

Please refer to Tennessee Board of Regents Policies [No. 2:01:00:00](#) and [No. 2:03:01:01](#)

I. Degrees and Requirements

In order to obtain a degree or certificate, students must complete the general requirements as prescribed by Pellissippi State and specific requirements set forth for the program.

Requirements include:

- A. Minimum residence for associate's degrees: At least 25 percent of the credit hours for an associate's degree must be completed at Pellissippi State. In addition, at least 12 hours of coursework in the major preceding graduation with an associate of applied science degree must be completed at Pellissippi State. Minimum residence for certificates: Thirty percent or more of the total credit hours required for a certificate must be completed at Pellissippi State.
- B. Minimum credit hours: Each candidate must complete at least 60 credit hours to be eligible for the associate's degree.
- C. Minimum grade-point average: A cumulative grade-point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 on all college-level coursework at Pellissippi State is required for graduation.
- D. Major studies: Completion of the curriculum for the major chosen is required for graduation.
- E. Degree application: Each prospective candidate must file an Intent to Graduate form during the semester preceding the semester of anticipated graduation and pay a graduation fee. Forms may be obtained in the Cashier's office.
- F. Catalog option: The student must meet the requirements for graduation under any one catalog in effect during the student's attendance at Pellissippi State, provided that the catalog used is within six years of the date of graduation. Articulation agreements may specify shorter completion periods. This option does not exempt anyone from the general requirements of Pellissippi State.
- G. Commencement: An annual commencement exercise will be scheduled at the end of each spring semester.
- H. Exit Testing: As required by public policy, a student may, as a prerequisite for graduation, be required to take one or more tests designed to measure achievement in general education and in the major. The purpose of such examinations is to evaluate the effectiveness of the College or the program. Participation in testing may be required of all students, of students in selected programs, and/or of students selected on a sample basis. In order to comply fully with this provision, students must authorize the release of their scores to the College. Unless otherwise provided for in an individual major, however, no minimum score or level of achievement is required for graduation. Individual student scores are confidential. Students not complying with requested testing provisions will have their transcripts and diplomas placed on hold.

- I. Candidates for a second associate's degree must meet the following requirements:
 1. The first degree must have been awarded by Pellissippi State or another associate-degree granting institution.
 2. A minimum of 15 semester hours of coursework must have been completed at Pellissippi State over and above requirements for the first associate's degree.
 3. All curriculum requirements for Pellissippi State must be met.
 4. A 2.0 grade point average must be attained on all college-level coursework.

II. Course Waiver and Substitution

Under special circumstances a course may be waived by the Academic Department Dean with approval from the Vice President of Learning (except DSP courses). Waivers are granted when necessitated by course deletions or other curriculum changes. Since no credit is awarded for a course waiver, a course of equal or greater credit must be substituted for a course that has been waived. In identifying an appropriate substitute, the student's academic advisor gives primary consideration to courses from the same discipline as the course waived.

III. Independent Study - See Pellissippi State Policy 04:06:00.

IV. Grading System

Letter grades are used to indicate the quality of work achieved by a student, knowledge of the subject, ability to apply this knowledge, and work habits and practices.

The quality points awarded for each grade per semester hour is as follows:

| | |
|----|-----|
| A | 4.0 |
| B+ | 3.5 |
| B | 3.0 |
| C+ | 2.5 |
| C | 2.0 |
| D | 1.0 |
| F | 0.0 |

The academic standing of a student is expressed in terms of a grade-point average (GPA). The GPA is determined by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of credit hours attempted. For the first semester of attendance, the cumulative GPA is determined by dividing the total quality points earned by the total quality hours. Grades described below are not included in the standard calculation of GPA:

- A. E (Extension)--The grade of E is used for developmental studies (DSP) courses only and does not count as hours attempted in determining the GPA for the semester in which the grade is issued. The extension allows the student to re-enroll in the course in the subsequent semester. When the student re-enrolls in the course, the final grade is issued for that semester, and the previously awarded E grade remains unchanged.

- B. I (Incomplete)--An Incomplete or I grade indicates that a student was passing a course at the end of the semester but was unable to complete all the requirements because of uncontrollable circumstances. It also indicates that the instructor approved the student's request to complete the remaining requirement(s) on or before instructor-specified dates. The instructor and the program coordinator must approve the assignment of an I grade in a DSP course. Instructors elect to assign I grades only in highly unusual situations; I grades cannot be assigned to allow students to raise deficient grades by submitting additional work or by repeating any part of a course.

