

VII. ACADEMIC POLICIES

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Academic Assistance

Academic Advisors. Each student is assigned to an academic advisor based upon the student's major.

Support Services for Students. The College provides a variety of resources to students, including the Office of Disability Services, the Career Center for Vocation and Development, and the Engle Center for Health and Counseling.

Math Help. The Math Help Room offers free, walk-in peer tutors for help with problems in math, physics, and statistics courses. Hours are Monday - Thursday, 7-9 p.m. in Frey Hall room 367. For more information, contact Dr. Doug Phillippy.

Study Skills Courses. GEST 041 Foundational Study Skills is offered each semester and is mandatory for conditionally admitted first year students. GEST 043 Supplemental Study Skills is open to all students.

The Writing Center. Any student at any stage in the writing process—from understanding an assignment and finding a topic to composing and revising a draft—may find assistance and encouragement at the Writing Center. Trained peer tutors advise and support student clients who visit the Writing Center, helping them become more confident and adept writers. The Writing Center is located within the Learning Commons of Murray Library

The Learning Center. The **Learning Center** (located in Murray Library) provides students with assistance in achieving and maintaining the level of academic proficiency necessary to be successful in Messiah College's rigorous intellectual environment. Beneficial to students at all levels of competence, both individual and small group tutoring is offered free of charge. Trained tutors who have excelled in the courses in which they are providing assistance offer tutoring in a number of subjects, including, but not limited to, Biology, Chemistry, Nursing, Spanish, Math, and Music Theory. In addition, tutors are capable of providing assistance with various academic skills such as time management, test-taking, textbook reading, note-taking and memory enhancement.

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a program that targets "high risk courses" rather than "high risk students." The College pays trained Supplemental Instruction Leaders to attend selected class lectures, take notes, read course material, then plan and conduct two 1.5 hour review sessions outside of class each week. The SI review sessions are interactive and utilize a variety of collaborative learning techniques as they combine how-to-learn with what-to-learn. Students acquire effective study strategies as they review course material and prepare for tests. The sessions are not remedial, but benefit all who attend. Statistical data suggest that students who attend SI sessions earn one-half to a full letter grade higher than those who choose not to attend.

Disability Services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodation in classes, programs, or services can arrange for adjustments through the Disability Services office. Students are required to self-identify, present current documentation of eligibility (three years or newer) and specify needed accommodations. Following verification of eligibility, an accommodation profile is developed with the student. Faculty or staff needing to make accommodations are then notified of the student's eligibility and provided with a list of suggested accommodations. Students who think they may have a disability are encouraged to meet with the Director of Disability Services. All communication remains confidential. Contact: Ms. Amy Slody, ext. 7258. For more information refer to the "Students with Disabilities" tab.

Academic Progress Alert. When a student's progress in a course is at risk (e.g., low test scores; missing assignments; lack of attendance), the faculty member is encouraged to initiate an "Academic Progress Alert." This email communication will be sent to the student and copied to members of the campus community who have a confirmed relationship with the student (e.g., academic advisor, athletic coach, office mentor, residence director, etc.). This alert is intended to motivate a student to seek the

appropriate assistance and to notify those members of the campus community who may be in regular contact with the student.

Academic Definitions

Bachelor of Arts. The B.A. degree is conferred for completion of a program with focus on broad and liberal education in the humanities, arts, social sciences, and sciences. Curricula leading to the B.A. emphasize ways of knowing and approaches to understanding consistent with the liberal arts. B.A. requirements typically promote broad preparation within the discipline and among related fields.

Bachelor of Science. The B.S. degree is conferred for completion of a program with focus on in-depth education in the sciences, social sciences, or professional fields. Curricula leading to the B.S. emphasize ways of knowing and approaches to understanding consistent with the sciences and/or professional or pre-professional preparation. B.S. requirements typically promote depth of preparation within a discipline and/or related disciplines.

Specialized Degrees. Messiah College may offer specialized degrees such as Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.), Bachelor of Science in Engineering (B.S.E.), Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) or Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W.). Such specialized degrees will be treated as Bachelor of Science degrees.

Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science for Same Discipline. Messiah College allows a department to apply to offer both a B.A. and a B.S. in the same discipline. When this occurs, appropriate distinctions must be made in the required curricula and the new program approved as a new major.

Major. A prescribed set of courses and other requirements recommended by the department and approved by the Community of Educators as a valid representation of the area of study. Generally these courses focus on a specific academic discipline; however, there are some interdisciplinary majors which include work from two or three disciplines. Satisfactory completion of this prescribed set of courses leads to a degree in that area of study.

Double Major. Students may complete more than one major within the normal timeline and requirements for each baccalaureate degree. A student pursuing a double major must determine which major is the primary major and which is secondary. The primary major determines whether a B.A. or a B.S. will be granted. Unless additional requirements are met (see “Dual Degree”), a student completing a double major receives only one diploma and one degree representative of the primary major. The primary major is also the standard by which General Education, other requirements, and the degree are determined. Each major must contain at least 24 unique credits.

A *dual degree* is the concurrent awarding of two different majors each with a different baccalaureate degree type, e.g., a B.A. and a B.S. In order to graduate with dual degrees, the following conditions must be met: there is no more than a one third overlap between the major associated with each degree; the student completes the general education requirements related to each major; and completes at least 30 additional credits beyond the larger baccalaureate degree program. Since Messiah’s baccalaureate programs range from 123 to 128 credits, anyone completing two degrees must complete 153-158 credits. Students who complete these requirements will be issued two diplomas, one for each degree earned.

Subsequent Degree. See COE Handbook.

Minor. A prescribed set of courses which focuses on a particular academic discipline. The goal is to allow the student to develop some depth of understanding in that discipline. Minors require 18 course credits with a maximum of 28 allowed. More details below under the Policy section.

Concentration. A prescribed set of courses in a sub-discipline of a major or closely related discipline consisting of a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 36 credits. Students may complete the requirements for

more than one concentration. The requirements for concentrations appear in the catalog. Concentrations will be included in official counts or lists of Messiah College majors and/or programs.

Emphasis. A prescribed set of courses in a subdiscipline of a major or closely related discipline consisting of a minimum of 12 credits of requirements. Emphases will not be noted in the student's record or transcript.

