

The purpose of Gwinnett Tech's academic policies is to ensure fairness and consistency in the manner in which academic performance is administered, evaluated and communicated to students. Academic performance is measured by comparing the student's actual acquisition of skills and knowledge with the prescribed learning outcomes of courses and programs. Such skill and knowledge, validated by the Technical College System of Georgia and local occupational advisory committees, is designed to prepare students for successful entry and advancement in their respective career choices.

## **Academic Freedom and Intellectual Property**

Through its mission, Gwinnett Tech is dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge that is vital to the workforce needs of the community. The college also affirms its commitment to the principles of academic freedom and encourages faculty, staff and students in the development of new teaching methodologies, scholarly works, educational software, and all other intellectual property. The complete intellectual property policy is available for faculty and staff in the standard operating policies and procedures, and is in full compliance with those policies and procedures as established in the Technical College System of Georgia. Copies of the intellectual property policy are available in the Office of Academic Affairs.

## **Academic Integrity**

Gwinnett Tech expects students, faculty, and staff to conduct themselves with honesty, character and academic integrity. Academic integrity is defined by the Center for Academic Integrity <http://www.academicintegrity.org/> as "a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility." Gwinnett Tech promotes and expects all members of the college community to conduct themselves professionally and with intellectual integrity.

Gwinnett Tech considers academic integrity an integral part of learning. Any infraction of this honesty policy is detrimental to the student's education and the integrity of the college. The following cases of dishonesty are strictly forbidden:

- Plagiarizing any assignment. "Plagiarism" means using someone else's ideas or words without using quotation marks and/or giving credit by citation of source(s).
- Copying/submitting another person's work.
- Unauthorized taking of someone else's work.
- Using unauthorized notes or equipment (including programmable calculators) during an examination.
- Stealing an examination or using a stolen examination for any purpose.
- Allowing another student to have access to your work, thereby enabling that student to represent the work as his or her own.
- Having someone else take a quiz or exam in your place or assisting someone in any way during a quiz or exam, or using any unauthorized electronic device or other unauthorized method of support during a quiz or exam.

- Fabricating information, such as data for a lab report.
- Falsifying a patient's medical record or a student's clinical record, or any other student record, including a record of attendance.
- Using another person's file or diskette or copying another student's computer program.

Instructors may use any one or more of the following disciplinary measures for addressing instances of dishonesty:

- Award a zero for the assignment;
- Assign a failing ("F") grade for the course;
- Recommend the dismissal of the student from the program.

Additionally, if an online student is suspected of dishonesty, the instructor can require the student to take onsite or proctored tests, or to complete other assessments to authenticate the student's level of proficiency.

### Academic Status

Students attending Gwinnett Tech are expected to meet certain academic standards. Students who maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (C) or better are considered to be in good academic standing.

**Academic Warning.** Students who do not earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 (C) will be placed on academic warning. "Academic warning" will appear on the student's transcript. Additionally, when accessing grade reports via [www.gtc-web.org](http://www.gtc-web.org), "academic warning" will appear on a student's grade report. Students who earn a minimum quarterly GPA of 2.0 (C) for the following quarter but do not have an average cumulative GPA of 2.0 (C) will remain on Academic Warning.

**Academic Probation.** Students who do not earn a minimum GPA of 2.0 (C) for the next quarter of enrollment following an academic warning will be placed on academic probation. "Academic probation" will appear on the student's transcript. Additionally, when accessing grade reports via [www.gtc-web.org](http://www.gtc-web.org), "academic probation" will appear. Students on academic probation will be limited to enrollment of no more than 15 credit hours for the period of probation.

**Academic Dismissal.** Students who do not achieve a minimum GPA of 2.0 (C) for the next quarter of enrollment following academic probation will be dismissed from the college. "Academic Dismissal" will appear on the student's transcript. Additionally, when accessing grade reports via [www.gtc-web.org](http://www.gtc-web.org), "academic dismissal" will appear.

Students who have been academically dismissed from the college the first time will be eligible to return after one quarter. Additional admissions testing will not be required unless the applicant fails to meet minimum admission standards as required by a particular program of study. Students who return after academic dismissal will be placed on academic probation and must meet with an advisement center advisor prior to registration. Readmitted students who do not achieve a minimum 2.0 (C) grade point average for the first quarter of re-enrollment will again be academically dismissed from the college and will not be eligible to return for one full calendar year from the ending of the quarter of dismissal.