Incomplete grades are replaced with earned course grades when students fulfill instructors' expectations for course completion; otherwise, students whose academic performance is judged as unsatisfactory by the instructor or who do not submit required assignments in a timely manner are assigned F grades. Unless the I is changed by the instructor prior to the date published in the College Catalog & Handbook, the I converts to an F grade. Spring and summer Incompletes must be removed by midterm of the following fall; fall semester Incompletes must be removed before midterm of the following spring. The instructor has the prerogative to limit the time allowed for completion. Incompletes also become F grades if students enroll in the same course in the semester after an I is received unless the course is dropped before registration ends. An I grade is not counted in the student's GPA at the time it is received. The grade replacing the I is included in the GPA. Warning to financial aid recipients: The I grade is considered an F in determining financial aid eligibility.

- C. AU (Audit)--This grade indicates the student elected to enroll in the course for no grade and no credit. Audits do not replace grades previously issued and developmental studies courses cannot be audited. Audit students must attend class. A student can change from audit to credit or credit to audit through the last day to add a course published in the academic calendar. To audit a course, the student must so indicate on the registration or drop/add form.
- D. W (Withdraw)--A grade of W indicates that a student has officially withdrawn from a course after the deadline to drop a course with a grade of W as published in the academic calendar. A student may officially withdraw from any course during two-thirds of the term following the first day of classes. The deadline to drop a course with a grade of W is also published in the academic calendar. A W grade will not be computed in the GPA. See the Drop, Add, and Withdrawal Standards section below.
- E. P (Pass)--This grade indicates a student successfully completed and has been awarded credit for a course. This grade is not computed in the GPA.
- F. NP (No Pass)--This grade indicates a student was not awarded credit by examination or cooperative education credit. This grade is not computed in the GPA.
- G. * (Repeat)--This indicates the student is repeating a course for the purpose of increasing mastery necessary for successful performance in a later course or for the purpose of increasing his/her GPA. In computing the GPA of a student who has repeated one or more courses, Mississippi State will count only the last grade received in the repeated course or courses and count hours attempted only once provided the number of repeats in any single course does not exceed two (three attempts). In the event a student repeats a course more than twice, the grade in the third and later attempts will be used in determining the GPA. Students may be permitted to repeat a course in which a grade of B or higher was earned only with the approval of the Vice President of Learning. Veterans or other eligible persons repeating courses for which they have passing grades (D or higher) and for which they have been paid are cautioned not to claim these courses for pay.

V. Maximum Load

The normal load for a full-time student per semester during the academic year is 15-20 credit hours, with 20 credit hours being the maximum. Any student requesting a course load above 20 hours must have Academic Department Dean approval. Students in career/technical programs should see the Academic Department Dean responsible for their major. Students in university parallel programs should see their assigned academic advisor; the advisor's Academic Department Dean.

VI. Drop, Add, and Withdrawal Standards

After the final registration period is over, students may make adjustments in their schedules by adding and/or dropping courses. A student may add courses for spring and fall semesters during the add period. A student may drop courses for spring and fall semesters without a W grade through the drop period (first fourteen calendar days of the semester beginning with the first day of classes including Saturdays). For other session drop/add dates, refer to the Student Enrollment Guide. A student may officially drop courses or withdraw from Pellissippi State and receive Ws not later than two-thirds of the way through the term beginning with the first day of classes. A student who stops attending class and does not officially drop or withdraw from class will receive an F.

Students enrolled in developmental studies program (DSP) courses must meet with a counselor, the DSP director, or the dean of Transitional Studies Department to request approval to drop those courses. Students may not drop DSP courses without this approval. Students may drop DSP courses only under serious circumstances such as a death in the family, long-term illness, or other similar instances.

Beyond the deadline to drop/withdraw, students may withdraw only from all classes and only if it can be demonstrated that unusual conditions or hardships exist. Unusual conditions or hardships may include extensive illness, unexpected relocation of residence or place of employment, or other legitimate reasons that may be approved by the Vice President of Learning or designee. Students requesting to withdraw after the deadline must meet with a designated staff member. No late withdrawals will be allowed after one year from the end of the semester in which the student was enrolled in the course.

VII. Academic Retention Practices

Academic Support Services: Pellissippi State is committed to providing services and programs to support students' academic success. Students who are considered to be on Academic Alert or Academic Review based on their attempted hours and related GPA are referred to a Student Success Coordinator or counselor.

