ACADEMIC INFORMATION

SCHEDULE OF COURSES
The Schedule of Courses, published for each semester and summer session, lists courses to be offered, names of the instructors for each course, times and places of classes, English Placement Level, and an academic calendar which includes, among other events, times and places of required placement tests, dates for registration, and the last day to withdraw from class.

All courses listed in the Schedule are offered subject to sufficient enrollment and instructor availability. Class days and times, room numbers, and instructors are subject to change.

COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM
Northern Marianas College uses the following numbering system to identify courses:
001 - 049 Community Programs, Continuing Education, some Workforce Development Program courses.
050 - 099 College preparatory courses intended to upgrade students’ basic skills to the level required for college-level programs.
100 - 299 Courses applicable toward the associate degree.
190 Special projects.
288 Practicum courses.
296 Special topics offered once during an academic year.
297 Seminars.
298 Internships.
300 - 499 Courses applicable toward the baccalaureate degree in Elementary Education.

CREDIT HOURS
The number of credits for which a student is registered determines his/her enrollment status. A student’s enrollment status is determined after the end of the Course Change (ADD/DROP) period.

CREDIT BY EXAMINATION
Northern Marianas College recognizes that college-level learning occurs in places other than the traditional college classroom. Except for courses specifically excluded (nursing courses with clinical hours, TS288 (Practical Training), TS298 (Internship Training), all NDU courses, and SOE Practicum & Methods courses), all college-level courses offered at NMC are open to challenge through a process of Credit by Examination. A student wishing to earn credit by examination must be a regular student, have a GPA of at least 2.0, and be currently registered. A student will not be permitted to take the examination for credit if credit for that course or its equivalent has already been received from an accredited college or university.

A student wishing to earn credit by examination must obtain written permission from the Chair of the department offering the course, enroll in the course during the registration period, and pay the regular tuition and fees for the course. A nonrefundable fee for Credit by Examination is charged in addition to regular tuition for the course. The application for Credit by Examination is available at the Office of Admissions and Records. The Chair of the department offering the course will assign an instructor to administer the examination which
must be taken by the student no later than the end of the second week of the term. The letter grade earned by examination will appear on the student’s transcript as the course grade.

Should the student fail the credit examination and receive a grade of “F” for the course, he/she may not retake the examination for credit but may re-register for the course in a subsequent term, paying course tuition and any applicable fees. The student may repeat the course in this manner only once (see REPEATING OF COURSES).

Once examination credit for a given course has been awarded, a student wishing to improve his/her grade may not repeat the examination for credit but may subsequently enroll in that course and receive a grade. The student must re-register for the course in a subsequent term and pay the course tuition and fees. The student will receive credit only for the course in which the higher grade was received (see REPEATING OF COURSES).

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Students who wish to study a topic not covered in courses regularly offered by the College may be able to earn credit for the course by independent study. Independent study requires that the student create a written plan of study and submit it for departmental approval; register and pay tuition for a 190/290 “Special Projects: Independent Study” course; study the course matter privately; meet with an instructor appointed by the Department Chair for a certain number of consultations; and complete the assigned course work. Availability of this option depends on:

1. The nature of the subject matter involved;
2. The student’s potential for successfully completing the independent study requirements;
3. The willingness of a faculty member to supervise the independent study;
4. Submission of a form describing the conditions of study and the course requirements, signed by the student and the instructor; and
5. The written approval of the Department Chair.

When these conditions have been met, the Department Chair will request that the Dean of Academic Programs and Services create a schedule listing for the course using the IS (Independent Study) course alpha numeric code.

In addition to the regular tuition for the course, a fee of $40 is charged for each course taken by independent study. This option is normally not available for courses regularly offered by the College, except by approval of the Dean of Academic Programs and Services.

**AUDITING COURSES**

To qualify as an auditor for any course, a student must complete all admission and registration procedures, including payment of tuition and fees. Students are permitted to audit certain courses with the written consent of the instructor. Auditing of laboratory science courses is generally not allowed. Students who wish to audit a course must submit the signed Instructor Approval Form authorizing the audit to the Office of Admissions and Records within the first week of instruction. There is no limit to the number of courses that may be audited by any
individual, provided permission has been received from each instructor. The extent of classroom participation is at the discretion of the instructor.

No credit is given at any time for an audited course, and the symbol “AU” will be recorded for the course on the student’s transcript. Where facilities are limited, students taking the course for credit have registration priority over auditing students.

