawal during the semester. A "W" will appear on the student's transcript for any class that was not completed. Students who plan to withdraw from the College after a semester has ended may file a withdrawal to be effective at the end of the semester. The withdrawal between semesters must be completed prior to the beginning of the next semester in order to avoid incurring additional financial obligations.

In cases where course outcomes cannot be met because of excused absences, Nichols College also allows for students to officially withdraw from the College altogether, as opposed to withdrawing from a specific course. Tuition, fees and room & board refunds will be calculated on the College's standard refund schedule found in the College Catalog. There are no additional refunds for withdrawal from the College due to excused absences.

Full-time day students who elect to leave Nichols College for reasons other than graduation must officially withdraw from the institution. Please see the full policy, Withdrawal Procedures and Policies, under STUDENT FINANCES, FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.

Financial Implications of Withdrawal from the College

Financial Aid Eligibility – Students who cannot successfully meet academic outcomes in any given semester of attempted credits and choose to withdraw from the College are required to meet with the Office of Financial Aid to discuss College and Federal Government Financial Aid requirements.

Tuition & Refunds – Tuition, fees and room & board refunds for students who cannot successfully meet academic outcomes in any given semester of attempted credits and choose to withdraw are made in accordance with the College's standard refund schedule in the College Catalog. There are no additional refunds for withdrawals due to absences.

Students are required to meet with both the Office of Student Accounts and the Office of Financial Aid to discuss financial implications of withdrawal from the College.

Appeal Procedure for Contesting a Grade

The appeal procedure may be used to challenge a grade that results from a faculty member exercising usual and customary professional judgment in the evaluation of student work. No grade may be appealed after six months from the issuance of the grade.

1. A student who believes an error has been made in their grade in any class should attempt to resolve the issue informally with the instructor.
2. In the event that an informal resolution does not occur, the student should promptly (within two weeks of speaking with the instructor) submit the grievance in writing, with supporting evidence, to the instructor's Dean and request a meeting with that person. The Dean should then arrange a meeting with the student within two weeks, review the grievance and supporting evidence, meet with the instructor, and resolve the problem, providing the student with written notification.
3. If the student remains dissatisfied with the Dean's decision, within two weeks of receiving written notification from the Dean, the student may submit a written appeal to the Provost to request a meeting. Following this meeting, the Provost would make a binding decision, thereby concluding the matter.

Attendance

Statistics indicate that attendance is a top predictor of student success.

Faculty members record attendance electronically, daily, or minimally, weekly. Recorded absences generate courtesy Absence Alerts by direct email to students, to advisors and to coaches the following day. Students, advisors and coaches follow-up on email alerts as needed to encourage the highest level of student engagement possible.

Attendance may or may not be built into the grade structure of the course. All faculty course attendance policies are published as part of their course syllabi. Students should make sure they understand their professors' attendance policies, which vary. For example, absences usually do not excuse course assignments or due dates without prior communication with the professor.

Students should go to class regularly. When unable to attend class, they should communicate directly with their professors. Students are responsible for promptly notifying faculty about absences. These are conversations students will have in the future with supervisors in the workplace, and these conversations will serve as an introduction to appropriate workplace behavior. This policy is consistent with our goal of supporting dialogue between faculty and students.

Classroom Conduct and Academic Expectations

Because all students and faculty at Nichols College are entitled to a positive and constructive teaching and learning environment, Nichols College classroom participants are prohibited from engaging in behavior or activity that causes the disruption of teaching, learning, research or other academic activities necessary for the fulfillment of the college mission. It is expected that students and instructors will:

- Respect the views and opinions of the instructor and fellow students, and engage in a constructive, respectful, and professional manner.
- Participate in a learning environment free from interference, discrimination, intimidation, sexual harassment, stalking, or disparagement in the classroom.
- Respect the professional authority of the faculty, including maintaining an environment free from bullying, harassment, or coercion related to grading and institutional policies.

