

**Southern Illinois University
School of Law**

Rules Relating to Grades and Grading System

[Excerpted from School of Law Rules
for AY 2009–10]

ARTICLE III - ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

1. Grades and Grading System

- (a) Grading Scale. Except when specifically provided otherwise in these Rules, grades at the School of Law shall be awarded on a scale of 0.0 to 4.0 (including the use of tenths). Students will not receive credit toward the 90 hours required for graduation in a course in which they receive a grade lower than 1.3. [amended 2/20/07; 4/15/08]
- (b) Median Grade. When awarded on the scale set forth in subsection (a), grades at the Law School shall conform to the medians set forth in this subsection (b), except that there is no required median for any section of any course in which six (6) or fewer students are enrolled for graded credit. [amended 2/20/07; 4/15/08]
 - (i) Instructors Teaching Multiple Sections. An instructor who has more than one section of the same course may combine those sections for purposes of setting the median.
 - (ii) Graduate Students. An instructor shall exclude any graduate student(s) taking the course for credit in the Graduate School when: (A) setting the median for a course or section of a course, or (B) calculating the size of the course (or section of the course) for purposes of selecting the proper median range.
 - (iii) Required First-Year Courses. The median grade in each section of each required first-year course shall be no lower than 2.85 and no higher than 2.95.
 - (iv) Other than Required First-Year Courses. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection (b), the median grade in all sections of all courses not covered by subsection (iii) shall be no lower than 2.9 and no higher than 3.1.
 - (v) Courses with Smaller Enrollment. In any course, including seminars, in which more than six (6) but fewer than thirteen (13) students are enrolled,

the median shall be no lower than 2.8 and no higher than 3.4.

(vi) Courses or Sections with GPAs Outside the Median Range. In any upperclass course, or section of a course, in which the median cumulative grade point average of students enrolled in and examining in such course is above or below the prescribed range, the permissible median grade range in such course may be expanded upward or downward to include the grade number closest to the median cumulative grade point average for students enrolled in and examining in such course.

(c) Grade Distribution. Grades at the Law School shall conform to the grade distributions set forth in this subsection (c), except when (i) fewer than thirteen (13) students are enrolled for graded credit in a course (or any section of a course), or (ii) the instructor provides the Dean with a written explanation of the reason(s) for deviating from the expected distribution. After grades are posted, the Dean shall make all written explanations available to the faculty.

Percentage of Students Expected to Fall in Each Grading Range for First-Year Courses:

3.7–4.0	5–20%
3.2–3.6	10–40%
2.7–3.1	15–55%
2.3–2.6	15–40%
< 2.3	5–30%

Percentage of Students Expected to Fall in Each Grading Range for Second- and Third-Year Courses:

3.8–4.0	5–20%
3.3–3.7	15–40%
2.8–3.2	20–50%
2.3–2.7	15–35%
< 2.3	5–20%

(d) Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grading. [amended 10/17/07] Students may earn

academic credit for a grade of “S” in courses graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (“S/U”) basis only in the following circumstances.

- (i) Courses Approved for S/U Grading. The faculty has approved the course for S/U grading prior to the beginning of the registration period for that course.

- (ii) Limited S/U Grading at Instructor’s Option. An instructor may, but is not required to, allow a specified number of students, not to exceed five, to register for a non-required course for S/U grading, even though the remainder of the students in the course will be graded on the scale described in subsection (a). The instructor must inform the Registrar and Associate Dean of the instructor’s election of this option at least one week prior to the beginning of the registration period for the course. A student may not elect S/U grading under this subsection (d)(ii) unless the student has successfully completed at least 31 hours of credit prior to the semester in which the course is offered. A student may not receive more than six hours of credit for courses with S/U grading under this subsection (d)(ii). If an instructor allows students to register for a course under this subsection (d)(ii), the students taking the course for S/U grading shall not be identified in any examination or other assessment and are to be evaluated by the instructor according to the grading scale described in subsection (a). After the instructor has submitted final course grades calculated on the scale described in subsection (a), the Registrar shall convert the grades of students who have elected S/U grading under this subsection (d)(ii) according to the following scale:

1.8 or greater	=	Satisfactory
below 1.8	=	Unsatisfactory

In determining whether the median grade for any such course complies with the requirements of subsection (b) and whether the distribution of grades conforms to the expectations of subsection (c), such determinations shall be made prior to the conversion of any grades on the scale described in subsection (a) to S/U grading and shall be made based on the grades of all law students enrolled in all sections of the course taught by the same instructor.

- (iii) Required S/U Grading of Students with Special Relationship to Instructor. S/U grading of a student shall be required if the instructor has an extremely close personal or family relationship with the student. This provision is to be invoked sparingly and only in cases where the relationship is of such nature that the awarding of a high grade in the course may give the appearance of impropriety or an unfair competitive advantage. This rule should not be construed to apply to the normal

student-faculty friendship that frequently develops through a course of communication over a three-year period of time.