Academic Integrity Policy. Personal integrity is a behavioral expectation for all members of the Messiah community: administration, faculty, staff, and students. Violations of academic integrity are not consistent with the community standards of Messiah College. These violations include:

- **Plagiarism:** Submitting as one's own work part or all of any assignment (oral or written) which is copied, paraphrased, or purchased from another source, including online sources, without the proper acknowledgment of that source. Examples: failing to cite a reference, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, misrepresenting another's work as your own, etc.
- **Cheating:** Attempting to use or using unauthorized material or study aids for personal assistance in examinations or other academic work. Examples: using a cheat sheet, altering a graded exam, looking at a peer's exam, having someone else take the exam for you, sharing information about exams, using any kind of electronic mobile or storage devices (such as cell phones, PDA's, Blackberry, iPods, iPhones, iPads, Flash drives, DVD's, CD's, photocopy pens) for unapproved purposes, communicating via email, IM, or text messaging during an exam, using the internet, sniffers, spyware or other software to retrieve information or other students' answers, etc.
- **Fabrication:** Submitting altered or contrived information in any academic exercise. Examples: falsifying sources and/or data, etc.
- **Misrepresentation of Academic Records:** Tampering with any portion of a student's record. Example: forging a signature on a registration form or change of grade form.
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** Helping another individual violate this policy. Examples: working together on an assignment where collaboration is not allowed, doing work for another student, allowing one's own work to be copied.
- **Computer Offenses:** Altering or damaging computer programs without permission. Examples: software piracy, constructing viruses, introducing viruses into a system, copying copyrighted programs, etc.
- **Unfair Advantage:** Attempting to gain advantage over fellow students in an academic exercise. Examples: lying about the need for an extension on a paper, destroying or removing library materials, etc.

The full policy is published in the Student Handbook and the College communicates the policy to students via the new student orientation program. However, primary responsibility for knowledge of and compliance with the policy rests with the student.

Classification of Students

Regular Students

Students who are pursuing a degree program are regular students. Regular students are classified according to the following guidelines:

- a. **First-Year Student:** Satisfaction of entrance requirements
- b. **Sophomore:** Twenty-four (24) earned credits
- c. **Junior:** Fifty-seven (57) earned credits

- d. Senior: Eighty-seven (87) earned credits

Unclassified Students

Students who are not pursuing a degree program but are taking courses for their own special needs, are unclassified students.

Conditionally Admitted Students

Conditionally admitted students are those new students who have not met the regular entrance requirements but have been allowed to attend Messiah College. These students are required to register for a two-credit developmental Study Skills course and limited to 14 credits. Conditionally admitted students must meet the usual GPA levels for academic good standing, probation and suspension.

Visiting Students

Visiting students are technically students who are matriculated at another institution, who have received permission from that institution to attend Messiah College. Visiting students receive their financial aid from their home institution and intend to transfer their Messiah College credits back to their home institution.

Credit and Load

Definition of Credit Hour

A credit hour is a unit of academic work consisting of fifty (50) minutes of lecture, or two (2) or three (3) such periods of laboratory work per week, throughout the standard 15-week semester. In addition to the in-class work, the student is expected to spend two hours outside of class. For terms other than the standard 15-week semester, an equivalent amount of class time is required.

Enrolled

A student shall be considered to be enrolled at Messiah College if as of the first day of class of the term s/he is registered for any credit-bearing course offered by Messiah College or by an off-campus program affiliated with Messiah College. A student shall be considered to be continuously enrolled if s/he is enrolled for consecutive semesters.

Students admitted for limited or special programs designed to meet their particular needs but not leading to graduation are considered non-matriculated, unclassified, or visiting students, depending on the nature of their program.

Full-time Status

Degree-seeking students who carry an academic load of 12 or more credit hours are considered full-time students, charged at the full-time student rate, and eligible for financial aid as full-time students.

Exceptions are made for students whose disabilities are confirmed by the Office of Disability Services as requiring consideration of this policy. ODS will recommend an adjusted standard of “full-time” for a particular student based on knowledge and documentation of the student’s disability.

Note: Federal financial aid regulations require a college to define a full-time workload for a program in the same way for all students. Colleges can’t accommodate a student with a learning disability or other handicap by allowing a full-time enrollment status lower than the minimum standard. As such, in order to maintain financial aid eligibility, all students must meet the standard of Satisfactory Academic Progress

outlined elsewhere in this catalog and available in the Financial Aid Information Booklet at http://www.messiah.edu/offices/financial_aid/booklet/booklets.html. This standard applies to all forms of financial aid, including institutional forms of financial aid.

Part-time Status

Students who carry an academic load of less than 12 credit hours are considered part-time students, charged at the part-time student rate per credit hour, and eligible for any financial aid open to part-time students.

Overload

Policy:

Any student taking more than 18 credits per semester must first obtain the approval of the student's academic advisor and the Registrar. Moderate requests for overloads are generally granted if the student has a grade point average of 3.0 or better. Additional tuition will be charged by the credit hour at the overload rate for each credit above 18.

In the spring semester, any student taking more than 4 credits in the J-term or more than 15 credits in the Spring term must first obtain the approval of his/her advisor and the Registrar. Additional tuition will be charged by the credit hour at the overload rate for each credit above 18.

Rationale:

The overload registration procedure has been instituted to insure that an assessment of the student's ability to handle an abnormally heavy load is made prior to the student enrollment in the courses.

Advising

General Guidelines

1. Personal student-faculty association provides the small college with unique opportunities to influence students. The concept of faculty as role models takes an added meaning in this setting.
2. All students, new and returning, need to feel that they belong. Faculty advisors can do much to help students acquire and maintain this sense of belonging.
3. The success of an advising program is dependent on the participation of everyone. It is a team effort.
4. Every faculty member is in a position to help students. The potential for each faculty advisor to help students requires faculty accessibility and availability.
5. An advisor cannot make decisions for an advisee, but he/she can be sympathetic, an understanding listener, and can offer various suggestions and possible solutions to the student's questions or concerns.
6. An advisee who reports having a disability that may require a reduced course load should be given consideration. Verification can be requested from the Office of Disability Services if there is reasonable doubt regarding the student's request.

Intensive Terms

January Term An integral part of the second semester, J-term gives students an opportunity to concentrate on a single course for three weeks. Transcultural travel programs are among the innovative courses offered. Students may also enroll in an approved J-term at another institution. The academic load for the spring semester is the sum of courses taken during J-term and Spring term. Therefore, students normally earn three or four credits in January and 12 or 13 credits during the Spring term, for a total of 15 to 17 credits in the second semester.

While all students are expected to register for a course during J-term each year, first year students and sophomores are required to do so. Since J-term and Spring term together compose the second semester, all fees are applied accordingly. No discounts for tuition or room and board are given to students who do not enroll for a J-term course.

May Term May Term is a three-week term immediately following Spring term and is reserved exclusively for cross-cultural studies courses. Since May Term is considered a part of the Spring Semester, students are charged additional tuition at the overload rate only for each credit above the 18 credits allowed for the second semester. Students interested in courses other than cross-cultural studies should enroll in the Summer Session.

