

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND GRADES

### Grades

The grade for each student shall be determined independently of other students in the class, and shall be related to the student's mastery of the material based on the grade descriptions below. Grades may not be awarded according to a predetermined distribution of letter grades. For example, grades in a subject may not be allocated according to set proportions of A, B, C, D, etc.

**Passing Grades.** Undergraduate and graduate students who *satisfactorily complete* the work of a subject by the end of the term receive one of the following grades:

A	Exceptionally good performance demonstrating a superior understanding of the subject matter, a foundation of extensive knowledge, and a skillful use of concepts and/or materials.
B	Good performance demonstrating capacity to use the appropriate concepts, a good understanding of the subject matter, and an ability to handle the problems and materials encountered in the subject.
C	Adequate performance demonstrating an adequate understanding of the subject matter, an ability to handle relatively simple problems, and adequate preparation for moving on to more advanced work in the field.

Note that the MIT internal grading system includes plus (+) and minus (-) modifiers for use with the letter grades A, B, and C for all academic subjects (except advanced standing exams). These modifiers appear only on internal grade reports. They do not appear on transcripts and are not used in calculating term or cumulative grade-point averages. The MIT grading system for external purposes does not include modifiers.

D	Minimally acceptable performance demonstrating at least partial familiarity with the subject matter and some capacity to deal with relatively simple problems, but also demonstrating deficiencies serious enough to make it inadvisable to proceed further in the field without additional work. Some departments require students with D-level performance in certain prerequisite subjects within the departmental program to do additional work, or to retake the prerequisite, before proceeding with the follow-on subject.
P	When use of the passing grade P is authorized, it reflects performance at the level A, B, or C (A+ to C- with modifiers used within MIT).

**Non-Passing Grades.** The grades and notations used for subjects *not passed or not completed* by the end of the term are as follows.

DN	Signifies a D grade on First-Year Pass/No Record and ABC/No Record.
F	Failed. This grade also signifies that the student must repeat the subject to receive credit.
FN	Signifies an F grade on First-Year Pass/No Record and ABC/No Record.
O	Absent. This grade indicates that the student was progressing satisfactorily during the subject but was either (a) absent from the final examination or (b) absent during the last two weeks of the term (for a full-term subject) or the last week of the term (for a half-term subject), or both (a) and (b). An O grade carries no credit for the subject. Unsatisfactory performance because of absence throughout the term should be recorded as F.
OX	Absence satisfactorily explained to and excused by the Vice Chancellor or designee in the case of either an undergraduate student or a graduate student. The Faculty member in charge of the subject will be notified when an O is changed to an OX. An OX carries no credit for the subject. However, the Faculty member in charge must provide the student the opportunity to receive a credit-carrying grade. This may be done with or without the instructor requiring a postponed final examination or other additional evaluation procedure.
I	Incomplete. The grade I indicates that a minor part of the subject requirements has not been fulfilled and that a passing grade is to be expected when the work is completed. The grade I for the term remains permanently on the student's record even when the subject is completed. The work should normally be completed before Add Date of the succeeding term of the regular academic year; however, the faculty member in charge, in negotiation with the student, has the right to set an earlier or later date for pedagogical reasons or extenuating circumstances. Graduate students may extend the five-week deadline with the explicit approval of the faculty member in charge.  The instructor is required to submit an Instructor's Report Form for a grade of I reported for an undergraduate. On the form, the instructor provides the date by which the outstanding work is to be completed and a default final grade. The default final grade represents the grade the student would have earned, using appropriately low scores for the missing work. If the subject has not been completed by Add Date of the succeeding regular term, the default final grade will be posted to the student's record unless a later deadline has been specifically agreed upon by the instructor and the student.  No grade of I can be assigned to any undergraduate in the term in which he or she graduates. All grades of Incomplete must be resolved prior to graduation.

J	Notation assigned for work such as thesis, UROP, or At Plant registration (internship or industrial practice), which has progressed satisfactorily, but has not been completed. A modifier of minus on a J grade indicates that a student partially met expectations of satisfactory academic performance or progress. Grade given upon completion of the work in a later term also covers this term. Faculty members must obtain approval from the Committee on Curricula or the Committee on Graduate Programs to use the grade of J in subjects other than those mentioned above.
U	Notation for thesis work that has not been completed and in which progress has been unsatisfactory. Grade given upon completion of the work in a later term also covers this term. Unless a student's progress improves significantly, the student may expect that grade to be failing.
T	Temporary notation. Used for subjects which cover the equivalent of one term's work, but are scheduled over parts of two normal grading periods. Prior approval must have been obtained from the Committee on Curricula for undergraduate subjects or the Committee on Graduate Programs for graduate subjects. This notation is recorded only on the student's internal record. A permanent grade must be assigned when the subject is finished.

Note that the MIT internal grading system includes the minus (-) modifier for use with the J grade for all academic subjects that use this grade. This modifier appears only on internal grade reports. It does not appear on transcripts and is not used in calculating term or cumulative grade-point averages. The MIT grading system for external purposes does not include modifiers.

**Other Notations.** The following notations are also used on the academic record.

S	Notation for credit awarded for work done elsewhere.
SA	Notation for satisfactorily completed doctoral thesis. Doctoral theses are not graded.
DR	Notation used only on the student's internal record for a subject dropped after the fifth week of the regular term for full-term subjects, or after the second week of instruction for half-term subjects.
LIS	Notation used only on the student's internal record for a subject the student registered for as a listener.
URN	Notation for a subject in UROP taken for pay or as a volunteer rather than academic credit.
VIS	Notation for a research subject taken as a non-degree visiting student.

**Alternate Grades.** When a significant disruption of academic activities is declared, as described in the Rules and Regulations of the Faculty (<https://facultygovernance.mit.edu/faculty-rules->

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PE	Performance at any of the levels A, B, or C, under the circumstance of an Institute emergency closure.
NE	Performance at the level of D or F for which no record will appear on the external transcript.
IE	Incomplete. Indicates that a portion of the subject requirements has not been fulfilled, due to a major disruption of the Institute's academic activities. A letter grade may be assigned if the work is subsequently completed. The grade IE remains permanently on the student's record even when the subject is completed. To receive a letter grade, the work must be completed prior to a date set by the Chair of the Faculty. If the work is not completed prior to the established completion date, the grade will remain an IE on the student's record and transcript. A grade of IE does not carry credit but need not be resolved prior to graduation.

Additional information regarding first-year grading, hidden grades, and the flexible P/NR grading option is available in the Undergraduate Education section.