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## The Grade of "D" in Core Classes

Robert Costomiris  
*Georgia Southern University*

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# The Grade of "D" in Core Classes

Submitted by Robert Costomiris

3/4/2011

## Question:

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Why does the university consider that the grade of "D" indicates the successful completion of most core classes?

Who established this policy?

How long has this policy been in effect?

Does the university think that this policy is in the best interests of students and the university?

## Rationale:

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Getting a "D" in any course is not usually considered a sign of success. In some core classes and in all major classes, the grade of "C" is required because a "C" is considered to be synonymous with "satisfactory," i.e., that the student who gets a "C" has demonstrated the "required mastery of the material" (to quote the old print version of the GSU catalogue). The grade of "D", by implication, is not satisfactory and implies that the student's grasp of the material covered in the course is "minimal."

If GSU is really trying to educate the citizens of Georgia, why do we accept unsatisfactory work in some of our core classes?

I raised the question during a meeting of the CLASS Faculty Advisory Board.

## Senate Response:

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Minutes: 4/18/2011: Request for Information: The Grade of "D" in Core Classes: Robert Costomiris (CLASS) Professor Robert Costomiris (CLASS) requested information about the Grade of "D" in Core Classes. Specifically, "Why does the university consider that the grade of "D" indicates the successful completion of most core classes? Who

established this policy? How long has this policy been in effect? Does the university think that this policy is in the best interests of students and the university?"

The rationale behind this request read as follows: "Getting a 'D' in any course is not usually considered a sign of success. In some core classes and in all major classes, the grade of 'C' is required because a 'C' is considered to be synonymous with 'satisfactory,' i.e., that the student who gets a 'C' has demonstrated the 'required mastery of the material' (to quote the old print version of the GSU catalog). The grade of 'D', by implication, is not satisfactory and implies that the student's grasp of the material covered in the course is 'minimal.' If GSU is really trying to educate the citizens of Georgia, why do we accept unsatisfactory work in some of our core classes?" The question had already been raised during a meeting of the Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Faculty Advisory Board. The Senate Executive Committee accepted the request for information and forwarded it to Mike Deal, who is the University Registrar. The response, dated April 14, 2011, read as follows:

### **Other Response:**

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Dr. Costomiris,

In response to your questions, please see below:

1. Why does the university consider that the grade of "D" indicates the successful completion of most core classes?

Reply: Georgia Southern, as a member of the University System of Georgia, uses the grading policy described below in the Board of Regents' Policy Manual and Board of Regents' Academic Affairs Handbook at the following links. (The links are available at the SharePoint website, provided that SharePoint is cooperating.) Board of Regents' Policy Manual All USG institutions shall be on a 4.00 grade point average system, calculated to and truncated at two significant digits. The following grades are approved for use in institutions in the determination of the Grade Point Average: Grade

Grade Point Average  
A Excellent (4.00)  
B Good (3.00)  
C Satisfactory (2.00)  
D Passing (1.00)  
F Failure (0.00)  
WF Withdrew failing (0.00)

Academic Affairs Handbook 2.4.9 Transfer Rules Provided that native and transfer students are treated equally, institutions may impose additional reasonable expectations, such as a grade of “C” in Area A–F courses.

Georgia Southern’s core curriculum was approved by the university’s curriculum committee, Undergraduate Committee, which is a standing committee of Faculty Senate. As the core was considered for approval, minimum grades required to satisfy core curriculum were determined based on the University System policy stating that minimum grades of “C” or better may be established in Core Area A-F courses.

2. Who established this policy?

Reply: See response to question #1, basically the Board of Regents.

2. How long has this policy been in effect?

Reply: The core curriculum was revised with the conversion to the semester system in 1998 and was just recently revised to be compliant with the USG core policies effective Fall 2011.

3. Does the university think that this policy is in the best interest of students and the university?

Reply, speaking for himself: I am only able to confirm that the core curriculum requirements have been reviewed and approved by the appropriate university processes.

Clara Krug (CLASS) Chair, Senate Executive Committee, asked for questions. There being none, the meeting proceeded to the next request.

TO: Dr. Robert Costomiris

FROM: Mike Deal  
Registrar

DATE: April 14, 2011

SUBJ: Faculty Senate RFI: Grade of “D” in Core Classes

Dr. Costomiris,

In response to your questions, please see below:

1. Why does the university consider that the grade of “D” indicates the successful completion of most core classes?

Reply: Georgia Southern, as a member of the University System of Georgia, uses the grading policy described below in the Board of Regents’ Policy Manual and Board of Regents’ Academic Affairs Handbook at the following links which includes the “D” as a “Passing” grade:

Board of Regents’ Policy Manual: <http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/>

Academic Affairs Handbook: [http://www.usg.edu/academic\\_affairs\\_handbook/](http://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/)

Board of Regents’ Policy Manual

3.5 Grading System

3.5.1 Grade Point Average

All USG institutions shall be on a 4.00 grade point average system, calculated to and truncated at two significant digits.

3.5.1.1 Grades Approved in Determining the Grade Point Average

The following grades are approved for use in institutions in the determination of the Grade Point Average:

Grade Grade Point Average

A Excellent (4.00)

B Good (3.00)

C Satisfactory (2.00)

D Passing (1.00)

F Failure (0.00)

WF Withdrew failing (0.00)

Academic Affairs Handbook

2.4.9 Transfer Rules

Provided that native and transfer students are treated equally, institutions may impose additional reasonable expectations, such as a grade of “C” in Area A–F courses.

Georgia Southern’s core curriculum was approved by the university’s curriculum committee, Undergraduate Committee, which is a standing committee of Faculty Senate. As the core was considered for approval, minimum grades required to satisfy core curriculum were determined based on the University System policy stating that minimum grades of “C” or better may be established in Core Area A-F courses.

2. Who established this policy?

Reply: See response to question #1.

3. How long has this policy been in effect?

Reply: The core curriculum was revised with the conversion to the semester system in 1998 and was just recently revised to be compliant with the USG core policies effective Fall 2011.

4. Does the university think that this policy is in the best interest of students and the university?

Reply: I am only able to confirm that the core curriculum requirements have been reviewed and approved by the appropriate university processes.

4/5/2011: The SEC approved R. Costomiris' RFI and referred it to Mike Deal.