Summer Session Undergraduate online courses, taught by Messiah College faculty with special training in online instruction, cost less than courses taught during the traditional academic year. Course credit from summer online courses applies toward the Messiah College degree for current Messiah College students and may fulfill General Education or major requirements.

Students may also elect to take courses at other colleges over the summer and transfer the credits to their Messiah program. To assure transfer of credit, these students should check the online Course Equivalency Database or complete the “Approval for Transfer Credit” form available in the Registrar’s Office. In addition, students should ensure that the transfer credit does not violate the residency rule in graduation requirements.

Since Summer School is not considered a part of the second semester, fees for Summer Session courses are charged independent of fees from the regular academic year.

Course Listing and Numbering

Course Numbering System

Courses are listed by department, the alpha prefix in the course number indicates in which department and discipline the course is offered. The course numbering is to be interpreted by the following principles:

- a. All courses are numbered at either a 100, 200, 300 or 400 level. These numbers represent a progression in academic rigor and expectation.
- b. Lower-level courses (numbered at 100 and 200) are introductory and foundational and designed for first-year and sophomore-level students.
- c. Upper-level courses (numbered at 300 and 400) are designed for junior- and senior-level students. Upper-level courses –
 - (1) presuppose exposure to the content of a prior course(s) at the “lower-level” and
 - (2) possess an academic rigor and a level of expectation for student work and performance that is significantly greater than for lower-level courses (e.g., demonstrate an advanced level of independence, writing ability, and critical thinking skills in learning difficult content material within various academic disciplines).
- d. The first digit of the course number represents the generally accepted level of the course, i.e., 100-199 courses are first-year level courses.
- e. Students may generally take courses which are at their level or below. Upon advice of their advisor, students may take courses which are one level above their classification.
- f. Each of two numbers in a two semester course designates the work of one semester.
- g. The credit value of each course appears in parentheses following the course title.

Cross-Listing of Courses

Cross-listed courses have multiple department prefixes for the same course. Students register for the course under the prefix for which credit is to be given.

Majors

Selecting a Major

A student must select a major no later than the second semester of the sophomore year. This is necessary to allow adequate time for meeting graduation requirements in that major.

Pre-major status

There are certain programs for which program accreditation or certification of graduates is essential if graduates are to pursue careers in those fields (e.g., nursing, engineering, teacher education, athletic training). If a program is subject to such accrediting or certification requirements, then that program should apply to the Academic Council for internal admission requirements to the program. If additional internal admission requirements to a particular program are approved, then the following conditions apply:

- a. Students initially declaring an intent in the program will be designated by a “pre-major” status with their department.
- b. Internal admission requirements to the program must be clearly delineated and publicized (e.g., in the catalog description of the program).
- c. Internal admission requirements must be such that “first-time, first-year” students who enter Messiah College as “pre-majors” are evaluated before the end of their sophomore year for admission to the particular program. Transfer students (both internal—from another Messiah major—and external—from another institution) must be evaluated by the end of the first semester junior year.

Declaration or Change of Major

Policy: After having declared a major, students who wish to register for another course of study must obtain the signatures of their current advisor, of the department chair in the major field to which they wish acceptance, and their new advisor, who is assigned by the department chair. Changing a major must be done through the Office of the Registrar.

Procedure:

- (1) The student obtains the Change of Major Request from the Office of the Registrar, obtains the signatures of their current advisor, the department chair in which the new major is housed and their new advisor. The student then returns it to the Office of the Registrar.
- (2) The Office of the Registrar makes the change and asks the former advisor to send the student’s advisor file to the new advisor.

Rationale: This policy has been instituted to ensure that students wishing to change majors receive adequate counseling, and to enhance campus communication by having all involved.

Individualized Major

Individualized majors are designed for students who have special interests that are not accommodated by any combination of existing majors or minors at the College. Students may develop a proposal for an individualized major that combines various academic resources available to all Messiah College students (including the Philadelphia campus and other external programs). Each proposal must stand on its own as a unique, individual initiative of the proposing student. Students completing an individualized major will graduate with a B.A. degree.

The following guidelines apply to all individualized majors.

a. Parameters for the Individualized Major

- a. The individualized major must be between 36 and 72 credit hours chosen from at least two different disciplines offered at Messiah.
- b. Two disciplines will be considered the primary disciplines and the major curriculum can have no fewer than 12 credit hours from each of these disciplines.
- c. At least 18 credit hours must be chosen from courses numbered 300 or higher.
- d. Each individualized major must include a senior-level (400) capstone course. This may be an existing course or an independent study course supervised by one of the faculty advisors.
- e. Each individualized major must include an existing writing intensive course from the primary disciplines from which the individualized major draws upon.
- f. No more than two courses can be taken as an independent or directed study
- g. The student must meet all the General Education requirements and all other requirements for graduation (e.g., residency requirements, total required credits, etc.). Any proposed overlaps with General Education must be approved by the Associate Dean of General Education and Common Learning and cannot exceed 12 credits.
- h. In order to propose an individualized major, the student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0.
- i. The individualized major may be proposed after the student has completed 30 credit hours. No proposal will be accepted after the student has completed 72 credit hours.

b. Development of the Proposal.

The student will develop a proposal for the major in conjunction with two faculty advisors from the two primary disciplinary areas, with one of these two faculty advisors to serve as the student's primary faculty advisor. The proposal must include the following elements:

- a. A title for the major that does not duplicate the name of any existing majors or minors and clearly captures the nature of the proposed program of study.
- b. An explanation of how the major will enhance the student's personal learning goals and objectives including possible connection with vocational and/or graduate school interests.
- c. Curriculum sheets (similar to those found in the Advising Handbook for existing majors) describing which specific courses will meet the major requirement and which will meet the College's general education requirements.
- d. A semester by semester plan for completing the required courses. Note that any planned independent or directed study courses must be pre-approved.
- e. The proposed courses must fit together logically and demonstrate the coherence, breadth, and depth which is characteristic of a college major. Proposals that simply piece together existing majors and minors are not acceptable.
- f. A statement that clearly explains how each required course satisfies the College's learning objectives for all majors (i.e., CWEO #4) and contributes to achievement of the goals and learning objectives of the proposed major (as articulated in point b).
- c. Approval Process. The primary faculty advisor will convene and chair an ad hoc committee composed of the two faculty advisors, the Registrar, and the Associate Dean of General Education and Common Learning to review the proposal. If approved by this committee, the individualized major proposal will be forwarded to the Department Chairs

of the two primary disciplines represented in the proposal for review and approval. Following the approval of the Chairs, the proposal will be reviewed by the Dean of the School of the primary advisor for final approval. If approved, it will be officially recorded as the student's declared major and a copy of the approved proposal will be sent, for information purposes, to the Dean of the School housing the other primary discipline. In order to assure prompt processing of a completed proposal, the approval process should take no longer than two months during the academic year from the time it is submitted. In the event that a sponsoring faculty advisor's employment ends, the department chair of the respective department will either supervise the completion of the major or appoint another faculty member capable of supervising it to completion.

