

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Definition of a Full-Time Student

Non F-1 Students are considered full-time when they are enrolled in a program that meets at least 12 hours per week. International students are considered full-time with 18 hours per week. Students are considered half-time when they are enrolled in less than 12 hours per week program. International students are considered half-time at less than 18 hours per week.

Instructional/Academic Hour

An instructional hour is defined as a minimum of 50 minutes of instruction during any block of 60 consecutive minutes of time. An hour is a unit of course measurement, not necessarily an indicator of transferability of credit.

Grading

Measurement of a student's progress is the responsibility of the classroom instructor. Grading procedures are explained in the syllabus for each course. Students receive a grade for each course that is based upon his/her performance in a combination of participation, classwork, quizzes, tests, essays, projects and homework. All graded work for any course must be completed before the student begins the next course. A zero is given for work not completed by the end of the course and averaged into the final course grade. The numerical course grade is translated into a letter grade according to the following standard grading chart. Each letter grade has a point value on a 4-point scale, as follows:



Grade		GPA	Percentage	Grade		GPA	Percentage
A	Excellent	4.0	93-100%	D+	Low Passing	1.3	67-69%
A-	Excellent	3.7	90-92%	D	Low Passing	1.0	63-66%
B+	Above Average	3.3	87-89%	D-	Low Passing	0.7	60-62%
B	Above Average	3.0	83-86%	F	Failing	0.0	Below 60%
B-	Above Average	2.7	80-82%	P	Pass		
C+	Average	2.3	77-79%				
C	Average	2.0	73-76%				
C-	Below Average	1.7	70-72%				

Grade Definitions

- A, A- Superior understanding of material. Student shows high level of proficiency.
- B+, B, B- Student demonstrates understanding of course material. Shows interest and has the ability to communicate ideas and concepts related to the subject matter of the course.
- C+, C, C- Represents understanding of course material demonstrated with few errors.
- D+, D, D- Limited understanding of the material represented by some errors.
- F Represents lack of understanding of the course material demonstrated by many errors. Failed to meet the standard and did not fulfill the requirements of course's objective.
- Pass/Fail Students may take no more than eight pass/fail classes while attending American LC. Students may change the grading status of a course from normal to pass/fail (or vice versa) through the end of the seventh week of classes. A "Pass" grade does not affect your GPA. However, failing will adversely affect a student's Grade Point Average (GPA).

Calculation of Grade Point Average (GPA)

All final grades received in a course are converted to numeric point-value equivalents on the 4-point scale shown above. For each course, the total points earned are the number of credits for that course multiplied by the point-value of the grade for that course (for example, in a 6-credit course, students who make A, B, C, D, or F in the course earn 24, 18, 12, 6, or 0 points, respectively).

American Language Center formally assesses students' academic progress at the end of each session. At that time, a Grade-Point Average (GPA) is calculated for each student. The total points earned for each course the student has taken are calculated and summed, and that sum is divided by the total credits attempted. Here is an illustrative example of a student who has completed four classes of his/her program thus far: Number of Grade/ Points / Points Value Earned GPA

Class	Hours	Grade	Points	Total points
Grammar	6	B	3	18
American Culture	4	A	4	16
Reading	6	C	2	12
Phonetics	2	D	1	2
Total hours	18		Total Points	48
			GPA	2.67

This student's GPA at this point in her/his program is 48 points divided by 18 hours, or 2.67.

How to Check Your Grades

1. Log onto the Gateway Online System at www.students.americanlc.org
2. Click on the "My Home" tab in the "Navigation" box on the left hand side of your screen.
3. After clicking "My Home" you will be taken to the "Course Overview" page. Click on a course name to access the page for that course.
4. Scroll down and click "Grades" from the left hand side on the course page to access your grades and attendance for this course.

Student Progress Report

A progress report is prepared for every student at the completion of each semester. Students receive a copy of this report via e-mail. In the case of a sponsored student, a copy may also be sent to the sponsoring company or government agency.

Grade Appeal Procedure

If a student feels that a grade should be changed, they should first speak to their instructor. An instructor can request to change a student's grade up to 30 days after a semester ends. After 30 days, the instructor will have to submit to the Academic and Faculty Coordinator, in writing, the reason for the grade change. The Coordinator will then approve or deny the change after considering the case.

Changing Class Level

At times a student's class level may need to change because of a different rate of progression from level to level, missing class because of a health issue, or other extenuating circumstances. Students may request a level change using the **Level Change Request Form** within the first two weeks of classes. The form can be found at the Admissions Office; however, the student's instructors must support and recommend this change and the Academic and Faculty Coordinator must approve or deny the request based on performance in the classes. An interview may be requested to determine if level change is beneficial to the student.

Pretest and Posttest

In an effort to more accurately assess curriculum effectiveness American LC is implementing mandatory student assessments at the beginning and end of each academic year. These tests are designed to measure instructor effectiveness and overall program efficiency.