**COURSE WAIVERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

The department chair or program coordinator makes recommendation for a course waiver. For each course waiver there must be an accompanying recommended course substitution. Credit requirements cannot be waived. A degree-seeking student wishing to have a course waived or substituted must complete the following procedure:

1. Submit a Course Substitution Form to a counselor/advisor or department chair that indicates the waiver substitution requested.
2. The department chair will confer with department members and, if they concur with the request, will forward the request to the Dean of Academic Programs and Services for approval.
3. If the Dean concurs with the request, it will be forwarded to the Registrar. If the Dean does not concur with the request, it will be forwarded to the student, via the Department Chair or Program Coordinator.

Each party involved in the Course Substitution procedure shall indicate approval/disapproval and indicate the reason(s) for the approval/disapproval of the requested waiver substitution.

**TIME LIMIT FOR COURSEWORK**

In areas of study in which the subject matter changes rapidly, material in courses taken long before graduation may become obsolete or irrelevant. Course work that is more than eight years old is applicable to completion of degree requirements at the discretion of the student’s major department. Departments may accept such coursework, reject it, or request that the student revalidate its substance. The eight-year limit on transfer coursework applies except when program accreditation agencies require students to satisfy current major requirements rather than major requirements in earlier catalogs, when completing earlier requirements is no longer possible or educationally sound.

**REPEATING OF COURSES**

A student may repeat a course whether it was previously passed or failed. A student may repeat a course earning Non-degree Units any number of times, but may repeat no more than three times a course earning college credits (i.e., courses numbered 100 and above).

When a course is repeated for the purpose of improving the grade, the student will receive credit only for the course earning the higher grade, and only the higher number of grade points earned will be used to calculate the student’s grade point average.

Students may wish to retake certain types of “skill-building” courses (e.g., some P.E. courses and studio art courses) not for the purpose of improving their grade, but to renew or increase their mastery of specific applied skills or to further develop artistic talent. Such courses may be retaken under the following conditions:

1. The student must already have taken the approved “skill-building” course for credit.
2. The student wishes to retake the approved course for the express purpose of increasing or recertifying the mastery of applied skills or further developing artistic talent.

3. A student wishing to retake an approved course for such purposes must obtain the written permission of his/her academic advisor, the instructor, and the Chair of the department in which the course is offered, prior to or during the registration period. The Chair will then request creation of a separate section listing for that course. Such section listings will be designated as “Further Study” sections, using the section code “FS” rather than a numerical code.

4. Students registering for an FS section of an approved course must attend class on the days and times scheduled for the regular section of the same course.

5. Approved courses retaken for “FurtherStudy” will earn the same number of credits, and the student will pay the same tuition and fees, as for a regular section of the course.

6. Grade points earned for courses retaken as “Further Study” courses will be considered in the calculation of term and cumulative grade point averages (GPAs).

7. The Number of times any approved course may be retaken a “Further Study” course by any one student will be jointly decided, in consultation with the student, by the student’s academic advisor, the course instructor, and the Chair of the department in which the course is offered.

8. Students are cautioned that most “Further Study” courses, taken as such, will not fulfill General Education or program requirements, but will count as electives. Most NMC degree programs allow a limited number of elective credits to be applied toward the degree, and most programs either specify or recommend courses to be taken as electives toward the degree. Therefore, students should consult their advisor prior to requesting permission to register for a “Further Study” section.

9. Every effort will be made to accommodate both the number of students wishing to enroll in the regular section of the course, and the number of students wishing to retake the course as an FS section. However, students are cautioned that where facilities are limited and the capacity size of the class is restricted, enrollment priority will be given to students taking the regular session of the course. That is to ensure that students taking the course to fulfill a requirement have the opportunity to do so.

10. Availability of the option to enroll in an FS section of an approved “skill-building” course ultimately depends on the ability of the classroom facility to accommodate both regular students and FS students, and on the willingness of the instructor to offer the FS option.

11. Only certain “skill-building” courses may be retaken under the FS option. For more information on which courses may be retaken under these conditions, contact the Office of the Dean of Academic Programs and Services.