Students who are placed on Academic Probation receive written notice and are strongly encouraged to meet with a designated staff member.

VIII. Academic Probation Standards

- A. Academic Probation: A student who fails during any term to attain a cumulative GPA at or above the level indicated below for the hours attempted will be placed on academic probation for the subsequent term:

| Total Hours Attempted | Minimum Required |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| GPA 14 and under | No minimum |
| Over 14 to 26 | 1.0 |
| Over 26 to 40 | 1.4 |
| Over 40 to 48 | 1.7 |
| Over 48 to 56 | 1.9 |
| Over 56 | 2.0 |

(E, I, P, NP, and W grades are not used in calculating GPA.)

- B. Academic Suspension: At the end of the probationary term, a student on academic probation who has failed to attain either the above cumulative standard or a 2.0 GPA for that term will be suspended for one term. For the student who is suspended at the end of the spring term, the following fall term is considered to be the term of suspension. The second occurrence will subject the student to a three-term suspension.
- C. Appeals: A student who has been suspended may request continuance because of special circumstances through Admissions and Records. A student allowed to continue will receive academic counseling and will develop an academic intervention plan that could result in a reduction in course load; redirection in program selection, testing, and/or course placement; and required attendance at workshops on topics related to academic planning and goal setting.
- D. Academic Dismissal: A student may be dismissed from Pellissippi State for failing to meet minimum academic standards.

IX. Academic Awards and Honors

Students graduating with the following grade-point averages in college-level courses will receive an honors designation on their diplomas:

- 3.90 - 4.00 Summa Cum Laude
- 3.70 - 3.89 Magna Cum Laude
- 3.50 - 3.69 Cum Laude

In addition to graduation honors, Pellissippi State recognizes outstanding college-level students through the Dean's Honor List (3.50 - 4.00 GPA). Students are eligible upon completion of 12 college-level hours per term of Pellissippi State coursework.

Other significant recognition is presented to outstanding graduates as selected by faculty. Developmental studies courses are not considered in determining eligibility for academic awards, honors, or Dean's Honor List.

X. Attendance Policy

Pellissippi State expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses (excluding distance education courses) must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class, laboratory, and clinical laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. Individual departments/programs/disciplines, with the approval of the Vice President of Learning, may have requirements that are more stringent.

In very specific circumstances, an appeal of the policy may be addressed to the Academic Department Dean of the department in which the course was taken. If further action is warranted, the appeal may be addressed to the Vice President of Learning.

Financial aid recipients are advised that attendance must be reported by the instructor for each course in which the student is enrolled before the student may pick up a financial aid check. Attendance for veterans receiving benefits is reported during the add period and monthly thereafter. Students enrolled in distance learning courses must meet instructor requirements for communication and completion of assignments to be reported as attending.

XI. Concerns or Complaints Regarding Instructors or Academic Advisors

A student who has a concern or complaint regarding a Pellissippi State instructor (or club advisor, counselor, or advisor) should follow these steps:

- A. Discuss the concern with the instructor (or club advisor, counselor or advisor).
- B. If the problem is not solved, the student or the instructor/sponsor/counselor/advisor may then contact the appropriate Academic Department Dean/supervisor. NOTE: A student who wishes to appeal the final grade in a course must contact the Academic Department Dean and file a Course Grade Appeal (see Attachment A) within the first 20 calendar days of the following semester (excluding summer).

- C. If the student continues to be dissatisfied, he or she should ask the Academic Department Dean/supervisor to contact the Vice President of Learning. The Vice President of Learning will determine any additional steps to be taken.

Complaints regarding discrimination or harassment should be directed to the Director of Human Resources and Affirmative Action Officer.

Approved: Executive Council, March 4, 1991
Editorial Changes, April 19, 1993, July 13, 1994
Executive Council, September 12, 1994
Reviewed/Recommended: President's Council, April 10, 1995
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Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, May 17, 1996
Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, September 9, 1997
Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, February 25, 2002
Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, October 28, 2002
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Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, November 1, 2010

Attachment A
Course Grade Appeal
Pellissippi State Community College

Full Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Student Identification Number: _____

Instructor's Name: _____

Course (including section number): _____ **Semester:** _____

Explanation for Appeal (to be completed by student):

Notes:

Resolution (to be completed by Academic Department Dean):