

Please refer to Tennessee Board of Regents Policies [2:01:00:00](#) , [2:03:01:01](#), and 08:01:00

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. For an associate of applied science degree, at least 12 hours of coursework in the major must be completed at Pellissippi State. Minimum residence for certificates: At least 30 percent 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: After meeting with an advisor, each prospective candidate must submit a graduation application by the published date during the semester of anticipated graduation.
- 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: A commencement exercise will be scheduled at the end of each fall and 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's 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.
- 5.

II. Course Waiver and Substitution

Under special circumstances a course may be waived or substituted. A waiver means the student is exempt from taking the course. Since no credit is awarded for a course waiver, the student must ensure that he/she has the required total credit hours for the degree. Students with a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution, who are entering a career/technical program at Pellissippi State Community College, will have their general education requirements waived. If the student changes from an AAS to an AS, AFA, AST, or an AA degree, the general education courses are not waived.–Course waivers do not count toward the minimum 25% residency requirement for graduation–

Under certain circumstances a course substitution may be permitted due to curriculum changes. Course substitutions are not permitted for general education courses. A program coordinator or the academic dean initiates the waiver or substitution. Approval must then be granted by the assistant vice-president of Academic Affairs and the chief academic officer. If approved, the Registrar’s office finalizes the waiver or substitution in the student’s record. Course waivers and substitutions are made in the context of program requirements and must maintain the integrity of the program.

III. Grading System

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

The quality points awarded for each grade per semester hour are 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 credit hours. Grades described below are not included in the standard calculation of GPA:

- A. 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 learning support 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. Spring and summer Incompletes must be removed by midterm of the following fall; fall semester Incompletes must be removed by 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.

- B. AU (Audit)--This grade indicates that the student elected to enroll in the course for no grade and no credit. Audits do not replace grades previously issued, and learning support 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 for the semester. To audit a course, the student must so indicate on the registration or drop/add form.
- C. W (Withdraw)--A grade of W indicates that a student has officially withdrawn from a course after the deadline to drop a course without a grade of W as published in the academic calendar. A student may officially withdraw from any course during the first two-thirds of the term. 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 also the Drop, Add, and Withdrawal Standards section below.

D. (Pass)--This grade indicates a student successfully completed and has been awarded credit for a course. This grade is not computed in the GPA.

E.NP (No Pass)--This grade indicates a student was not awarded credit for a course. This grade is not computed in the GPA.

F.\* (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 highest grade earned 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 all 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 chief academic officer. 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. Students should be aware that some universities will calculate the grades from all attempts of a particular course when calculating transfer GPA.

#### IV. Maximum Load

The normal load for a full-time student per semester during the academic year is 15 to 20 credit hours, with 20 credit hours being the maximum. Any student requesting a course load above 20 hours must have chief academic officer approval.

#### V. 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 Academic Calendar. 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 learning support courses must meet with a counselor, or appropriate academic department dean or program coordinator to request approval to drop those courses. Students may not drop learning support courses without this approval. Students may drop learning support courses only under serious circumstances, such as a death in the family, long-term illness, or other similar situations. Students enrolled in co-requisite courses must meet with an advisor or counselor. Students may not drop co-requisite courses without this approval.

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 chief academic officer 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.

## VI. 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.

## VII. 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 number of hours attempted will be placed on academic probation for the subsequent term:

<b>Total Hours Attempted</b>	<b>Minimum Required GPA</b>
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 Counseling Services. 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 for the Dean's Honor List 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. Learning support courses are not considered in determining eligibility for academic awards, honors, or Dean's Honor List.

### X. Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend and participate in **all** scheduled class, laboratory, or clinical sessions. Absences result in missed learning opportunities, lower grades, and, in many cases, failure for the course. Prompt and regular attendance enhances the likelihood of student achievement while also instilling habits that will prepare graduates for success in the workplace.

With the approval of the chief academic officer, individual faculty/programs/disciplines/departments may establish specific requirements for attendance in individual courses. If an attendance policy is requested, a consensus of at least 75% must be reached by all faculty, program coordinators, and deans associated with the course before the request is submitted to the chief academic officer. Each course syllabus will specify attendance requirements and the specific academic consequences entailed by those requirements.

Financial Aid recipients are responsible for meeting attendance requirements for institutional, State and Federal Aid in order to maintain eligibility.

### XI. Concerns or Complaints

Pellissippi State Community College strives to provide the best instructional atmosphere and level of service to students. At times, however, students may have an issue, concern or complaint regarding their educational experience. In such cases, the College strives to resolve issues as quickly as possible and at the level closest to the issue.

Students should follow the procedures listed below to resolve their concerns or complaints.

#### A. Informal Resolution

1. Complaint regarding a class or instructor: The first step a student must take in resolving a complaint regarding an academic situation is to discuss it with the faculty member directly. If that discussion does not resolve the issue, the student should speak to the dean of the academic department. If there is no resolution at that level, the student may file a formal written complaint below.