**COURSE LOAD**

A student carrying 12 or more credits in the fall or spring semester is considered a “full-time student.” A student carrying from nine to 11 credits per semester is a “three-quarter time student”; six to eight credits per semester represent a half-time load. A student registered for five or fewer credits per semester is considered a “part-time student.” For the summer session, a student taking six credits is considered to have a full-time course load.
The following are limits on a student’s semester course load: (1) up to 18 credits with the academic advisor’s approval, and (2) from 19 to 22 credits with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 and submission of a completed Request for Course Overload form, which must be approved both by the student’s academic advisor and by the Department Chair for the student’s program. Liberal Arts majors must have the approval of their academic advisor and the Director of Counseling Programs and Services. A student wishing to register for a course load of more than nine credits during a summer session must submit a completed Request for Course Overload form, approved by the academic advisor and the Department Chair (or Director of Counseling Programs and Services, as appropriate).

A student planning to complete the associate degree within two years must complete at least 15 credits every semester. Students should note that NMC degree programs require a variable number of credits. Careful planning with an academic advisor is necessary to complete all required courses for a degree within two years. Students who take only 12 credits per semester will normally complete an associate degree program in two and a half years. Additional semester(s) may be needed if students are required to take courses below the 100 level in preparation for entering degree programs.

The College imposes no time limit for completing a degree or certificate program. Students receiving federal financial assistance, however, have a time limit as a measurement toward making academic progress (see FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS). Certain hiring agencies (e.g., the Department of Public Safety) may impose time limits for program completion.

If program requirements change while a student is consistently enrolled, the student will graduate under the degree requirements existing at the time of his/her initial enrollment. A student may follow the new degree requirements if he/she specifically requests to do so by submitting to the Office of Admissions and Records a Change of Major form that has been approved by the student’s academic advisor. Students who have a break in enrollment for at least two consecutive semesters and have not been granted an official leave of absence by the Director of Admissions and Records, must follow requirements specified in the catalog or Individualized Degree Plan applicable at the time of re-enrollment.

**ACADEMIC WORK LOAD**

A 3-credit course requires the student and instructor to come in contact with each other for at least 37.5 hours during the semester. Traditionally, fulfillment of these contact hours is manifest in weekly meetings in class for at least 3 hours per week. Hence, a 3-credit course is equivalent to a student meeting an instructor for a minimum of 3 hours per week.

A student enrolled at NMC as a full-time student during the fall or spring semesters must register for at least 12 credits. This is typically a schedule with four or five courses. As indicated by the definition of contact/clock hours per credit hour, a student enrolled in at least 12 credits will be expected to meet with all course instructors for a cumulative minimum of 12 hours per week throughout the semester.

A student’s expected workload in connection to credit hours is much more than the minimum contact hours an instructor is required to have with a student. In most cases, a student’s workload is three times (3X) the actual contact/clock hours a student and instructor are responsible for maintaining throughout the semester. A student’s workload is comprised of actual contact hours, but may also include research, group and individual study, field work,
etc. that occurs after class time. Students are advised to observe the following formula in preparation for coursework and effective time management:

- 1 credit = 1 hour in class + 2 hours study/week
- Most NMC courses are 3 credits each, so:
- 3 credits = 3 hours in class + 6 hours of study/week
- A student enrolled in 12 credit hours, for example, should expect to commit to a workload of approximately 36 hours per week.

**GRADING SYSTEM**

The following letter grades are used to indicate the quality of scholastic performance in courses taken for academic credit. Each letter grade earns the indicated number of “grade points” which are used to determine the student’s “grade point average” (GPA), i.e., a measure of overall academic performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>4 grade points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>3 grade points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2 grade points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>1 grade point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failing</td>
<td>0 grade points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In place of grades, the following symbols may be given but are not used in computing the GPA:

- CIP. A grade of “CIP” (Course in Progress) is designated for courses, which are designed to be completed after the normal semester ends. This grade is entered on the student’s transcript until the course is completed; at which time it is replaced by a regular letter grade.

- The “I” or Incomplete Grade symbol may be awarded at the instructor’s discretion, subject to approval by the Department Chair, to students engaged in passing work who due to reasons beyond their control, have yet to complete a small but essential part of the course work. This portion of the course work may consist of a final exam, a final research paper, a final project, or not more than two papers for an English Composition course.

- Unless there are extenuating circumstances that the instructor and Department Chair agree are valid reasons for postponing completion of the course work from the end of the term for a maximum of 12 months, the unfinished work should be completed and submitted to the instructor as soon as practicable, but no later than the middle of the following term. Extenuating circumstances are generally considered to be situations over which the student has
little or no control (e.g., personal illness or injury, birth of a child, death of a parent/spouse/child, and catastrophic illness in the immediate family, jury duty, and military service). The Department Chair will make final determination of the submission deadline. If the course work is not completed and submitted by the established deadline, the “I” will automatically be changed to an “F” grade. If a student repeats a course for which an “I” grade was given, that grade will automatically be changed to an “F”.