**Attendance Policy.** Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to be on time for each class. Students are expected to be punctual and attend all classes for which they are registered. Instructors will keep an accurate record of class attendance. Students anticipating an absence or tardy should contact the instructor in advance or provide notification as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of the student to account for instructional time missed and to seek permission for make-up work at the discretion of the instructor. If the student does not attend classes, submit assignments, or when applicable contact instructors in a timely manner (either in person, phone, or e-mail) a failing grade(s) may be issued. Students are advised of the attendance policy for each class by the instructor and through the course syllabus. *Special attendance policies may be required for some programs.*

**Absence.** An absence will be recorded when a student misses class or is tardy more than 10 minutes past the start of a class hour. This policy does not include students who attend approved field trips, who complete assignments early as authorized by the instructor, or who participate in an open lab situation. This policy also does not include students who are called for jury or military duty. In all such cases, students must inform their instructors (and the Financial Aid Office, if appropriate) prior to their absence, when possible, and provide appropriate documentation.

**Administrative Withdrawal.** Any student who does not meet the instructor's standards for scheduled contact hours for any class will be administratively withdrawn from the class and assigned a grade of "WF" for the course (which is equivalent to a failing grade).

Online students who fail to participate in class over a two-week period may be administratively withdrawn and assigned a grade of "WF" for the course (which is equivalent to a failing grade).

**Appeal of Administrative Withdrawal.** Students have the right to appeal an administrative withdrawal with the vice president of academic affairs. Dismissal of an administrative withdrawal is limited to certain criteria which may include, but is not limited to: hospitalization of the student, the death of an immediate family member during the quarter of the withdrawal, the student being assigned to active military duty or jury duty for more than three consecutive days during the quarter. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the vice president of academic affairs no later than one week (seven days) from the date of notification of the administrative withdrawal. Students should inform their instructor of their appeal and continue attending class while the appeal is in process, unless otherwise advised. All decisions on appeals of administrative withdrawals rendered by the vice president of academic affairs shall be final.

**No Show.** Students who do not attend class by the second scheduled class meeting and who do not officially withdraw from the course by the second class meeting will be designated as "no show" and will be removed from the class roll. Online students who do not log in during the first seven calendar days of the quarter will be dropped as a "no show." Hybrid courses that meet once per week count as two class meetings so students must attend or log in during week one to avoid "no show" designation. The course will not appear on the student's academic record and 100% refund of applicable tuition and applicable refundable fees will be given. Financial aid students will be responsible for all charges related to any classes for which they are designated as "no show." Financial aid will not pay for "no-show" classes. It is the student's responsibility to confirm their registration status for each course. Appeals regarding no shows will not be entertained past the second week of the term.

**Tardy.** A tardy will be recorded when a student arrives one to ten minutes late for a class. When a student is tardy more than 10 minutes of a class hour, an absence will be recorded for one class period.

### **Competency-Based Courses**

Course syllabi identify those competencies that should be demonstrated by students in order to successfully complete a course. Course syllabi may also identify certain competencies as critical. Competencies may be further described and/or governed in supplemental course policy statements, schedules, assignment lists, etc., provided to students.

Assessments of a student's level of competence may be achieved by, but are not limited to, the following methods: written, oral and/or practical quizzes, tests and examinations; assigned written and/or oral projects (including homework assignments, term papers, classroom presentations, etc.); and classroom, laboratory, and/or clinical observations of student learning activities.

In order for a student to receive credit for a course, the final weighted average of all course assessments must be a minimum of 70 percent. However, failure to demonstrate achievement of any critical competency(ies) by the end of a quarter will result in a grade of "F."

Students who fail to demonstrate achievement of any critical competency(ies) during the quarter may, if authorized by the instructor, be given an additional assessment opportunity to demonstrate competence. The additional opportunity will be comparable to, but not necessarily identical to, the initial assessment. The maximum grade awarded for the additional assessment will be determined by the instructor.

A student who fails the final assessment of any critical competency(ies) during a quarter may be administratively withdrawn from the course if continued participation is deemed harmful to the student and/or to others.

### **Course Cancellation and Instructor Changes**

Gwinnett Tech will make every effort to offer scheduled courses. The college reserves the right, however, to cancel courses due to insufficient student enrollment. In the event of a course cancellation, the academic affairs office will give students the option of receiving a refund, if appropriate, or changing to another class based on availability. The college also reserves the right to change instructors, as well as course dates, times and locations from those published in the course listings.