- (iv) Special S/U Grading in Legal Clinic Courses. Legal Clinic courses shall be graded according to the following special grade scale:

Satisfactory+	Outstanding Clinical Work
Satisfactory	Meets all Requirements Satisfactorily
Satisfactory-	Meets Requirements Minimally
Unsatisfactory	Does Not Meet Minimal Requirement

- (v) Non-School of Law Courses. The student has taken a course satisfying all the requirements of Rule IV.6.
- (vi) Transfer Students. The student has been admitted to the Law School as a transfer student and the Registrar has assigned a grade of “S” for courses taken at another law school for which the student receives academic credit at the Law School in accordance with Rule II.3.
- (vii) Summer School/Transient Students. The student has been approved to take summer school courses, or as a transient student, and the Registrar has assigned a grade of “S” for courses taken at another law school for which the student receives academic credit at the Law School in accordance with Rule III.5(b)(ii) or (iii).
- (viii) Extraordinary Circumstances. The Dean, after appropriate consultation, has approved a course for S/U grading in extraordinary circumstances, including but not limited to, the death, disability, or discharge of the instructor in the course.

No more than 21 hours of academic credit for courses described in subsections (d)(i)–(d)(v) may be counted toward the 90 credit hours required for graduation.

All credit awarded for courses graded on an S/U basis shall be excluded in calculating the student’s semester or cumulative grade point averages.

- (e) Incomplete. [amended 10/17/07] An instructor may, but is not required to, award a grade of Incomplete in a course where a student fails to complete all course requirements prior to the end of the semester in which the course is offered. When an incomplete is given to a student, the student must satisfactorily complete all course requirements within one year from the last day of the semester in which the student received the Incomplete grade, and the instructor shall submit a grade change card assigning the student a grade in the course to remove the Incomplete grade. If the student fails to satisfactorily complete all course requirements within such time, the Registrar shall enter a grade of 0.0 for the student in the course.

This one-year period may only be extended with prior approval of the faculty for good cause shown.

- (f) Withdrawal. [amended 10/17/07] W is to be used to designate withdrawal from a course.
- (g) Non-Credit Courses and Requirements. [amended 10/17/07] All non-credit courses and non-credit graduation requirements must be satisfactorily completed, even though no grade is assigned for the course or requirement.
- (h) Release of Grades. [amended 10/17/07] The Registrar shall make grades available to the students enrolled in a course in such manner as required by University rule or as otherwise approved by the Associate Dean after consultation with the faculty. The Registrar shall not make grades available to students prior to the end of the examination period, unless the Associate Dean approves, for good cause shown, earlier release of such grades.
- (i) Timely Submission of Grades. [amended 10/17/07] The timely submission of grades in all Law School courses is important to its educational endeavors. To this end, and subject to any waiver as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Dean, all grades shall be submitted to the Office of the Registrar for all courses taken in the School of Law on or before the earlier of the following: four weeks from the date of the scheduled examination in the course or the Wednesday immediately preceding the first day of regularly scheduled classes for the next semester. For summer courses, grades must be submitted no later than the latter of three weeks from the date a final was given or the first day of fall classes.
- (j) Grades Assigned to Graduate Students. [added 2/20/07; amended 10/20/09] A faculty member teaching a law school course may determine the grade of a graduate student taking the course for Graduate School credit by a method of assessment that is the same as, different from, or additional to the method of assessment used by the faculty member to determine the grade of law students enrolled in the course. Regardless of the method of assessment, the faculty member shall either: (i) report the graduate student's grade to the Registrar using the Graduate School grading scale listed below, which grade the Registrar shall then report to the Graduate School; or (ii) report the graduate student's grade to the Registrar on the same grade scale as for law students enrolled in the course, in which case the Registrar shall report the grade to the Graduate School according to the conversion listed below:

Grade on Law School 4.0 Scale	Grade Reported to the Graduate School		
2.8 – 4.0	A	Excellent	4 grade points
1.8 – 2.7	B	Good	3 grade points
0.8 – 1.7	C	Conditional	2 grade points

0.1 – 0.7	D	Poor	1 grade point
0.0	F	Failing	0 grade points

- (k) Changing Grades After Submission to Registrar. [added 10/17/07] After an instructor has submitted final course grades to the Registrar and the Registrar has confirmed that the instructor's course grades conform to the requirements of subsections (a)–(c), the instructor may change a student's grade only if all the requirements of subsections (k)(i)–(k)(iii) are satisfied.
- (i) An instructor may change a grade only if the instructor made an arithmetic or clerical error in calculating a student's grade or if the instructor failed to read a substantial portion of a student's answer. An instructor may not change a grade based on a reassessment of the quality of all, or any part, of the student's answer.
 - (ii) The instructor must submit a written explanation of the nature and effect of the error (or failure to read an answer) to the Associate Dean. Absent compelling circumstances, the written explanation must be submitted to the Associate Dean no later than the first Monday in April with respect to a grade awarded in a course held in the preceding fall semester and no later than the first Monday in November with respect to a grade awarded in a course held in the preceding spring semester or summer session. The written explanation shall be accompanied by all available documentary evidence of any arithmetic or clerical error, such as spreadsheets, grading sheets, etc.
 - (iii) The Associate Dean finds clear evidence that the instructor made a mistake of the type described in subsection (k)(i) and that the error can be corrected only by a change in the grade. Upon a finding of such clear evidence, the Associate Dean shall instruct the Registrar to change the grade.

The Associate Dean shall annually report to the faculty about all grade changes made pursuant to this subsection (k).