Violations will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Class Standing by Credit Hour

Completed credit hours:

Senior	87+
Junior	57-86
Sophomore	27-56
First-year	0-26

Continued Enrollment/Academic Suspension

Students whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below the minimums listed below will be placed on **Academic Suspension Warning (ASW)** and will be enrolled in the College Success program.

Credit-Hours Attempted (not including W courses)	Minimum Cumulative GPA Needed
1 - 31	1.5
32 - 45	1.75*
46 or more	2.0

**Transfer students must achieve a minimum GPA of 1.75 in their first semester. Transfer students who do not meet this requirement will be placed on Academic Probation. Thereafter, they must follow the previously stated GPA guidelines.*

Failure to meet the minimum required cumulative GPA by the end of the next nine or more credit hours will result in Academic Suspension.

Academic Sanctions

Academic Suspension Failure to meet the minimum required cumulative GPA by the end of the term of Academic Suspension Warning will result in Academic Suspension. Furthermore, any student who has been at Nichols for more than one semester and earns less than a 1.00 in any one semester in which they were enrolled in nine or more credits will be academically suspended. If a student with less than nine credit hours in any one semester receives less than a 1.00 grade point average for two consecutive semesters, the student will be placed on Academic Suspension.

Suspended students with extenuating circumstances may appeal the suspension to the Academic Review Committee by a letter to the Registrar. Committee meetings are held in January and June. The appeal letter is due in the Office of the Registrar prior to the meeting to be considered for appeal.

If there is no appeal, or if an appeal is not successful, suspended students wishing to re-enter the College at a later time must submit a letter of intent to the Registrar for consideration by the Academic Review Committee. The letter must be submitted after five months have elapsed and at least three weeks before the student would like to enroll.

As an indicator of academic promise, a student may take up to seven credit-hours during the period of suspension.

Academic Probation *There are four categories of probation:*

- 1) **Standard Academic Probation for Day Students:** This category of probation is for Day students who were on Academic Suspension Warning but did not meet the minimum required cumulative GPA after one semester and were granted readmission after a successful appeal.
- 2) **Standard Academic Probation for UGO Students:** This category of probation is for UGO students who were on Academic Suspension Warning but did not meet the minimum required cumulative GPA after 9 or more credits and were granted readmission after a successful appeal.
- 3) **Transfer Probation:** This category of probation is for transfer students who did not achieve the required minimum 1.75 GPA after their first semester at Nichols.

4) **Restart Probation:** This category of probation is for Day students who received less than a 1.00 GPA in any one semester in which they were enrolled for nine or more credits and were granted readmission after a successful appeal. As part of the Restart Program, an action plan will be created with the student which will include weekly meetings with an assigned Success Coach.

No student on probation may hold office in any College organization, participate in any intercollegiate event or program, including athletics, or otherwise represent the College publicly. Students on probation are not excluded from membership in student organizations or from intramural athletics. Participation in intercollegiate athletics is subject to the regulations of the National Collegiate Athletic Association and other athletic associations in which the College holds membership.

In cases where a student's overall GPA is 2.0 or above, Academic Probation does not prohibit participation in co-curricular activities, as previously described.

Students who successfully complete winter or summer inter-session course(s) and raise their cumulative GPA above the minimum standards listed above may request to have their academic status reviewed by submitting a letter of request to the Office of the Registrar. All requests will be considered by the Academic Review Committee and a subsequent decision will be communicated to the petitioning student via email.

All readmitted students are required to have an approved Action Plan on file. Readmission to the College does not guarantee eligibility for Financial Aid.

Students who are on Academic Probation and are suspended again are not eligible for readmission or appeal until a period of at least five months has elapsed; the exception to this rule is for the student who has earned a GPA of 2.0 or higher during their most recent semester (fall or spring).

Readmission After Long-Term Suspension Students who were suspended for academic reasons and who have been separated from Nichols College for a period of five years or longer may appeal for readmission on a full-time or part-time basis by submitting a letter to the Registrar. Normally, such students will not be required to go before the Academic Review Committee. Their standing and academic program status will be evaluated and determined after readmission.