An exception to this policy on Incomplete: (1) For those courses which do not use the “F” grade, the equivalent non-credit grade will be assigned, and (2) All grades of Incomplete must be resolved prior to certification for graduation. If a student who is applying for graduation has an unresolved Incomplete at the time the Registrar certifies their eligibility for graduation, the “I” will be changed to an “F” or equivalent non-credit grade and used in the final GPA calculation.

W. A Withdrawal “W” is entered on the student’s permanent academic record when a course is dropped in the manner indicated under “Schedule Adjustment: Add/Drop/Withdrawal.”

UW. An “Unofficial Withdrawal” is entered on the student’s permanent academic record when a student did not attend any class sessions for a course, or attended only during ADD/DROP period (first week of instruction) and never thereafter, and did not officially withdraw from the course. A “UW” will be entered on the student’s permanent record.

TF. A “Technical Failure” grade is used only for non-degree unit (NDU) courses. If a student’s academic performance proves to be inadequate, or if the student has excessive absences, a grade of “TF” will be entered on the student’s permanent academic record.

P or NP. There may be special circumstances wherein a student prefers a “P” (Pass) or “NP” (No Pass) option in lieu of a letter grade for a particular course. This option may not be used for any course that is required for General Education or Program credits. It is only available for electives above and beyond required courses. A student wishing to exercise this option must obtain the written permission of the instructor and the Department Chair during the regular registration period. A grade of “P” is given when the student, in the judgment of the instructor, has demonstrated an acceptable mastery of the subject matter to warrant being given credit for the course. A grade of “NP” is given when such is not the case.

A grade of “P” awards the student the number of academic credits assigned to the course, but it is not calculated in the student’s GPA. Students should be aware that a “P” grade is rarely accepted for transfer by other institutions of higher learning, nor can NMC convert a “P” grade to a letter grade for any reason. Grading for ED 492, Practicum in Student Teaching: A, Pass, No Credit (A, P, NP).

AU. Audited courses are designated by the symbol “AU” on the student’s transcript [see AUDITING COURSES (NO CREDIT)].

NP. “NP” (No Pass) is a specific symbol reserved for English Language Institute (ELI) courses, developmental mathematics courses, and developmental reading and writing courses for the deaf and hard of hearing.

Some students may make progress in fulfilling proficiency requirements for such courses, but not enough progress to receive a “P” and move on to the next level. In such cases they receive a symbol of “NP”, and must register for and retake the course until the required proficiency
has been reached. An “NP” symbol indicates that the student is making progress within that level, but needs more practice before qualifying for promotion to the next level.

The “NP” symbol is not a failing grade. A failing grade of “TF” is given to an ELI or developmental math student whose performance has been inadequate. Grading for ED 492, Practicum in Student Teaching: A, Pass, or No Credit (A, P, NP).

NDU. This is an abbreviation for “Non-degree Unit”, and indicates that the credits earned are for developmental courses not counted toward the total credits required for the Associate Degree.

Note: Grades of CIP, I, W, P, NP, TF and AU, are not included when computing a student’s GPA. Recipients of financial aid or veteran educational benefits should also note that grades of “TF”, “NP” and “AU” cannot be used to meet “satisfactory progress” requirements.

CR. “Credit”: The “CR” symbol is reserved for Advanced Placement only.

GRADE APPEALS

The assignment of grades is a faculty responsibility. If a student disagrees with an assigned grade, he/she may choose to undertake an appeal process by following these procedures:

1. The student meets with the instructor for a review and justification of the grade.
2. If, after meeting with the instructor, the student still disagrees with the grade, he/she contacts the Chair of the department that offered the course for a further review.
3. The Department Chair meets with the instructor for a review and justification of the grade. The Department Chair performs the review if the instructor of the course is no longer employed by the college.
4. If the disagreement remains, the student may file an appeal to the Dean of Academic Programs and Services only after completing the above steps in an effort at a resolution.
5. If the disagreement remains after completing the above steps, the student may file a formal student grievance with the Office of the Dean of Student Services (See Student Appeal and Grievances Procedure).