2. **Complaint about another student:** The first step is to discuss the concern with the other student. If the student with the concern is uncomfortable addressing the other student, he or she may contact the Security Office or the dean of students at the Hardin Valley Campus or the dean at the Division Street, Magnolia Avenue, Blount County, or Strawberry Plains Campus. If there is no resolution at that level, the student may file a formal written complaint below.
3. **Other complaints:** If the student has a complaint regarding college services (e.g., financial aid, facilities, advising and registration, admissions, computer accounts, etc.), he or she should first attempt to resolve the issue by speaking with a staff member or supervisor in that department. If the issue is not resolved at that level, the student may file a formal written complaint below.

## B. Formal resolution

A student who has attempted informal resolution without success may file a formal complaint. The student should fully complete and submit the electronic student complaint form. This form will be submitted to the appropriate vice president over the area in which the student has a concern. The vice president (or designee) will conduct an investigation within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. The vice president (or designee) will communicate the outcome of the investigation to the student in no more than 30 working days of receiving the complaint.

Students or prospective students who wish to file a complaint related to accreditation or regarding violations of state law not resolved at the institution may submit a Student Complaint Form to the Tennessee Board of Regents at 1 Bridgestone Park, Third Floor, Nashville Tennessee 37214, or by going on line and filing out the form electronically at <http://www.tbr.edu/contact/default.aspx?id=2936>. Under Tennessee's open records law, all or parts of complaints will generally be available for review upon request from a member of the public.

Complaints regarding accreditation can also be made by contacting the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, telephone: 404-679-4500 ([www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org)). Complaints of fraud, waste or abuse may be made by email at [reportfraud@tbr.edu](mailto:reportfraud@tbr.edu) or by calling the Tennessee Comptroller's Hotline for Fraud, Waste and Abuse at 1-800-232-5454.

## XII. Academic Grade Appeal

An academic appeal is a formal request brought by a student to challenge a grade. An academic appeal will be considered if there is evidence of one or more of the following conditions that have adversely affected the student's grade:

- error in calculation of grade;
- substantial deviation from the syllabus;
- clear violation of Pellissippi State Community College and/or the Tennessee Board of Regents policies.

Students have a right to a clear explanation (from the instructor or dean, as appropriate) of actions taken by the instructor, such as how a grade was calculated. An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional

judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for an academic appeal.

The Academic Appeals Process has two steps:

A. Informal Process:

Before a student may bring a formal academic appeal, he/she must first meet with the instructor to request that a change be made. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome or cannot consult with the instructor, he/she must meet with the appropriate academic dean to determine if a resolution can be reached.

B. Formal Appeal Process:

If a resolution is not reached after the Informal Appeal Process is completed and the student desires to continue the appeal, the student must complete the Academic Appeals Form and submit it to the academic department dean for that course within five business days of notification of the completion of the Informal Process. Failure to initiate the Formal Process of Appeal within five business days, absent good cause, constitutes acceptance of the result of the Informal Process of Academic Appeal and waiver of the right to a Formal Appeal. Submission of the Academic Appeals Form will initiate the appeals process, which will proceed as follows:

1. If the academic dean determines that the appeal does not meet the requirements of this policy, he/she shall communicate this in writing to the student. If the academic dean determines that the appeal is appropriate under this policy, he/she will notify the chief academic officer to convene the Academic Appeals Committee to consider the appeal.
2. The academic dean will forward the Academic Appeals Form to the chief academic officer, who will convene the Academic Appeals Committee. This committee is made up of five faculty members and two students. (For further information regarding the Academic Appeals Committee, please refer to Policy 08:01:00 Committee Structure and Memberships.) The chief academic officer, or designee, will coordinate the committee hearing, but will not vote. Any individual involved with or who has an interest in the outcome will not sit in judgment as a member of the hearing committee.
3. The Academic Appeals Committee will set a date for the hearing within 15 business days of the student appeal. The student must be notified of the date, time, and location of the hearing soon as possible, but given a minimum of one week's notice. The student has the following rights applicable at the hearing:
  - a. the right to present his or her case;
  - b. the right to be accompanied by an advisor. The hearing committee may restrict the advisor's right to speak at the hearing.
4. The committee will then conduct the appeal hearing, consider all the evidence presented and make a decision by two-thirds vote. The committee can either uphold or overturn the action of the instructor.
5. The chief academic officer will send the student written notification of the decision of the Academic Appeals Committee within 10 business days of the hearing.
6. The decision of the Academic Appeals Committee is final.

NOTE: Complaints regarding discrimination or harassment should be directed to the Executive Director, Equity and Compliance.

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  
Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, November 3, 2003  
Approved: President Allen G. Edwards, June 21, 2004  
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Approved: President L. Anthony Wise, Jr., March 6, 2017

**Attachment A**

**Academic Appeal  
Pellissippi State Community College**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student ID Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course (including section number):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Semester:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Explanation for Appeal (to be completed by student):**

**Dean's Notes:**

**Resolution (to be completed by Academic Department Dean):**