### **Course Credit**

Course credit awarded by other than satisfactory completion of a course at Gwinnett Tech may be earned for the following (as described on pages 20 to 22):

- Advanced Placement Credit
- Secondary Articulation Credit
- College Level Examination Placement Credit (CLEP)
- Exemption Exam
- Credit by Transfer
- Military Credit (See Credit by Transfer)
- Non-Collegiate Course Credit

## Learning Support

Gwinnett Tech offers academic support through learning support courses for students whose transcripts, SAT scores, and/or placement tests in math, reading, and/or writing indicate a lack of academic preparation for regular programs of study. Students whose transcripts or placement test scores show an underdevelopment in any or all of these areas are required to successfully complete the appropriate learning support course(s) before they are fully accepted to a program of study. The required learning support courses are identified during the admissions process and reported to the student.

Learning support courses are divided into two tracks - certificate/diploma and associate degree level. Student test scores may indicate that a sequence of both diploma and degree learning support courses are needed.

The following policies apply to all students required to take learning support courses:

- If a student receives 80% or better in MAT 0098A, MAT 0098B, MAT 0099A, ENG 0096, ENG 0097, RDG 0096 or RDG 0097, he/she is eligible to take the COMPASS exit exam with instructor referral. Exit exam must be taken in same quarter as course.
- If a student receives 70% or better in RDG 0098, ENG 0098, or MAT 0099B he/she is eligible to take the COMPASS exit exam with instructor referral. Exit exam must be taken in same quarter as course.
- Students must complete required learning support reading and English courses or pass exit exams before taking college level English, math, psychology and sciences.
- Students who test into RDG 0096, 0097, or 0098 must enroll in the lowest course in his/her required reading sequence and must re-enroll the following quarter, if needed, until it is passed. Each course in the reading sequence must be taken during subsequent quarters until all are passed.
- Students who test into two or more learning support subject areas must enroll in at least one learning support course every quarter until the entire learning support sequence in all subject areas has been completed or the exit exams passed. It is strongly recommended that students who test into two or more learning support subject areas enroll in the college study skills (COL 0098) course during their first quarter of attendance
- If a student receives a passing grade of A or B in ENG 1010 or MAT 1012, he/she is eligible to retest on the COMPASS. The student must pay the retest fee.

## Elective Courses

Students must choose approved electives based on the list provided in the program of study area in the catalog of their year of acceptance. Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree program elective courses may be inside or outside the program of study. However, diploma-level general education core courses cannot be used as electives in degree programs.

## Prerequisite Courses

Students must meet the prerequisite requirements based on the current catalog. Prerequisites are listed in the catalog under course descriptions.

## Grades

The purpose of Gwinnett Tech's grading system is to establish policies and standards which are fair to all students and ensure that all courses include an effective and uniform policy

for assessing and awarding grades. The grading system and course weights for each course are explained to students by the instructor at the beginning of the quarter and are included in the course syllabus. Grades are posted on [www.gtc-web.org](http://www.gtc-web.org) at the end of the quarter and are available for student access and review.

**Letter Grades.** Values of letter grades are as follows:

A = 90 - 100	I = Incomplete	EX = Credit by Examination
B = 80 - 89	W = Withdrew	TR = Credit by Transfer
C = 70 - 79	WF = Withdrew Failing	A* = Learning Support
D = 60 - 69	AC = Articulated Credit	B* = Learning Support
F = 59 and below	AU = Audit/Warranty	C* = Learning Support

For students to receive credit for a course, a minimum of 70 percent (C) is required. This course must be completed with a “C” or better before the student will be eligible to start any additional course work that requires this class as a prerequisite.

When students successfully repeat a course in which they received an F or WF, the new grade is added to the transcript. The F or WF also remains on the transcript. An incomplete grade can only be given to students who are passing a course but who cannot complete the course for good cause. These students will be awarded an incomplete, or “I” grade, and will be given an extension of three weeks into the following quarter to complete the course. If the work is not completed within 21 calendar days from the first day of the following quarter, the “I” grade will be automatically awarded an “F” grade for the course. Under extenuating circumstances, the student may petition the course instructor in writing for a specified extension of time beyond the three-week period, but must do so and receive approval prior to the end of the initial extension period.

