

Academic Policies

Credit Hour Policy

A credit hour is the equivalent of one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for fifteen or sixteen weeks. One credit hour shall be allocated based on the following:

| CATEGORY | CONTACT HOURS PER WEEK | CONTACT HOURS PER SEMESTER |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Direct Faculty Instruction | 1 | 15 |
| Laboratory | 2 or 3 | 30-45 |
| Clinical | 3 to 5 | 45-75 |
| Practicum, Fieldwork | 3 | 45 |
| Internship | 3 to 6 | 45-90 |
| Co-op | Varies by Dept. | Varies by Dept. |

One instructional hour equals fifty minutes of classroom or direct faculty instruction; fifty minutes of laboratory or studio instruction; or sixty minutes of clinical, practicum, fieldwork, internship, or co-op. Academic Affairs awards credits for coursework in formats other than face-to-face (e.g., online, hybrid, accelerated) based on documentation demonstrating equivalency to the above allocation chart.

Academic Honesty

Original thinking and intellectual honesty are central to a college education. Research projects require the use of existing works. As such, students must conduct themselves with proper regard for the intellectual property rights of others, as well as those of the College. WMCC does not accept or condone plagiarism and cheating. Students involved in such activities are subject to serious disciplinary action.

The following are presented as examples of academic dishonesty:

1. Misrepresenting as one's own academic work that is done by someone else with or without permission of the original author
2. Providing or using prohibited assistance in assignments and examinations
3. Communicating with other students during an examination without authorization; collaborating in the preparation of reports or take-home examinations; copying, giving aid, or failing to follow the instructions of the faculty member in charge
4. Tampering with or falsifying official college records
5. Infringing upon the right of other students to fair and equal access to college library materials and comparable academic resources
6. Falsifying data collected for and presented as part of a course assignment
7. Presenting another person's work as one's own without proper acknowledgement

Faculty members may identify other instances of academic dishonesty.

WMCC does not tolerate academic dishonesty. The College expects students to complete their coursework honestly, be it laboratory projects, examinations, or term projects. When a student is suspected of academic dishonesty, the faculty member involved identifies the infraction and confronts the student, giving specific evidence to support the charge: the act was seen firsthand, it was reported by another student, the work handed in was of higher quality than usual, the language used is too close to another text for it to constitute original work. Judicial procedures and consequences for cases of academic dishonesty are described in the *Student Handbook*.

Academic Amnesty

All grades earned during a student's previous attendance at WMCC are no longer used to calculate the student's new cumulative GPA. Subject to the VPAA's approval, grades of C- and above taken during that earlier time are used to meet course requirements. All previous grades remain on the student's transcript.

To be eligible for Academic Amnesty, a student must meet all the following conditions:

1. The student must not have taken any courses at the original college of enrollment for a period of at least three years from the last semester of attendance.
2. The student must submit a letter of request for Academic Amnesty before the start of the student's second semester after readmission.
3. The student must never have received Academic Amnesty before.
4. The student must have achieved a cumulative GPA below 1.7 during previous attendance.

Student Medical Leave Policy

Under certain conditions, a matriculated student may apply for a formal Medical Leave of Absence for up to two consecutive semesters. These conditions are that the student has a serious medical condition that (1) requires extended in-patient treatment in a medical facility, (2) demands ongoing outpatient medical treatment that prevents the student's completion of academic requirements, or (3) creates such hardships as to render the student incapable of meeting the program's technical standards or the demands of the Student Code of Conduct.

Students considering a Medical Leave of Absence should be aware that **WMCC's *granting of such leave does not relieve a student from financial responsibility to the College.*** A student seeking a Medical Leave of Absence who is a financial aid recipient should contact the Financial Aid Office to discuss the leave and any corresponding changes in financial-aid eligibility. Students considering a Medical Leave of Absence should also consult the [U.S. Department of Labor](#) for information about continuing their health-insurance coverage.

Students requesting Medical Leave of Absence must:

1. Provide a letter to the VPAA identifying their program of study, the medical reason for the request, the proposed date on which the leave would begin, and the proposed date of readmission.
2. Provide documentation to the VPAA of the medical condition. This documentation must come from a licensed healthcare professional who is *directly involved in the treatment* of the student's particular condition. The documentation should also be sufficiently comprehensive to facilitate the decision-making process.
3. Drop all courses for which the student in question is responsible.

The VPAA (or designee) determines the appropriateness of the request for Medical Leave of Absence and notifies the student in writing whether the request is granted and what the conditions are for readmission. Students whose requests for Medical Leave of Absence are granted must reapply for admission at the end of the leave period, provided they have met all conditions for readmission.

Conditions for readmission may include, but are not limited to, submission of documentation from a licensed healthcare professional directly involved in the treatment of the student's condition. This documentation must be sufficiently comprehensive to provide reasonable assurance that the returning student will be able to meet all college and program academic, technical, and behavioral requirements. Other conditions for readmission may include a required in-person meeting with the VPAA and/or the student's advisor, compliance with any new admission criteria occurring during the student's absence, or the need to repeat courses or clinical experiences to ensure the student remains current and up to date.

Students who choose to seek a Medical Leave of Absence under the provisions of this policy need to be aware that information they voluntarily disclose during the application and readmission processes is handled under the confidentiality guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is disclosed only to those persons with a direct academic need to know.

Audit Policy

Under the Audit Policy, students may enroll in courses to learn more about the challenges of college work, to explore a discipline of interest, to refresh prior learning, or to supplement existing knowledge. Typically, audit students attend lectures, seminars, and/or laboratories but do not complete graded assignments. When enrolled as an audit, the student is not given a final grade, nor does the student receive credit for the course towards graduation (the academic transcript will reflect an AU for the course). *Student must pay the full tuition for the course.* Federal financial aid does not cover costs for an audited course.

Not all courses can be taken for audit, and entry into a course as an audit student is by permission of the instructor. A student must complete registration as an audit during the first week of classes. Once admitted as an audit, the student may not change to credit status after the designated add period; likewise, a student registered for credit may not change to audit status after the designated add period.