Course Load

Fall/Spring Semesters The normal course load for full-time day students is 14-17 credit-hours. First-year students with a GPA of 3.3 or above and 14 or more earned credits, sophomores with a GPA of 3.0 or above, juniors with a 2.7, and seniors with a 2.4 may take up to 19 credit-hours. Under special circumstances, seniors with GPAs under 2.4 may be permitted to take up to 19 credit-hours with special permission from the Academic Advisor and Dean. Tuition includes up to 18 credit-hours per term.

Summer/Winter Intersessions and Accelerated Online/Hybrid Courses Accelerated undergraduate courses are offered during the Summer and Winter Intersessions. Students may take up to 12 credit-hours in the Summer, and up to 4 credit-hours during the Winter. Day students may take up to 3 credit-hours in the Undergraduate Online program during the Fall and/or Spring semesters, provided they meet the same GPA and credit minimum criteria listed above regarding course overloads.

Course Repeat

A student may elect to repeat any course with one exception: the course is part of a sequence of courses and the more advanced course has already been completed. Upon completion of a repeated course, the student's transcript will indicate that a course has been retaken. The most recent grade earned will become the official grade for the course. It will replace the former grade as a factor in the GPA. The student's cumulative grade point average will reflect this performance. This policy does not apply to the WF grade.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

The point value for each grade received is multiplied by the number of credit-hours for that course. A total of the grade points for the semester's courses is then divided by the overall credit-hours attempted to determine the semester grade point average (GPA). A perfect average would be 4.0 (A).

The semester grade point average includes only grades received in a given semester. The cumulative grade point average is a measure of the student's total coursework attempted at Nichols College. To figure the cumulative grade point average, the total number of grade points (the sum of all course grades multiplied by their grade point values) is divided by the total number of credit-hours attempted. Credits assigned W grades are not counted in the total of attempted credit-hours for the GPA or CGPA. Exception: Financial Aid calculations count credits associated with W grades as attempted credit-hours.

Grades of AU and W have no effect on GPA. A grade of P is counted toward hours earned but does not have a quality point value. Grades WF and F are included in hours attempted but represent no earned hours and 0.0 grade points.

The GPA used for determining Honors and Academic Sanctions is the transcript GPA and is not rounded.

Grade Reports

Grade reports are available to all students online at mid-semester and at the end of each semester.

Grading System

Letter grades are awarded in all courses as follows:

Grade	Grade Points per Credit-Hour	
A	(93 – 100%)	4.0 Excellent
A-	(90 – 92.99%)	3.7
B+	(87 – 89.99%)	3.3
B	(83 – 86.99%)	3.0 Above Average
B-	(80 – 82.99%)	2.7
C+	(77 – 79.99%)	2.3
C	(73 – 76.99%)	2.0 Average
C-	(70 – 72.99%)	1.7
D+	(67 – 69.99%)	1.3
D	(63 – 66.99%)	1.0 Below Average
D-	(60 – 62.99%)	0.7
F	(59.99% and below)	0.0 Failure
AU	Audit - Only with the permission of the Registrar during Add/Drop	
W	Withdrawn within first 10 weeks of a semester	
WF	Grade is awarded in instances of academic dishonesty	
I	Indicates coursework not completed (see Grade of Incomplete policy)	
P	Pass (courses on pass/fail basis; see Registrar for regulations governing pass/fail courses)	

Grade of Incomplete Assuming the faculty member determines as an exercise of their individual discretion that a student (i) has extenuating circumstances, and (ii) projects to be able to successfully complete all course requirements of provided limited additional time, a faculty member may assign a grade of Incomplete to allow a student up to three (3) weeks of additional time from the date final grades are due for that course to complete requirements. Students are required to engage in, and establish with, the professor a mutually agreeable written plan for submitting all required coursework. This plan must be submitted to the Registrar's office, and copied to the student, on or before the day the Incomplete is posted.

Incomplete (I) grades must be removed within three (3) weeks of being issued or the Registrar will change the grade to F.