All continuing education participants will be assigned S, U, or W grades.

### **Course Repeat Policy/Forfeiture of Credit**

If a student registers for a course for which he/she has already received credit, the student forfeits the previous credit in that course for graduation purposes and will be calculated for purposes of meeting graduation requirements. *Students who receive a grade of D, F, U, W, or WF three times for the same course will be prohibited from retaking the course at the college.* Exceptions to this policy can only be made by the vice president of academic affairs.

**Work Ethics Grades.** Nationally, as well as in Georgia, employers have expressed concerns about work ethics as one of their top issues. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that 80 percent of workers who lose their jobs do so not because of the lack of occupational skills, but because of poor work ethics. In response, the Technical College System of Georgia requires that technical education include an evaluation of occupational skills and work ethics. Each course will have two grade components assigned. In addition, to a course grade a Work Ethics grade is also posted on the transcript.

The curriculum for work ethics was developed and has been established statewide. The ten work ethics are identified and listed below:

- Attendance: the student attends class, arrives/leaves on time, notifies instructor in advance of planned absences, and makes up assignments punctually.
- Character: the student displays loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness, dependability, reliability, initiative, self-discipline, and self-responsibility.
- Teamwork: the student respects the rights of others, is a team worker, is cooperative, is assertive, displays a customer service attitude, seeks opportunities for continuous learning, displays mannerly behavior.

- Appearance: the student displays appropriate dress, grooming, hygiene, and etiquette.
- Attitude: the student demonstrates a positive attitude, appears self-confident, and has realistic expectation of self.
- Productivity: the student follows safety practices, conserves materials, keeps work area neat and clean, and follows directions/procedures.
- Organizational skills: the student manifests skills in personal management, time management, prioritizing, flexibility, stress management, and dealing with change.
- Communication: the student displays appropriate verbal and nonverbal skills.
- Cooperation: the student displays leadership skills, appropriately handles criticism and complaints, demonstrates problem-solving capability, maintains appropriate relationships with supervisors and peers, and follows chain of command.
- Respect: the student deals appropriately with cultural/racial diversity, and does not engage in any harassment of any kind.

The Work Ethics grading scale is as follows:

Exceeds Expectations	=	3 points
Meets Expectations	=	2 points
Needs Improvement	=	1 point
Unacceptable	=	0 points

Work Ethics grades are not assigned for learning support classes or for courses where “W” or “WF” grades have been assigned.

### Grade Appeals

A student who elects to appeal an academic grade is required to adhere to the following process:

**Step 1.** The student first appeals a final grade to the course instructor. The appeal must be written and submitted no later than the 15th calendar day of the following quarter. The instructor will respond in writing within seven calendar days.

**Step 2.** If the appeal is not resolved at Step 1, the student may appeal to the appropriate division director. This appeal must be written and submitted within seven calendar days after receipt of notification from Step 1. The division director will respond in writing within seven calendar days.

**Step 3.** If the appeal is not resolved at Step 2, the student may appeal to the office of academic affairs. This appeal must be written and submitted within seven calendar days after receipt of notification from Step 2. You must submit any documentation you wish considered by the appeal committee with your written statement that you wish to continue step 3 of the appeal. The office of academic affairs will review the appeal and determine further steps to be taken. If necessary, the office of academic affairs will assemble a five-member appeals committee including two faculty members from the division in which the appeal was initiated, but outside of the program concerned; one faculty member from another division; one member from Student Affairs; and one division director. This step, including any student and/or faculty interviews and the committee’s written response to the student by the division director on the committee, should be completed within seven calendar days.

The decision of the appeals committee on an academic grade is final.

During the grade appeal process and unless otherwise advised, the student should continue to attend classes in which he/she is enrolled. Health Science or Public Safety

students in an appeal process should contact the appropriate division director or the Office of Academic Affairs to receive direction and approval of further attendance. Appeals of work ethics grades will follow the above steps, but will conclude at Step 2. The division director's decision on a work ethics grade appeal is final.

**Grade Changes**

Instructors may change assigned grades up to a maximum of two quarters after the grade was originally assigned. Any requests for grade changes after two quarters will require approval by the vice president of academic affairs.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)**

A student's academic standing is based on a cumulative and term grade point average (GPA). All credit hours attempted at Gwinnett Tech in any program of study are used in calculating the GPA. Credit earned in other institutions, credit by examination, credit by articulation, and credit given for learning support classes are not used in computing GPA.