Minor

Definition: A minor is a prescribed set of courses which focuses on a particular academic discipline or area of study. The goal is to allow the student to develop some depth of understanding in that discipline or area of study.

- a. Students are not required to complete a minor.
- b. Minors require a minimum of 18 semester hours in a discipline other than that of the student's major.
- c. A student may complete more than one minor.
- d. To earn a minor a student must attain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 for the courses listed as meeting the requirements for the minor.
- e. At least 12 credits of the minor must be unique to the minor (not shared with the major, a second minor or the QuEST requirements).
- f. At least one-third of the total credits must be taken at Messiah.

Procedures for completing a Minor:

- a. Information about available minors and minor curricular requirements can be found in the college catalog, college website or obtained from the student's advisor or department chair.
- b. Students are encouraged to discuss their interests in a minor with their advisor during registration times. If the student has specific questions, they can contact the chair of the department (or the designee) in which the minor is housed.
- c. During their third semester or anytime thereafter, students may declare their intention to complete a minor by filling out the "Minor Request Form" available in the Registrar's Office.
- d. Once the completion of all minor requirements has been verified, the minor will be recorded on the student's final transcript. If, at the time of graduation, a student has not completed the requirements for a minor, the minor designation will be added to the student's transcript if he or she completes the requirements for the minor within one calendar year of the graduation ceremony at which his or her most recent Messiah degree has been awarded.

Registration

Fall Semester Registration

Policy: Students admitted to the College formally register for classes through the academic advising process. Prior to registration, students must ensure their accounts are up to date with the Business Office and their health records file is current with the Engle Health Center. Students with a Chapel Hold must receive clearance from the College Ministries Office. Any student not in compliance with these

requirements will be blocked from registration.

Procedure:

- (1) Registration materials, including the Schedule of Classes are distributed to current students around March 30.
- (2) Students meet with their academic advisor to discuss course selections for the upcoming registration. Desired courses are listed on the “Registration Request” form. This form is signed by the student and his/her advisor. A copy remains with the advisor and the student retains a copy.
- (3) At the conclusion of the advising meeting, the advisor releases an advising hold enabling the student to register at his or her appointed time.

Rationale: Uniformity of procedure is required to handle the large volume of students and ensure fairness to all students. Advisor’s signature is required to ensure the student is taking courses appropriate to his or her major, interests and abilities. Proof of payment is required to ensure that students do not build up large balances which they are unable to pay. Clearance from the Engle Health Center is required to ensure that all health records are complete and accurate for each student in case of emergency. Obligations with the College Ministries Office are an essential component that requires the student’s commitment.

Spring Semester Registration

Registration procedures for the spring semester are similar to the fall registration procedures. Students will register for both the January Term and the Spring Term (May term Cross-Cultural classes are optional). Registration materials are distributed to current students around October 30.

Drop/Add (Change in Registration)

- a. After initial registration, changes of courses to the original schedule should be discussed with the advisor. After the first week of classes, changes in courses require the written approval of the instructor(s) and advisor on a “Drop/Add” form. The requests are submitted to the Registrar’s Office in accordance with the published deadlines.
- b. Procedure:
 - (1) Students contact their advisor prior to changing courses on their schedule.
 - (2) Subsequent to the contact with their advisor, students log on to the online registration system (through the end of the first week of classes) to make schedule adjustments.
 - (3) Beginning with the second week of classes, all changes to the student’s schedule will be processed through the Registrar’s Office with the “drop/add” form. The signatures of the instructor(s) and advisor are required.
 - (a) During the first third of the semester/term, courses may be dropped with the required signatures.
 - (b) During the middle third of the semester, a grade of W is recorded and appears on the student’s transcript. The withdrawal does not affect the student’s GPA.
 - (c) During the final third of the semester, withdrawals are not permitted, except for medical or other emergencies. Unofficial withdrawals are recorded with a grade of F.
 - (4) After the first week of the semester a fee of \$15.00 per processed Drop/Add Request is charged to the student’s account.
 - (5) All requests for dropping or adding courses after the published deadlines, due to neglect or failure to follow the procedures outlined above, will be reviewed by the Registrar. A late registration fee of \$40.00 (per course) will be charged if the change is approved.

- c. Courses may be dropped during the first third of the term and will not appear on the student's transcript. Students may withdraw from a course during the second third of the term. Courses from which a student has withdrawn will be indicated with a "W" on the student's transcript. Dropped or Withdrawn courses do not affect the student's grade point average. After the first five class days of a semester, a fee may be assessed for each course change requested. Specific deadline dates for course changes are posted each semester on the Registrar's homepage

Rationale: Drop/Add procedures emphasize the importance of student responsibility in the advisor/advisee relationship while providing flexibility and convenience to the process. Changes occurring later in the semester insure students have the opportunity for counseling.

Special Courses and Credit Programs

Independent Study Guidelines

Policy: Independent study is available to students who wish to explore a particular area of study outside a classroom setting. Projects must be carefully designed and directed toward a specific goal under the direction of a qualified faculty member who meets regularly with the student during the study. A faculty member may direct a total of two independent and directed studies during a given semester and three during a given summer.

Procedure:

- (1) The student obtains an "Application for Independent Study" for each project undertaken, writes a proposal according to the guidelines given on the application, then obtains the required approval signatures. (2) The student submits the signed application and a copy of the written proposal to the Registrar's Office.
- (3) The Registrar's office reviews the application and, if approved the student is registered for the course by the Registrar's Office. One copy of the application is sent to the faculty member supervising the experience and another is retained in the Registrar's Office. A third copy of the application is returned to the student confirming the registration.
- (4) Grades are submitted by the faculty member to the Registrar along with other grades at the end of the semester.

Directed Study Guidelines

Policy: Directed study is available to junior and senior students who need to complete a catalogued course at a time other than when it is offered. Each department has designated which courses may be offered by directed study. Each study must be done under the supervision of a qualified faculty member who will meet with the student from three to five hours per credit hour of the course. A faculty member may direct a total of two independent and directed studies during a given semester and three during a given summer.