An appeal for a grade change, if necessary, should be initiated as soon as possible but no later than the end of the following semester (excluding summer). Should a Grievance and Fairness Committee issue a decision to change the grade, the Dean of Student Services will notify the student in writing and issue a memorandum to the Registrar on the decision of the committee to effectuate a change to the student’s permanent academic record.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

A GPA is computed from the credit hours of all courses (100-level or above) for which conventional grades are reported. The GPA is determined by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the total number of credits attempted for which a letter grade of A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0 has been assigned, excluding those credits for which Grades of “I,” “W,”
“UW,” “P,” “NP,” “AU,” “CR,” or “TF,” are assigned. Transfer credit hours and grades are not used to calculate the GPA.

“GPA” = number of grade points earned divided by the number of credit hours attempted, excluding symbols of “I,” “W,” “UW,” “P,” “NP,” “AU,” “CR,” and “TF”.

“Term GPA” = grade point average for the term just concluded, excluding symbols of “I,” “W,” “UW,” “P,” “NP,” “AU,” “CR,” and “TF”.

“Cumulative GPA” = grade point average for all terms combined, excluding symbols of “I,” “W,” “UW,” “P,” “NP,” “AU,” “CR,” and “TF”.

**EDUCATIONAL LEVELS**

A matriculated student is one who has complied with all requirements for admission to the college and has received an official Notice of Admission. All students taking courses in any regular semester must be matriculated students. Only in summer sessions may a student who has not matriculated be enrolled in classes.

**Freshman:** A Student who has earned less than 30 credits towards the requirement of a Certificate or Associate Degree.

Note: Non-degree credits not applicable for financial aid purposes.

**Sophomore:** A Student who has earned 31 credits or more towards the requirements of a Certificate or Associate Degree.

Note: Non-degree credits not applicable for financial aid purposes.

**Junior:** A Student who has earned 61 to 90 credits towards an Associate or Baccalaureate Degree.

Note: Non-degree credits not applicable for financial aid purposes.

**Senior:** A Student who has earned 91 credits and above.

Note: Non-degree credits not applicable for financial aid purposes.

**Graduate:** A student who has completed a four-year college course with an acceptable baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and who has been admitted to the college with post-baccalaureate standing.

Diploma Students, Undeclared Students, and Special Students are not assigned educational levels by the College.

**GRADE REPORTS**

Term grade reports are normally available and are mailed to students two weeks after the grades are due from instructors.

Upon receiving a grade report, the student should carefully check the accuracy of the courses, term credit hours, and grades recorded. The assignment of grades is a faculty responsibility. If a student disagrees with an assigned grade, he/she may choose to undertake an appeal process by following these procedures:
1. The student meets with the instructor for a review and justification of the grade.
2. If, after meeting with the instructor, the student still disagrees with the grade, he/she contacts the Chair of the department that offered the course for a further review.
3. The Department Chair meets with the instructor for a review and justification of the grade.
4. If disagreement remains, the student may file an appeal to the Dean of Academic Programs and Services only after completing the above steps in an effort at resolution (see STUDENT APPEAL).

An appeal for a grade change, if necessary, should be initiated as soon as possible but no later than the end of the following semester (excluding summer). Should a decision be made to change the grade, the instructor must submit a Change of Grade form to the Office of the Dean of Academic Programs and Services for processing and approval.

**ACADEMIC RECORDS**

The Office of Admissions and Records (OAR) maintains the official academic records on all students. Prior to presentation to the faculty for vote on the conferring of degrees, the qualifications of degree candidates are checked against the official record. The OAR also maintains the official roster of students; records of academic probations, suspensions, and dismissals; records of honors; and other academic records.

**ACADEMIC HONORS**

Students who excel in their academic studies will be recognized by having their names placed on the President’s List, Dean’s List, or Part-time Honors list of outstanding students. The student must be enrolled in a degree program in courses at the 100 level or above, and grades received must be academic letter grades in order for the student to be recognized with honors.

**PRESIDENT’S LIST**

Full-time students whose term grade point average is 3.96 or above are listed on the President’s List. This honor is printed on the student’s grade report and permanent academic record.

**DEAN’S LIST**

Full-time students whose term grade point average is 3.75 to 3.95 inclusive are listed on the Dean’s List. This honor is printed on the student’s grade report and permanent academic record.

**PART-TIME STUDENT HONORS**

Students who are carrying from six to 11 credits (inclusive) per term, and whose term grade point average is 3.96 or above, are listed as receiving honors on their grade report and permanent academic record.