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UNC Charlotte Academic Policy: Academic Distinctions

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For recognition of their academic prowess, students who achieve a defined GPA are recommended for the Dean's List or Chancellor's List each semester, and are eligible to graduate with distinction, as outlined in this policy.

Please note: Exceptions were made for Spring 2020 and for the Academic Year 2020-2021 (Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021) due to COVID-19.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

CHANCELLOR'S LIST

The Chancellor's List recognizes undergraduate degree-seeking students with superb records of academic performance. To qualify for the Chancellor's List during the fall or spring semester, a full-time student must be in good academic standing and earn a grade point average of at least 3.8 in 12 or more credit hours graded A, B, or C, with no grade less than C. A part-time student must be in good academic standing and earn a combined Fall and Spring grade point average of at least 3.8 in 12 or more credit hours graded A, B, or C, with no grade less than C. To qualify for the Chancellor's List as a part-time student, a

student must enroll on a part-time basis in both Fall and Spring semesters in the same academic year. Students who receive the grade of AU or P are not excluded from recognition as long as 12 hours are completed with A, B, or C. Students who receive the grade of D, F, I, NR, or N are not eligible for recognition. Chancellor's List recognition appears on the student's academic record (official transcript).

DEAN'S LIST

The Dean's List recognizes undergraduate degree-seeking students with outstanding records of academic performance. To qualify for the Dean's List during the Fall or Spring semester, a full-time student must be in good academic standing and earn a grade point average of at least 3.4 and not more than 3.79 in 12 or more credit hours graded A, B, or C, with no grade less than a C. A part-time student must be in good academic standing and earn a combined Fall and Spring grade point average of at least 3.4 and not more than 3.79 in 12 or more credit hours graded A, B, or C, with no grade less than C. To qualify for the Dean's List as a part-time student, a student must enroll on a part-time basis in both Fall and Spring semester in the same academic year.

Students who receive the grade of AU or P are not excluded from recognition as long as 12 hours are completed with grades of A, B, or C. Students who receive the grade of D, F, I, NR, or N are not eligible for recognition. Dean's List recognition appears on the student's academic record (official transcript).

GRADUATION WITH DISTINCTION

Students may earn undergraduate degrees at different levels of distinction: Cum Laude ("With Honor"), Magna Cum Laude ("With Great Honor"), and Summa Cum Laude ("With Highest Honor"). Each of the undergraduate degrees is awarded Cum Laude when the graduating student's cumulative grade point average is 3.4 or more but less than 3.7, Magna Cum Laude when it is at least 3.7 but less than 3.9, and Summa Cum Laude when it is at least 3.9. To be eligible to graduate with distinction, a student must be in good academic standing and have a grade point average computed on at least 48 credit hours completed in residence at UNC Charlotte. Students who have fewer than 48 credit hours completed in residence at UNC Charlotte may submit an academic petition to receive graduation with distinction. Students enrolled in a degree completion program at UNC Charlotte for which there are less than 48 credit hours required for the major are exempt from this credit hour requirement and are not required to file a petition.

III. DEFINITIONS

- **GPA (G**rade **P**oint **A**verage**) –** The grade point average for an undergraduate student is determined by adding all accumulated quality points together, and then dividing by the total number of GPA hours the student has attempted, excluding those for which the student received a grade of I, IP, W, WE, H, P, AU, or N. In computing the grade point average, only those credits attempted at UNC Charlotte are included. See the **GPA Calculator**.
- **Semester or Term –** A period of study, usually a third of the academic year (i.e., Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters). Fall and Spring semesters generally include a period of study of one 15-week and two 7-week half terms. The Summer semester generally includes one eleven-week and two five-week half terms. UNC Charlotte offers courses for the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters, as well as varying term lengths associated with each semester. For the definition of each term refer to the Office of the Registrar.
- **Transcript** – A list of all the courses a student has transferred in or taken at UNC Charlotte with the grades that the student earned in each course at UNC Charlotte. A transcript is an exact and complete record of a student's academic history. The University requires a high school transcript when a student applies for admission.