Honors

Dean's List and President's List: The Dean's List and President's List give recognition to those students who achieve high grades during a single semester. In order to be included on the Dean's List, a student must have a minimum average of 3.5 for at least 12 undergraduate credit-hours and must have received no grades below B- during the semester. Students whose semester average is 3.85 or higher for at least 12 undergraduate credit-hours and no grades below B- will receive President's List honors.

Commencement Honors: High scholastic achievement during the entire College career is recognized at commencement. Outstanding scholars are awarded degrees with three levels of distinction. In order to be eligible for Commencement Honors, a student must have earned at least 48 credits at Nichols College and must have achieved the following cumulative averages:

Honors	Required Average
Cum Laude	3.4 - 3.64
Magna Cum Laude	3.65 - 3.84
Summa Cum Laude	3.85 - 4.0

Student(s) with the highest grade point average will be recognized by being awarded the President's Award for Academic Excellence. In order to be recognized for this award, a student must have earned at least 90 credits at Nichols College.

In order for a student to participate in the graduation ceremony in May, they must not have more than 7 credit-hours to complete. Undergraduate students who complete 47 or fewer credits at Nichols and meet the following GPA requirements will earn honors distinction:

Honors	Required Average
With distinction	3.70 - 3.84
With high distinction	3.85 - 4.0

Nichols Honors Scholar Commencement Recognition: At graduation, students who have successfully completed the Honors Scholar Program, (see ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, Nichols Honors Scholar Program), with the required 3.4 GPA within the honors courses and overall will be recognized. Their diploma and official College academic transcript will reflect the designation Nichols Honors Scholar.

Limitations of Applicability

A student in continuous attendance must complete the graduation requirements listed in the Catalog in effect at the time of initial registration. In the event a student does not remain in continuous attendance at Nichols, the requirements for graduation become those in effect at the time of re-entry into the program.

Requirements for Degrees

An appropriate degree is awarded to each student who fulfills the following requirements:

1. Completion of all admission requirements.
2. Successful completion of one of the programs of study in the catalog in effect at the time of the student's matriculation. For full-time students, the program must be completed within 10 semesters, not necessarily consecutive. Part-time bachelor's degree candidates shall complete all degree requirements within 10 calendar years.
3. Achievement of a cumulative grade point average of 2.0.
4. Achievement of a grade point average of 2.0 in the concentration or the major area of study.
5. Achievement of a grade point average of 2.0 in the minor or the certificate. Students may opt to drop the minor or certificate from their program of study if they don't meet the GPA requirement.
6. If a student has completed all course requirements for graduation but does not meet the 2.0 overall CGPA and/or the 2.0 GPA in the major or concentration requirements, the student may take a maximum of 3 courses in an attempt to meet the GPA graduation requirement.
7. Satisfactory completion of two W-designated (Writing Intensive courses).*
8. All students (including transfer students) must take at least 30 credit-hours – immediately preceding graduation – at Nichols College and complete all degree requirements. 30 of the final 36 credit-hours must be taken at Nichols College.

***Writing-Intensive Courses** Students are required to complete at least two writing-intensive "W" courses prior to graduation. "W" courses are upper-level offerings designed to give students additional writing practice in various academic disciplines. Normally, students are expected to take one "W" course in their concentration or major, and another outside the concentration/major. Transfer students should consult Academic Advisors about the "W" course requirement and the selection of "W" courses. The schedule of classes, published by the Registrar, indicates the "W" courses being offered during a given semester.

Transcripts

Transcript orders must be submitted electronically. Nichols College partners with the National Student Clearinghouse for the submission and processing of requests for transcripts from Nichols College, Central New England College, and Worcester Junior College. Visit www.getmytranscript.com to submit a request for an official transcript.

Transfer Courses

Students enrolled at Nichols should receive written approval from the Registrar's Office before registering for a course(s) for credit to be taken at another institution or through a non-traditional credit opportunity for transfer to Nichols. Courses taken without written approval from the Registrar's office run the risk of not being transferrable.