Procedure:

- (1) The student obtains an "Application for Directed Study" for each course, obtains the required signatures, and returns the application to the Registrar's Office.
- (2) The Registrar's Office reviews the application. If approved, the student is registered for the course by the Registrar's Office. One copy of the application is sent to the faculty member supervising the experience and another is retained in the Registrar's Office. A third copy of the application is returned to the student confirming the registration.
- (3) Grades are submitted by the faculty member to the Registrar along with other grades at the end of the semester.

Rationale: To allow students to complete certain catalogued courses at times when they are not normally offered and to ensure that the proper amount of supervision is given to each student doing a directed study.

Co-curricular Activities Guidelines

- a. Students participating in a full session of an intercollegiate sport may register, at most, twice for one credit per season of involvement. However, only one credit may be applied toward the General Education physical education activity requirement. Students participating in two intercollegiate sports may apply only one toward the General Education physical education activities requirement. A maximum of one credit may be counted as an elective. Credit may be granted only during the semester in which the completion of participation occurs and will not be awarded after the fact.
- b. Students participating in music ensembles register for 0-.5 credits during the semester of participation. If the registration is for credit, a pass/fail grade will be recorded.
- c. The editors of the College newspaper, The Swinging Bridge, and the College yearbook, The Clarion, may register for the course ENGL 392 Student Publications Practicum (1). Permission of the advisor is required before enrollment. The course may be repeated for a total of four (4) credits.

Credit Earned Through Examination Programs

Messiah College awards credits earned through the approved testing programs listed below. A maximum of 32 credits may be earned by all forms of testing. (Approved by action of the Dean's Council, 2/8/97.)

Advanced Placement (AP)

Students who have taken college level courses in high school may possibly receive college credit for them by taking the AP Examination of the College Entrance Examination Board, if their high school offers it. Granting such credit may reduce the number of semester hours students need for graduation. Official transcripts of AP test results should be sent to the Messiah College Registrar's Office for evaluation.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

IB is a curricular program with university entrance examinations which may be taken in any country and recognized in any country. Students who have taken IB courses in high school may possibly receive college credit for them by taking the IB examination. Granting such credit may reduce the number of semester hours students need for graduation. Official transcripts of IB test results should be sent to the Messiah College Registrar's Office for evaluation.

Credit by Examination

- (1) Policy Messiah College offers a limited number of courses by which students may earn credit for the course by taking a "challenge" exam in lieu of the course. Each department designates which course(s) may be taken as credit by exam.
- (2) Procedure
 - (a) Prior to taking the exam, the student must obtain an application form from the Registrar's Office.
 - (b) The student presents the form to the appropriate department chair who will make arrangements for the challenge exam or designate the examining professor.
 - (c) When the exam has been taken, the department chair or examining professor will indicate the grade (Pass/Fail) on the application form.

- (d) The student pays the credit by examination fee at the Falcon Exchange, obtaining the approval signature showing that payment was made.
- (e) The form is returned to the Registrar's Office
- (f) The Registrar's Office records credit on the student's transcript if the examination is passed. If the student fails the exam, no record is made on that student's transcript, and the student will be required to take the courses or credits that were to have been waived by successful completion of the exam. Completion of the course is not required if it was intended to be elective credit.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Students who wish to verify knowledge of college level work in a given discipline may take the CLEP test (Messiah is not an approved test site) and receive CLEP credit on the transcript. These credits are evaluated by the Registrar's Office and may be applied to general education and major requirements. Any student considering CLEP opportunities should contact the Registrar's Office for further information.

Department Honors Courses

To encourage scholarly initiative and in-depth investigation within a limited area of study, Messiah College provides able students with an opportunity to pursue honors courses within their major. Students may qualify for an honors course by 1) earning a GPA of 3.50 for all courses and completed at the College to the middle of their junior year and 2) meeting all other requirements as prescribed by the department (e.g., GPA for major courses).

Each department offering an honors course prescribes the nature of the work, the point at which it shall begin, and whether the credit in whole or in part may be counted toward fulfillment of a student's major requirements. The Department must also approve a student's work for a given semester before permission can be given to proceed with the next semester's work.

Up to six semester hours of credit in honors courses may be earned at the rate of three hours per semester. Only the grades of A, A-, and B, B+ will carry credit. If the honors work is of such high quality as to merit the grade of A, the student will graduate with honors in the discipline, provided he/she has completed six semester hours.

Students participating in the College Honors Program may meet their senior honors project requirement through an approved Department Honors Course.

Graduation with honors in a discipline is recognized at Commencement and is noted on the student's diploma and academic transcript. Only senior students may participate in Department Honors courses.

Class Attendance

Class attendance is important to student learning and hence central to Messiah College's educational mission; therefore, regular class attendance is expected. However, the College recognizes that certain types of educational activities take place outside of the classroom and can lead to conflicts with class attendance. The purpose of this policy is to spell out guidelines for student attendance and absence, in general, and to clarify policy and protocol related to four out-of-class educational activities, in particular. These "College-endorsed" activities requiring College review and approval include:

- Intercollegiate athletic contests (this does not include regularly scheduled practices or club sports)
- Artistic performances (this does not include regularly scheduled rehearsals)
- Academic field trips
- Student presentations at professional conferences

Course attendance policies

- a. Individual course policies on class attendance are left to the discretion of the instructor (or academic department). Individual faculty members (or academic departments) are expected to design and implement attendance policies that are supportive of the College-endorsed educational programming outside of the classroom and, to the extent it is possible, provide ways a student can make up the portions of the courses missed due to student participation in College-endorsed educational activities without penalty.
- b. Attendance policies must be conveyed to students at the beginning of the semester and must be delineated in the syllabus. Attendance policies must address the following: (1) the extent to which attendance is required, (2) the role absences play in the attendance policy, (3) the policy for making up absences, and (4) the impact of attendance/absences on student evaluation.
- c. Faculty should be respectful of student schedules and the class time assigned to other courses. Faculty have been given an assigned time for their courses, and it is, in general, expected that instruction will take place within this designated time. Any exceptions must be stated in the syllabus.
- d. If an out-of-class requirement in one course conflicts with the class time of another course, the faculty member making the out-of-class requirement must provide other ways for the student to fulfill the requirement of the required out-of-class requirement.

