MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Peter Quigley, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, UHCC
Suzette Robinson, Director of Academic Programs, UHCC

SUBJECT: Recommendations for Grading Options

As Acting Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs for Leeward Community College in the Spring of 2015, I invited representatives with a variety of responsibilities from each UHCC campus to form the Ad Hoc Committee for Grading Options. We commenced discussion on August 4, 2015 and concluded our deliberations on November 10, 2015 with the following recommendations.

James Goodman
Convener, Grading Options Ad Hoc Committee
UHCC Student Success Council
Ad Hoc Committee for Grading Options
Recommendations

1. Summary
Based upon the responses of representatives from all of the University of Hawai‘i Community Colleges, the Ad Hoc Committee for Grading Options recommends the below grading options.

   a. The grading option for (developmental) co-requisite courses in Math and English should be Credit/No Credit (Cr/NC).

   b. Students who pass the 100-level course should earn credit for that course regardless of their grade (Cr/NC) in the (developmental) co-requisite course.

   c. For the 100-level course, the grading option should be A-F (and Credit/No Credit*).

As the recommendations reflect the views of the majority of campuses, in the three major recommendations (found in the below items 3, 4, and 5), the advantages and disadvantages are listed under each of those recommendations.

2. Definition of Co-Requisite Course
In this document, the co-requisite model refers to two courses that are taken concurrently. It does not include a sequential model such as the 8-week/8-week model.

   For Math, this refers to MATH 78 and MATH 88.

   For English, this refers to ENG 22 in an ALP model (based on CC Baltimore County) and the to-be-determined new co-requisite course.

3. Recommendations for Co-Requisite Course Grading Options
   a. Recommendation--Cr/NC, where Cr represents readiness for the next instructional level, passing with a C or better.

   b. Advantages

      i. Students might sacrifice study time in the 100-level course trying to earn a higher letter grade in the remedial co-requisite course that does not count toward their degree. The point of the companion co-requisite course is to support success in the transfer course. Letter grades are a distraction.

      ii. VA benefits--If a student receives an F, he/she is not required to pay back the money from VA benefits. However, if a student receives an N, NC or I, he/she must pay back the tuition for that course.

      iii. Cr/NC grades do not affect GPA, whereas letter grades do.

   c. Disadvantages

      i. Cr/NC grades lack the incentive or reward of letter grades for students.

      ii. Some students may not perceive of co-requisite as a “real” course if it does not have “real” grades, and therefore students may not take the course seriously.
iii. Success (in terms of grades) in co-requisite course often bolsters students’ confidence and motivation in the 100-level course.

iv. There is no D grade where students won’t pass the course, but for financial aid purposes they can still earn credit (for earning the required 67% of credits carried each semester).

v. Restricting grading options to just Cr/NC limits the ability for students and instructors to meet individual students’ needs.

4. Do students need to pass co-requisite course to pass 100-level course?
   a. Recommendation--No
   b. Advantages
      i. The purpose of the co-requisite course is to support students in passing the college-level course. A student is ultimately evaluated by the target college-level course (sufficiently meeting the SLOs).
      ii. Allows for students who were “misplaced” to stop attending co-requisite course if it is no longer needed.
   c. Disadvantages
      i. Student may not participate in or attend co-requisite course regularly if they think passing the co-requisite course is not necessary to earn a passing grade in the 100-level course. ALP students often do well at the beginning of the semester with earlier assignments, but often need much more support as the semester progresses.
      ii. If one student (even if s/he were misplaced) is allowed to miss the co-requisite course and still pass, it would set a bad example for the rest of the students who need the support of the co-requisite course.
      iii. It disrupts the benefits of the cohort-effect in an ALP class if students see the co-requisite course as optional and attend sporadically.

5. Recommendations for College-Level Course
   a. Recommendation--A-F (and Cr/NC*)
   b. Advantages
      i. The majority of campuses are already using A-F grades for college-level course.
      ii. Students who receive VA benefits will not have to pay back tuition for courses in which they receive an F grade. They do have to pay back tuition for N, NC or I grades.
   c. Disadvantages
      i. An F grade negatively affects students’ GPAs, whereas an N grade does not impact students’ GPAs.

*The Credit/No Credit option is only if a student does not intend to use the course (such as ENG 100 or Math 103) to fulfill a graduation or program requirement. Courses used to fulfill graduation and program requirements must be taken for letter grades.