The numerical grade points for academic letter grades are as follows:

A .....	4.0	D .....	1.0
B .....	3.0	F .....	0
C .....	2.0	WF .....	0

The grades of EX, I, W, TR, AU and AC do not have numerical grade points and are not used in calculating the GPA. Learning support courses are awarded grades of A\*, B\*, C\*, D\* or F\*. These courses do not generate grade points and are not used in the calculation of the academic GPA.

**Withdrawal Policy**

Each quarter students' class schedules become official upon payment of required fees (either by the student or by award of financial aid). Students who drop a class by the third day of the quarter will be removed from the class roll, and the course will not show on the student's academic record. 100% refund is issued for classes dropped by day three of the term.

Thereafter, students may officially withdraw from a course without academic penalty by the designated withdrawal date for the quarter and receive a "W" grade for the course. The "W" grade is not computed in the student's grade point average, but does count in terms of financial aid eligibility. To officially withdraw from a course, students must complete a Notice of Withdrawal form and return the form to the Registrar's Office. There is no refund for classes withdrawn after day three of the term.

Students who withdraw after the designated withdrawal date for the quarter will receive a "WF" grade, unless a "W" grade is approved by the vice president of academic affairs through the appeal process for administrative withdrawal (see page 69). Students must complete a Notice of Withdrawal form as above. A "WF" grade is computed in the student's grade point average as a failing grade and counts toward the student's financial aid eligibility.

Each academic program at Gwinnett Tech identifies outcomes to address the continuous improvement of education. The learning outcomes are directly addressed by methods and criteria designed to demonstrate achievement of those outcomes, and improvements are implemented that impact the quality of each program's function. A learning outcome is a brief, clear statement identifying in measurable terms the intended result of achievement of competencies. Learning outcomes focus on the specific performance(s) students are

expected to demonstrate when the outcome is achieved. The means of assessment is a description of the methodology used to gather data in order to determine whether the learning outcomes have been achieved. Success criterion is a statement of the specific standards that identify successful achievement of the intended learning outcome.

**Electives.** Electives are designated in two ways – general and technical or technically-related. Students may choose general electives from the variety of programs offered at Gwinnett Tech. Students must choose technical or technically-related electives from the program area indicated with academic advisor approval. Students must also meet all prerequisites for elective courses, including test scores.

**Note:** Diploma-level general education courses cannot be used as electives in associate degree programs.

### **Associate of Applied Science in Health**

Students who have completed a Technical College System of Georgia health program at a diploma level may have that training apply toward earning an associate degree. The associate of applied science degree in health studies applies to those students who are best served by a customized degree.

### **Credit by Examination. (See page 21.)**

**Non-collegiate Sponsored Credit.** Students requesting credit for non-collegiate sponsored instruction must bring a transcript of the instructional activity or an official copy of the test results for inclusion in their academic records. Certificates of attendance or completion along with an official course description will suffice if the institution or training agency does not provide official transcripts; copies will be placed in the student's academic record. Credit awards are to be in compliance with American Council on Education (ACE) or other agency guidelines. If credit is being requested for training not evaluated by ACE or another official agency, the credit award may be recommended by an advisory committee/subcommittee convened for that purpose or by a committee appointed by the vice president of academic affairs.

### **Technical Education Guarantee**

The Technical College System of Georgia has developed curriculum standards with the direct involvement of business and industry. These standards serve as the industry-validated specifications for each occupational program. These standards allow Georgia's technical colleges to offer their business partners the following guarantee.

"If one of our graduates who were educated under a standard program and his/her employer agree that the employee is deficient in one or more competencies as defined in the standards, the technical college will retrain that employee at no instructional cost to employee or employer."

This guarantee applies to all Gwinnett Tech graduates who are employed in their field of training and is in effect for a period of two years after graduation.

### **Transferability**

Transferability of Gwinnett Tech courses is assured by all other Technical College System of Georgia technical colleges. Occupational and academic core courses in the associate degree curriculum are transferable to other colleges and universities at the discretion of the receiving institution.

**Articulation Agreements**

An articulation agreement allows students from Gwinnett Technical College to apply transfer credit to a participating institution for a bachelor's degree. For additional information on specific agreements, please contact the program director for your area of interest.