Procedures and protocol for absences related to College-endorsed activities

- a. Steps will be taken to minimize student absences related to College-endorsed activities. Toward this end,
 - (1) All athletic contest schedules will be reviewed and approved by the Athletic Director and the Faculty Athletic Representative prior to the beginning of the semester.
 - (2) All artistic performance programming will be reviewed and approved by the Dean of the School of the Arts prior to the beginning of the semester.
 - (3) All academic field trips by faculty or departments will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate School Dean or the Assistant Dean of General Education and Common Learning (for IDS courses) at least one month prior to the activity.
 - (4) All student absences due to student professional presentations will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate School Dean at least one month prior to the activity.
- b. All parties involved will be made aware of the scheduled absences well ahead of the date(s) of absence.
 - (1) To the extent it is possible, absences due to College-endorsed activities will be identified at the beginning of each semester or term.
 - (a) At the beginning of each semester the Faculty Athletic Representative will send all teaching faculty the approved dismissal times for all scheduled athletic contests.
 - (b) At the beginning of each semester the Dean of the School of the Arts will send all teaching faculty a schedule of approved performances, which may result in class conflicts.
 - (2) Upon receipt and approval by the appropriate supervisor, anyone sponsoring the College-endorsed educational activity must complete the "Instructor Notification System" that is available in Banner Self Service under the Faculty and Advisors menu two weeks prior to the activity. This form must be filled out in full, and upon completion will be sent to each faculty member that is impacted.
 - (3) Students participating in College-endorsed activities are still required to directly notify in advance the faculty member of any class they must miss. This must be done at least a week prior to the planned absence. Students are also responsible for meeting with the faculty member to work out the conditions for completing any work or assignments in accordance with the attendance policy of the course.

- c. No College-endorsed activities that result in student absences may be scheduled on the days before or after any College break or during finals week. Any exceptions must be approved by the Athletic Director, Vice Provost/Dean of Students, School Dean or Provost.
- d. It is understood that flexibility in these procedures will be granted in the case of conference and NCAA playoffs, or approved late-developing opportunities for student performance or presentation.

Absences due to student illness or critical illness/death in the immediate family

- a. For class absence due to personal illnesses, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor(s) prior to the class if possible. If prior notification is not feasible, the student should ensure that she/he notifies her/his instructors by the end of the day on which the class(es) meet.
- b. For deaths in the family and similar emergencies, students should notify Student Affairs through the Office of the Dean of Students. As the Dean’s Office will notify the faculty of the student involved, it is important that the student notify the office as soon as possible.

If a student believes that the above policy has not been followed, he or she can appeal to the Provost.

Frequent Absences Due to Illness and Chronic Health Problems. Please see section Students with Disabilities.

Grading Policy

Grading System

The grading system presently in use can be roughly divided into three major categories: letter grades, pass/fail grades, and auxiliary symbols.

a. Letter Grades:

Letter grades carry a quality point value and are used in the computation of semester and cumulative grade point averages (GPA).

Quality/ Characteristic	A – Honor Outstanding	B – Excellent Above Average	C – Good Average	D – Poor Below Average	F – No credit Unsatisfactory
1. Interest and ability to communicate.	Almost always shows creativity, sound judgment, intellectual curiosity and communicates correctly and clearly	Frequently shows creativity, sound judgment, intellectual curiosity and communicates correctly and clearly	Shows sustained interest and is able to communicate well and understandably	Exhibits interest. Marginal performance in communicating	Shows sub-minimal interest. Does not communicate clearly enough to get ideas across.
2. Performance skills of discipline.	Almost always analyzes critically, synthesizes creatively, uses facts in original	Frequently analyzes critically, synthesizes creatively, uses facts in original	Usually produces viable generalizations and satisfactorily organizes data	Commits errors in fact and judgment when discussing material and has difficulty going beyond	Does not comprehend the concepts and ideas which are a part of the course. Does

	thinking, and generalizes logically	thinking, and generalizes logically		gathering and examining facts and data	not gather and examine facts and data satisfactorily.
3. Techniques of scholarship.	Shows sound techniques in all projects and uses knowledge effectively	Shows sound techniques in most projects and uses knowledge effectively	Good understanding of techniques in most projects.	Demonstrates minimal competence in the techniques of scholarship.	Does not use sound techniques of scholarship.
4. Meeting requirements of the course in preparation, outside reading and class participation, etc.	Meets or exceeds stated course requirements with distinction in all aspects.	Meets or exceeds stated course requirements with excellence in most aspects.	Meets stated course requirements with adequate performance in all aspects.	Meets stated course requirements with adequate performance in some aspects.	Does not meet the standards and requirements.

Performance Level of Different Letter Grades

Letter Grade	Meaning	Quality Point Value
A	Honor-Outstanding	4.0
A-		3.7
B+		3.3
B	Excellent-Above Average	3.0
B-		2.7
C+		2.3
C	Good-Average	2.0
C-		1.7
D+		1.3
D	Poor-Below Average	1.0
F		0.0

b. Pass/Fail Grades

During a college career, students may take a maximum of four courses on a Pass/Fail (P/F) basis. Pass/Fail courses cannot be used to meet a major, minor, or QuEST requirement. It must be a free elective. Pass/Fail grades do not carry a quality point value and are not used in the computation of semester and cumulative grade point averages.

P = Pass. Used only for a passing grade in a Pass/Fail course or when a student selects to register for a course on a Pass/Fail basis. The cutoff for pass shall be “C–”. Semester credits in which the student receives a P count toward the total required for graduation, but not toward the grade point average.

F = Failure. The grade of F is a failing grade and is included in the computation of both the semester and cumulative GPA. F applies under the following conditions:

- (1) The student has not done passing work for the term;
- (2) The student drops the course in the final third of the term;

- (3) The student does not do passing work (earning a D+ or less) in a course graded on a pass/fail basis;
- (4) The student fails to clear an Incomplete within the specified time frame;
- (5) The student unofficially withdraws from a course.

c. Auxiliary Symbols:

Auxiliary symbols do not carry a quality point value and are not used in the computation of semester and cumulative grade point averages (GPA)

W = Withdrawal. Given to a student who withdraws from a course(s), or from the College, or from specific courses in cases of emergency during the final third of the semester.

I = Incomplete. Used only when a student cannot, for emergency reasons, complete a course on schedule.

AU = Audit. Used only when a student wishes to regularly attend a course but not receive college credit or a grade for work in the course.

Grade Point Average (GPA):

- a. Semester GPA: The GPA for each semester is calculated from the graded courses attempted during that semester. Credit hours in which the student receives a “P” count toward total credits earned but not toward the GPA. Credit hours in which the student receives an “F” are calculated in the GPA.
- b. Cumulative GPA: This is the grade point average for all courses taken at Messiah College.
- c. Factors Affected by GPA:
 - (1) Graduation: 2.0 cumulative GPA for all work; 2.0 cumulative GPA in major requirements.
 - (2) Acceptance into specific programs: Engineering, Nursing, and Teacher Education programs have cumulative and/or major GPA requirements as part of admission into the program. Consult the College catalog for specific GPA requirements for each program.
 - (3) Graduation Honors:
 - (a) Summa Cum Laude: Cumulative GPA of 3.90 or above
 - (b) Magna Cum Laude: 3.60 but less than 3.90 cumulative GPA
 - (c) Cum Laude: 3.30 but less than 3.60 cumulative GPA
 - (4) Department Honors Courses: 3.50 cumulative GPA
 - (5) Dean’s List: 3.60 semester GPA or higher, based on twelve (12) or more graded hours.
 - (6) Academic Probation:
 - (a) First Year (0 - 23 credits): below 1.8 cumulative GPA.
 - (b) Sophomore (24 - 56 credits): below 1.9 cumulative GPA.
 - (c) Junior or Senior (57 credits or above): below 2.0 cumulative GPA.

