

## A Proposed Compromise of the Proposed Changes to Incomplete Grade Procedures

The Rights & Responsibilities Committee and other interested faculty members met on March 22 and April 5, 2007, in the Alumni Room in Keen Johnson regarding the Proposed Changes to Incomplete Grade Procedures. The Registrar attended the April 5 meeting.

The group agreed that documentation is an important component of the incomplete procedure so that the student, instructor, and registrar know what the expectations are for the student to fulfill the course requirements to receive a grade.

The Registrar clarified two major items in the discussion of the proposal:

- After what date are grades “locked” (so that they may not be changed at the end of the semester—without doing a “change of grade” form)? **Heidi’s Reply:** Grades are “locked” the same day grades are due – typically by late afternoon or early evening. Locking the grades is a necessary function in order to do end of term processing which drives the recalculation of earned hours, GPA, and enrollment status. End-of-term processing is an all or nothing process—we have no capability to segregate our population by student or course in order to piecemeal the process. Once end-of-term processing is complete, all changes must be done manually—which is why faculty have to submit grade change forms.
- Was “IP” not supposed to be included in this discussion? “IP” is listed in the proposal, but it was understood that “IP” was not supposed to be part of the incomplete policy. **Heidi’s Reply:** While it is true that IP grades are not supposed to be part of the incomplete contract (since these are already approved at the individual course level through the CAA process), we did, however, want to clarify that no I or IP grades could be left outstanding on student transcripts if they desire to have their degree conferred. The proposed catalog text revision, however, may still need clarification regarding IP. The following revised statement is more indicative of the intended message: *“A degree cannot be awarded to a student with an incomplete EKU course on his/her record. Any student who is a pending graduate with an unresolved incomplete (“I”) grade will be given the choice of accepting an “F” for the course (or “NC” for courses with previous “IP” grades) or being deferred to the next term for graduation consideration.”* There is no intent to suggest a change to the IP policy.

The following comments refer to the memorandum that was presented by the Registrar to the Faculty Senate at the March 2007 meeting. See the memo beginning on page 12 at <http://www.eku.edu/academics/facultysenate/agendas/2006-07/03-05-07/agenda.pdf>

### RATIONALE

We support both rationale items 1 and 2 for having a university-wide policy for Incomplete Grade Procedures.

## PROPOSAL

Recommend Effective Fall 2007, after discussions with faculty have occurred.

### Item (1) Recommended Changes to the Proposal:

- The student or the faculty member may initiate the request.  
**Rationale:** Oftentimes, students do not know that they may request an incomplete, or they may not be in a situation to request an incomplete. If the student has been performing well to a certain point, the faculty member should be able to suggest or initiate the incomplete process.
- The form is changed to request only student name and ID, course ID, current course grade, course requirements needed to complete, and completion date required. Ideally (but not operationally functional in Banner), when the instructor enters “I” on the grade screen, a dialog box opens; and the instructor only needs to type in the current course grade and course requirements needed for completion. All of the other information would already be linked. When submitted, an e-mail copy could automatically be sent to the instructor and the student. However, since we were unable to pursue an automated process, the paper “incomplete grade contract” is necessary. When faculty enter an “I” grade on the final grade report, a message will appear reminding the faculty member to complete an “incomplete grade contract” for each student who receives an “I” grade. The revised contract is attached. The faculty member must sign the form, and ideally, the student also signs the agreement. In those rare cases, where the student is not available for a signature, the Registrar’s office will mail the contract to the student with a disclaimer that indicated the student’s agreement of the contract unless notification is given to the Registrar’s office within 10 business days of the date of the contract. The Registrar’s office will remind faculty who have not submitted incomplete contracts within two weeks of the final grade submission date. Once a contract is received by the Registrar’s office, the “I” will change to “I^.” Thirty days from the final grade submission date, the remaining “I” grades that are not supported by a contract will be changed to “F.” The “I^” grades need to be completed by the end of the next semester (fall or spring).  
**Rationale:** The instructor knows the course requirements better than anyone else, is aware of student performance to date, and has ultimate responsibility for the student grade. The “reasons for incomplete” are not necessary as long as the instructor knows the situation and has approved; further circulating that information would violate individual privacy.

### Item (2) Recommendation:

The committee does not dispute the proposed item, but acknowledges that more time is needed to allow for final grades to be posted. Give faculty a time extension for entering final grades; for example, the grades need to be entered by Tuesday or Wednesday after finals rather than Monday. This request could be supported if the change is endorsed by the university. Important note: All delays impact the ability to process transcripts, confirm graduation, or alert students of continued attendance eligibility (suspensions/dismissals).

## PROPOSED CATALOG TEXT REVISION

Paragraph 1:

Strike “and the student has already completed at least 70% of the course requirements.”

**Rationale:** Some courses progressively build to a final project that may be 70% or more of the grade at the end. Again, this item should be left to the discretion of the course instructor.

Keep the following statement, except for the strikethrough: “A Request for an Incomplete Grade contract must be ~~approved and~~ received by the Registrar’s Office no later than 30 days after the semester deadline for final grade submission.”

**Rationale:** The approval should come from the instructor.

Paragraph 2:

Keep the first and third sentences. Change the second sentence to read: “The student must initiate the request through the instructor before the established deadline.”

**Rationale:** The approval should come from the instructor who knows the situation.

Paragraph 3:

No dispute with the paragraph except for the “IP.” Clarification is needed for catalog purposes:  
*“A degree cannot be awarded to a student with an incomplete ECU course on his/her record. Any student who is a pending graduate with an unresolved incomplete (“I”) grade will be given the choice of accepting an “F” for the course (or “NC” for courses with previous IP grades) or being deferred to the next term for graduation consideration.”*

## PROPOSED ADDITION TO CATALOG TEXT

This paragraph will need to be rewritten based upon the outcomes of our discussions.

**Therefore, the Rights and Responsibilities Committee moves approval of this document in support of the Incomplete Grades Proposal as amended.**