IV. POLICY CONTACT(S)

- **Authority**: **Faculty Council**
- **Responsible Office**: **Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs**
- **Additional Contact(s)**: n/a

V. HISTORY

- **April 3, 1980:** Approved
- **May 2, 2012:** Revised
  - Effective with the December 2012 graduating class and beyond, the Graduation with Distinction levels changed as listed below:
    - Summa Cum Laude from 4.0 GPA to above 3.9 GPA
    - Magna Cum Laude from 3.8-4.0 GPA to 3.7-3.9 GPA
    - Cum Laude from 3.4-3.8 GPA to 3.4-3.7 GPA
- **February 21, 2013**: Revised [Dean's List qualifications were defined more clearly with a distinction between full-time and part-time student recognition]
- **March 26, 2015:** Revised [updated definition of transcript]
- **January 14, 2016:** Revised [changed language to accommodate new Academic Standing policy]
- **April 9, 2020:** Revised [exception for Spring 2020 passed by FEC]

- **March 25, 2021:** Revised [retitled the policy from "Academic Honors" to "Academic Distinctions", and added petition option for graduating with distinction, effective Fall 2021]
- **April 28, 2022:** Revised [added sentence for students enrolled in program less than 48 credit hours]

VI. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES

- **Academic Petition**
- **Academic Policy: Academic Standing**
- **Academic Policy: Grading**
- **Academic Policy: Honors Programs**

COVID-19 EXCEPTIONS

Academic Year 2020-2021 (Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Summer 2021)

- **Academic Honors Policy Exception for Academic Year 2020-2021 (COVID-19)**
- **Grading Policy Exception for Academic Year 2020-2021 (COVID-19)**
  - **Amendment to Grading Policy Exception (includes H grade designation)**

Spring 2020

- **Academic Honors Policy Exception for Spring 2020 (COVID-19)**
- **Grading Policy Exception for Spring 2020 (COVID-19)**
- **Message from the Provost regarding Grading Policy Exemption for Spring 2020**

VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Where is this policy referenced?**
  The policy is published on the Academic Policies & Procedures webpage of the **Provost website** and in the Degree Requirements & Academic Policies section of the **Undergraduate Catalog**.
- **Which students are covered under this policy?**
  This policy applies to all undergraduate students at UNC Charlotte.

- **When does the change passed by Faculty Council on May 2, 2012, take effect?**
  On May 2, 2012, the Faculty Council passed a change to the grade point average levels necessary to graduate with distinction. This change is effective beginning with those graduating in December 2012 and their transcripts and diplomas will reflect the change. (NOTE: The information printed in the Commencement program is based on the previous semester's grade point average.)
- **Can I still earn Chancellor's or Dean's List distinction with a grade of "N" if it was in a non-graded course?**
  Yes, only students who earn a grade of "N" from a course taken as Pass/No Credit are ineligible for distinction.
- **Can I be placed on the Chancellor's or Dean's List if I am a distance education student at UNC Charlotte?**
  To qualify for the Chancellor's or Dean's List at UNC Charlotte you must have the required grade point average as determined in the policy above. The policy applies to all UNC Charlotte degree-seeking students, whether enrolled in classes on campus or online.
- **When is the GPA calculated to determine Graduation with Distinction levels?**
  The academic honors of Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, and Summa Cum Laude are determined based upon final grades, and this is what appears on a student's official transcript and diploma. However, what is listed in the Commencement Programs may differ, as the honors are based on the GPA at the time these publications are printed, which is prior to receiving final grades.
- **Can I graduate with distinction if I am a distance education student at UNC Charlotte?**
  To graduate with distinction at UNC Charlotte you must have the required grade point average as outlined by the above policy and have earned 48 hours of credit completed in residence at UNC Charlotte. The policy applies to all UNC Charlotte degree-seeking students, whether enrolled in classes on campus or online
- **Will the Chancellor's List and Dean's List be available for the 2020-2021 academic year**
  Yes. The Faculty Council approved an **exception to the Academic Policy**, allowing students to be eligible for Chancellor's List or Dean's List if they have earned at least 9 credit hours (instead of 12) in courses graded A, B, or C. This allows students to accept a Pass (P) grade in some courses, as long as the student accepts letter grades in at least 9 credit hours. *This exception applies only to the 2020-2021 academic year*.
- **Can students who have fewer than 48 credit hours completed in residence at UNC Charlotte petition the Office of the Provost to receive graduation with distinction in Spring 2021?**
  No. This option becomes effective beginning in Fall 2021.
- **Am I eligible for distinction if I am enrolled in an early entry program?**
  Yes, undergraduate degree-seeking students who are dually enrolled in undergraduate and graduate coursework as part of an early entry program are eligible for distinction.