Incomplete Grades

- a. Policy: A grade of incomplete is recorded for a student only when, for emergency reasons, the course cannot be completed on schedule. To receive credit for the course, the unfinished work must be completed within four (4) weeks of the close of the term.
- b. Procedure:

- (1) When the student presents a legitimate emergency request to his instructor and the instructor agrees to it, the instructor records a grade of I (incomplete) in online grading. He/ She will then be prompted by a dialogue box to submit the reason for the incomplete grade.
 - (2) When a student completes the course work, the instructor submits the change of grade information online to the Registrar's Office indicating the student's correct final grade.
 - (3) If a course is not completed within the extended timetable, the incomplete grade is converted to an "F". Any exceptions to the following timetable must be cleared in advance with the Registrar.
 - (a) Fall Semester: before the opening of Spring Term.
 - (b) All other terms: by the end of the fourth week following the close of the term.
- c. Rationale: This policy serves as a necessity of keeping grade records up-to-date, provides for student emergencies, and yet provides a reasonable deadline to help students avoid doing two (2) semesters' work at the same time. It also discourages procrastination.

Auditing

a. Policy - Students who wish to attend a course but not receive college credit or a grade for their work may audit the course. This option requires students to attend the class on a regular basis. Students are not required to do any of the course work (though they may opt to do so) or take tests. A student must drop the course if he or she decides not to attend the course since it appears on the transcript as an audited course. The option of auditing courses is open to both full-time and part-time students. (Note: Students should be alerted to the fact that courses taken as audit cannot be included for Financial Aid purposes. Encourage those students to contact the Financial Aid Office.)

b. Procedure

- (1) Declaration of the audit is done at the time of registration through the Registrar's Office.
- (2) Students may change from credit to audit and vice versa when they register or within the first five class days at the beginning of the new term.
- (3) The Business Office bills audit credits at the published tuition rate for audits.
- (4) When the course is complete, the student's transcript indicates the symbol "AU" and the name of the course—no credit or letter grade is given.
- (5) If the student decides not to attend the course, he or she must drop the course within the drop/add deadline so it will not appear on the student's record.

c. Rationale - Accommodates degree program students who want to broaden their horizons into a field of interest or part-time students who wish to take a course purely for their own interest and do not need to work for college credit.

Change of Grade

- a. If after final grades have been assigned and submitted, and an error in a student's grade is discovered by the instructor, or brought to the attention of the instructor by the student, the instructor submits change of grade information online to the Registrar's Office. All changes of grades must be accompanied by a rationale and be approved by the Registrar's Office by the end of the following semester.
- b. A student's final grade may not be raised by doing additional assignments after the course has

concluded or by revising previously submitted assignments.

Repeating Courses

A student may only repeat any course in which a grade of D+, D, or F was received. With repeated courses, the second grade and credits count in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA, but the original grade and course will remain on the student's transcript. All repeat courses must be taken at Messiah College, including Temple courses taken through the Philadelphia Campus and any other approved off-campus program, subject to the assessment of course equivalency. (Revised by action of the Curriculum Committee 2/27/98)

- a. It is the responsibility of the student and advisor to monitor the registration for repeated courses.
- b. Both occurrences of repeated courses will be marked on the transcript.
- c. The credits earned for the first grade remain in the term and cumulative calculations until completion of the repeated course. At the end of the term in which the course is repeated, only the credits and grade earned for the second occurrence are used in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA and total credits earned.
- d. Students need to be advised of possible financial aid or athletic eligibility consequences of repeating courses for which credits have been earned. Students should contact the Financial Aid Office for specific information.

Grade Appeal Procedures

If a student disagrees with a grade which has been given in a particular course, and it has been determined that the grade recorded was not in error, the student may initiate the grade appeal process.

a. Informal discussion between student and instructor.

If the discussion results in a grade change, a grade change request is submitted to the Registrar's Office by the instructor. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student is referred to the department chair.

b. Informal discussion between student and department chair.

The student should informally discuss the matter with the department chair. The department chair should discuss the concern with the instructor. If the discussions result in a grade change, a grade change request is submitted by the instructor. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student is informed that there is a formal appeal procedure. The first informal contact with the department chair must be before the end of the semester following the semester in which the grade was earned.

c. Formal discussion between student, instructor, and department chair.

The department chair should arrange a meeting to discuss the matter with the student and instructor together. If this discussion results in a grade change, a grade change form is submitted to the Registrar's Office by the instructor. The student should be informed in writing of this decision. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student should be informed in writing of this decision, along with options available to the student.

d. Student appeal in writing to department chair.

This written appeal must be made within ten (10) working days of the written notification of the student by the department chair of the outcome of the formal discussions. Within

ten (10) working days of the student's appeal, the department chair must inform the instructor of the appeal and provide a copy of the student's appeal. The instructor has ten (10) working days to provide a written explanation of the student's grade. The department chair has ten (10) working days to convene a departmental meeting (without the instructor or student present) to review the case

e. Student appeal in writing to the School Dean.

If the decision of the department is not to the student's satisfaction, the student may appeal the decision to the dean. This appeal must be made in writing, within ten (10) working days of the department chair's letter to the student. The dean shall investigate carefully and render a decision in writing within thirty (30) days, which shall be final.

f. Cases involving the department chair.

In any case where the instructor is the department chair, another member of the department will serve in the role of the chair in these proceedings.

Transcripts

The student's permanent record of courses taken and grades achieved comprise the academic transcript. Courses taken by Philadelphia students at Temple University are so indicated on the transcript, as are courses taken as visiting students at other institutions or other Approved Off-campus Study Programs. Credits taken at all other colleges and universities are entered as transfer credits and are not computed in the student's grade point average.

a. Request for Transcript

- (1) Policy: Academic transcripts are issued by the Registrar's Office upon a student's written request and, depending upon expediency of service requested, must be accompanied by payment (see messiah.edu/registrar/transcript). The student's financial account with the College must be cleared before any transcripts are issued.