Courses requested for transfer credit by currently enrolled students will be evaluated according to the following guidelines:

- Transfer credit is reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may come from the following places:
 - Regionally accredited higher education institutions where a grade of C or higher was earned, provided the course(s) are like a course(s) offered at Nichols College and are applicable to a Nichols College degree program. Official transcripts are required to award credit.
 - Advanced Placement Exam (AP), College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), and International Baccalaureate (IB) credit will be evaluated and awarded after receipt of official score reports or transcripts. Score(s) must meet credit granting levels (e.g., a 3 or higher for AP exams).
 - A maximum of 30 credit hours can be transferred from these programs for Bachelor's Degree students.
 - A maximum of 15 credit hours can be transferred from these programs for Associate's Degree students.
 - Non-traditional credit is evaluated based on recommendations made by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and must be American Council on Education (ACE) approved. Platforms for non-traditional credit opportunities include Sophia Learning, Straighter Line, and Study.com. Credit will be evaluated and awarded after receipt or official transcripts.
 - A maximum of 30 credit hours can be transferred from these programs for Bachelor's Degree students.
 - A maximum of 15 credit hours can be transferred from these programs for Associate's Degree students.
- Up to six credit hours are permitted for transfer credit toward junior/senior concentration requirements for Bachelor of Science

in Business Administration programs.

- Up to nine credit hours are permitted for transfer credit toward junior/senior concentration requirements for Bachelor of Arts programs.
- Up to three credit hours are permitted for transfer credit toward minor requirements.
- All students (including transfer students) must take 30 of their final 36 credit hours at Nichols College.

Unit of Credit

Nichols College, a NECHE accredited institution, recognizes the "Carnegie Unit" as the measure of a traditional semester credit hour and as the primary measure of degree attainment that may be awarded on the basis of a combination of both formal and informal activities and learning experiences. The Nichols College definition of credit hour follows the definition of credit hour established by the United States Department of Education and is consistent with the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) guidelines.

United States Department of Education Definition of the Credit Hour:

For purposes of the application of this policy and in accord with federal regulations, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates:

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time,

or

2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practicums, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Policy Guideline:

Courses offered at Nichols College for full time day students and/or graduate and professional studies students may be delivered in a traditional 15 week semester, in 7 week accelerated modified remote and/or in online formats. Regardless of learning modality, courses deliver equivalent learning experiences. The following factors would be fair indicators of equivalency.

- **Learning outcomes** for the same course in varying formats should be stated identically. The statement should be sufficiently abstract that multiple and varied learning activities and assessments would serve to demonstrate accomplishment of the outcomes.
- **Equal numbers of instructional hours across formats for a course**, activities delivered in class and online outside the physical classroom.

Direct faculty instruction time includes but is not limited to classroom instruction, e-learning, laboratory work, field work and internships. Additional academic activities include, but are not limited to, readings, reflections, essays, reports and group or teamwork.

Each of these basic measures for undergraduate, accelerated and graduate programming may be adjusted to reflect modified academic calendars, delivery modalities, and formats of study. It is expected that for every hour of instruction time students will have at least an additional 2 hours of outside classroom work.

Table of Direct Faculty Instruction Time

Credit Hour	Total "clock hour time" of instruction	Direct faculty instruction time per week in a 7-week session	Direct faculty instruction time per week in a 15-week semester
1	15 hours	1 hour, 47 minutes	50-60 minutes = 1 clock hour
2	30 hours	3 hours, 34 minutes	1 hour, 40 minutes
3	45 hours	5 hours, 21 minutes	2 hours, 30 minutes

Use of Correct English

Any student whose written or spoken English in any course is unsatisfactory may be reported by the instructor to the Provost who may assign supplementary work, without academic credit, varying in amount with the needs of the student. If the work prescribed is equivalent to a course, the regular tuition fee is charged. The granting of a degree may be delayed for failure to make up such deficiency in English to the satisfaction of the Provost.

These policies can also be found in the Nichols College catalog. Access the most up to date version at:

<https://www.nichols.edu/academics/college-catalog/>