



Academic Standards Policy

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Board Policy Alignment: [E-1 Ends](#)

[EL-0 General Executive Constraint](#)

[EL-5 Organization Culture](#)

[EL-8 Access to Education](#)

[EL-9 Asset Protection](#)

Responsible Official: Provost and Vice President of Teaching, Learning, and Student Success

Purpose

Frederick Community College (“FCC” or the “College”) is committed to academic excellence. This policy identifies the standards by which academic excellence is measured and the personnel responsible for setting and maintaining those standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all FCC current and prospective students, as well as FCC faculty, staff, and administrators.

Definitions

See the Policy Glossary for definitions of hyperlinked terms in this policy.

Policy

The Provost and Vice President of Teaching, Learning, and Student Success (Chief Academic Officer) leads the College community in implementing the educational goals of the institution and developing and upholding the academic standards and procedures of the institution to ensure excellence in instruction.

The College establishes academic standards in accordance with, but not limited to, the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), the Maryland Higher Education Commission

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(MHEC), the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), and other state and federal statutes or regulations.

To uphold academic excellence and ensure consistency in the application of the College and regulatory requirements, FCC establishes the following as academic standards, which are further delineated in the Academic Standards Procedures.

A. Awarding of Credit and Definition of Credit Hour

FCC awards [academic credit](#) in accordance with State, federal, and accreditation standards. The College recognizes that students acquire college-level learning through multiple pathways and may award credit for coursework completed at accredited institutions, as well as for demonstrated mastery gained through other means.

FCC defines the [credit hour](#) in alignment with the U.S. Department of Education and COMAR standards.

B. Registration and Change of Schedule

FCC maintains consistent registration practices with clearly established timelines that allow students with opportunities to register and adjust their academic schedules. The College publishes registration periods and related academic deadlines to support access and transparency.

C. Classification of Full-time Student Status

FCC establishes full-time enrollment status in alignment with state, federal, and accreditation expectations. This designation supports consistent application of financial aid regulations, academic standing guidelines, and reporting requirements.

D. Attendance Reporting

FCC maintains attendance reporting practices that comply with federal financial aid requirements and ensure the accuracy of student enrollment records. Faculty must verify student academic attendance within established timelines.

E. Grading

FCC maintains grading practices that reflect student achievement of course learning outcomes and uphold the academic standards of the College.

F. Academic Progress

The College reviews the academic progress of students at the end of each semester to identify their appropriate academic standing.

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G. Change in Major

FCC supports students in selecting academic pathways that align with their goals. Students may request a change of [major](#) in accordance with published College standards and timelines.

H. Course Repetition

FCC permits students to repeat [courses](#) in accordance with established criteria.

I. Graduation Requirements

FCC awards associate degrees, [certificates](#), and [letters of recognition](#) to students who complete the prescribed curriculum and meet the College's academic standards in accordance relevant regulations governing program length, general education, and credit hour standards.

FCC maintains standards for awarding subsequent degrees to ensure completion of additional, distinct academic requirements beyond those applied to a previously earned degree.

Requirements for [workforce training certificates](#), [digital badges](#), and other short-term credentials are established in alignment with workforce needs and in compliance with state regulations.

Program development, modification, and discontinuance are carried out in accordance with regulations and academic governance processes to ensure that credentials remain current, coherent, and aligned with student and community needs.

The College recognizes outstanding academic achievement through established honors designations.

J. Course Substitutions

FCC may approve limited course substitutions within degree and certificate programs to support timely completion while upholding academic integrity and complying with degree requirements.

K. Academic Clemency

FCC offers [Academic Clemency](#) to eligible returning students as a one-time opportunity to exclude a limited number of previously earned "D" or failing grades from GPA calculations.