Academic Petitions

When a student finds it necessary to request an exception to an academic policy the following procedure shall be followed:

- a. Secure an "Academic Policies Petition" from the Office of the Registrar.
- b. Complete the form and obtain the signatures of the student's department chair and academic advisor and return the petition to the Office of the Registrar.
- c. The petition is then reviewed and acted upon by the Registrar.
- d. The decision of the Registrar will be indicated on the form and copies will be distributed to the student's academic file, the student, and the student's advisor.

General Education Policies Petitions

When a student desires to request an exception to a General Education requirement or a substitution for a General Education requirement the following procedures shall be followed:

- a. Secure a "General Education Policies Petition" from the Office of the Registrar.
- b. Complete the form and obtain the signatures of the student's department chair and academic advisor and return the petition to the Office of the Registrar.
- c. The petition is then reviewed by the Registrar and/or the chair of the General Education Committee who may act on the petition based on approved guidelines for course substitutions and waivers or refer it to the General Education Committee for action.

- d. The decision of the Registrar will be indicated on the form and copies will be distributed to the student's academic file, the student, and the student's advisor.

Alternate Course Request due to Disability

Qualifying students must be registered with the Office of Disability Services and be declared eligible for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Eligibility is required before a petition for alternate courses will be considered. There must be a direct relationship between the student's documented disability and the reason for requesting course alternatives.

- a. Secure an "Alternate Course Petition" from the Office of Disability Services (available online).
- b. Complete the form and submit the petition to the Office of Disability Services.
- c. Students who have previously been approved for ADA accommodations will only need to submit the petition. Students not presently ADA-eligible will be required to verify eligibility before a petition will be considered.
- d. If approved, and following approved guidelines for course substitutions, the Director will specify course alternatives as approved by the respective departments and/or the General Education Committee and return the petition to the student.
- e. Obtain signatures of the student's department chair and academic advisor(s) and submit the completed petition to the Office of the Registrar.
- f. Copies will be distributed to the student, the student's academic file, the academic advisor, and the Office of Disability Services.

Co-Curricular Eligibility

Purpose of Academic Probation

The purpose of placing a student on academic probation is to help the student reorder his/her priorities and time commitments in the direction of greater emphasis on academic studies, in order to help that student attain the College's minimum standards for satisfactory academic progress as soon as possible. Any full-time student who fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress (defined as completion of 24 or more credits per academic year and maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 1.8 while earning the first 23 credits, 1.9 for 24–56 credits, and 2.0 for 57 credits or more) will be placed on academic probation.

The Registrar is responsible for notifying students of their being placed on academic probation immediately upon completion of the grading process for the period of study leading to such status. A student on academic probation will be advised to take a maximum of 14 credits per semester while on probation.

Co-curricular Eligibility during Academic Probation

A student who has been placed on academic probation shall be ineligible for participation in the following cocurricular activities:

- Intercollegiate athletics and club sports
- Theatre productions
- Music ensembles
- SGA officers
- Officers in any SGA-chartered organization, including team managers of Outreach Teams
- Music Ministry Teams

- Resident Life Staff
- Staff members of The Pulse Media Hub

Students placed on academic probation as a result of fall semester grades shall become ineligible for cocurricular participation on the first class day of J-term/Spring Semester. Students placed on academic probation as a result of spring semester or summer session grades shall become ineligible for participation on the first class day of the fall semester. The only exceptions will be those cases where such participation earns academic credit in a college course and that course meets a graduation requirement for the student's major.

Students who are removed from academic probation as a result of fall, spring semester, or summer grades shall become eligible for cocurricular participation as soon as grades are officially recorded for that period of study.

Exam Policies

Class Exams

The instructor shall decide whether students who miss a pre-announced class examination will be granted make-up privileges.

Final Exams (Approved by Community of Educators Senate, 10/15/02)

a. Policy: The final exam period is an important and integral part of the semester. Faculty members are required to conduct a significant evaluative experience/exam or some other educative experience during this time. Faculty should design their courses in a way that preserves the integrity of finals week. Minimally, this means that faculty should (1) be cautious about the amount of work they assign students in the week prior to finals week and (2) schedule final exams or other semester-ending experiences during finals week.

Students are expected to attend their final exam period at the scheduled time. Any student having more than eight credit hours of final examinations in one day may request a change in his or her final schedule. All requests for change must be submitted to the Registrar's Office using the "Request for Final Examination Change" form. It should be noted that travel arrangements are not sufficient reason for exceptions to the exam schedule. All requests for rescheduling exams must be submitted to the Registrar at least one week prior to the first day of final examinations. Once the Registrar confirms the student is scheduled for more than 8 credit hours of final examinations in one day, the student and instructor need to coordinate to reschedule the exam for a time mutually acceptable to both.

Any student having an emergency or illness during final examinations should contact his or her instructor immediately. In these situations, make-up privileges and arrangements are at the discretion of the instructor. In no instances should any co-curricular or other College event be scheduled in a way that conflicts with the final exam schedule.

Notification of Rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access.

A student should submit to the College official responsible for maintaining the record a written request that identifies the record the student wishes to inspect. The College official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are

not maintained by the College official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

A student who wishes to ask the College to amend a record should write the College official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested, the College will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing. A hearing, to be conducted by a disinterested person appointed by the President, will be held within 30 days of receipt of a written request. The student will have a full and fair opportunity to present relevant evidence. A written decision will be rendered within two weeks of the date of the hearing.

(3) The right to provide written consent before the College discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

The College discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a contractor, consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom the College has outsourced institutional services or functions instead of using College employees or officials; a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on a College committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the College.

Upon request, the College also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

FERPA permits the College to release "directory information" without student consent to anyone requesting information. Directory information at Messiah College includes a student's name, home address, campus address, home telephone number, campus telephone number, campus email address, photograph (available only on an internal online student directory and faculty class rosters), dates of attendance, degree for which a student is a candidate, academic major, academic awards or honors, class year, full-time/part-time status, and weight and height for members of athletic teams.

Additionally, the College may provide lists of student names by religious preference (if known) once each year in response to inquiries by local churches. The College does not, however, release directory information to outside organizations for commercial solicitation.

Any student may opt for directory privacy by going to the Student Directory Profile (Privacy Settings) found in BANNER self-serve. This option allows students to block any or all of the directory information that appears in the campus wide online directory. Students who opt to block all of their directory

information will be excluded from any lists that may be provided to authorized internal and external departments. Thus, information that may otherwise be communicated to a student's parents (campus events, commencement, etc.) will not be. Any student who for legal or other legitimate reasons requires the highest level of records privacy must meet with the Associate Dean of Students and the Registrar to discuss the circumstances involved.