Students who are absent on the designated test dates will be subject to missed test fees and will not be able to attend classes until a rescheduled test has been completed. Class periods not attended by the student as a result of an outstanding test will be recorded as official absences and will negatively impact the student's attendance average.

Advancement to the Next Level

To advance into the next level, students must successfully complete the previous level by achieving a GPA of 2.0 or higher over the course of an academic year. As detailed above, in some circumstances a student may be allowed to advance into the next level at an earlier date with recommendation of his/her instructors and approval of Academic Coordinator.

Class Registration

Registration for classes is required for each semester. It allows students to indicate their schedule preference. It is important to register as soon as the registration window opens up in order to get your desired schedule. Once registrations are processed, students can view their schedule in their profile on the Gateway Online System.

Schedule Change

Changes to a student's schedule must be requested within the first two weeks of the beginning of the semester. These requests must be submitted through Gateway Online System, by completing the online Schedule Change Form. Students wishing to make a scheduling request after the second week of school must do so in writing. This explanation should fully describe the student's situation and the reason for the late request. These requests will be reviewed by the Academic and Faculty Coordinator. Please note that the decision to grant or deny a scheduling request is subject to various factors.

Academic Probation

Any student whose cumulative Grade Point Average falls below the minimum standard at the specific evaluation points given above will be placed on Academic Probation for the next semester. It is expected that the student will make every effort to correct the deficiencies that have led to the probationary status. If a student does not raise his/her grades during the probationary period to the point that he/she is now in good academic standing, the student will face continued Academic Probation or academic dismissal from the school. Academic Probation will be continued so long as the student can complete his/her program with a GPA of 2.0 or better. If, because of course retakes or course incompletes, a student cannot complete the program with a GPA of 2.0 or better and/or within 150% of the normal time required for graduation, he or she will be dismissed from the program.

Leave of Absence

A Leave of Absence allows a student to interrupt his/her studies for unusual, mitigating circumstances beyond the student's control. It is not, however, granted for matters of convenience or personal preference, for example, for vacations and celebrations. Students must make the request for a leave of absence by submitting a letter with detailed information describing the circumstances and provide the school with documentation to support the need for the request. The letter must be signed and dated by the student. The request must be submitted in advance for the approval process, unless circumstances beyond the student's control prevent the student from doing so (for example, an emergency hospitalization). In this case, the request must be completed as soon as possible. The student must meet with the Academic and Faculty Coordinator or the International Student Advisor and with the Admissions Coordinator

A student may be granted only one leave of absence in any twelve-month period. This Leave of Absence may be granted for a maximum of 90 days. Upon the student's return from the leave of absence, the student will be permitted to retake the course he/she began. If a student does not resume attendance on or before the end of the approved Leave of Absence, the student will be terminated from the school.

Reduced Course Load (Medical)

Reduced course load allows a student to interrupt or reduce his/her training for unusual, mitigating circumstances beyond the control of the student. In order to reduce enrollment below full-time based on temporary illness or a medical condition, you must obtain a written statement from a health care practitioner (M.D. or D.O) recommending the interruption or reduction in studies. Please provide a statement on letterhead from your doctor or health care provider explaining why a reduction in course load is needed. A reduced course load cannot exceed twelve months while the student is pursuing a course of study at American Language Center. A student who drops below a full course of study without the prior authorization from the school may be expelled from American LC and have his/her status terminated in SEVIS.

The health care provider must provide the following:

1. the semester for which the health care provider recommends the reduction in course load.
2. whether the health care provider recommends reducing your studies to a certain number of hours or withdrawing from all classes.
3. the medical reason for the reduction in course load.
4. the signature of a licensed practitioner.

A Reduced Course Load request can only be processed for one semester at a time. A new letter from a health care provider is required for subsequent semesters.

Please note: *Students with approved Reduced Course Load requests are still liable for payments in accordance with the Enrollment Agreement, but may be exempt from future payments as stated in the agreement. There is a \$50 Reduced Course Load Maintenance Fee per each occurrence/extension.*

Withdrawal

A student can voluntarily withdraw from the school. Students who plan to withdraw from the school are strongly urged to meet with a Student Adviser to complete their official exit, although this is not required. Students who voluntarily withdraw may re-enter the same program only if the Academic and Faculty Coordinator approves and if the re-entry date is within one year of the student's last date of attendance. All days in active status prior to the withdrawal count in the calculation of maximum program length. Student will be charged tuition according to the last date of attendance as recorded by an instructor. If a student withdraws before completing the course he/she is currently taking, a grade of F will be recorded for that course. If the student later re-enters the program from which he/she withdrew, the student will be permitted to retake the course he/she began prior to the withdrawal and to earn a grade that will replace the F in his/her permanent record.

Dismissal / Termination

Termination may occur in (but is not limited to) the following cases:

- Unresolved Attendance Probation,

- Unresolved Academic Probation,
 - GPA below 2.0 for more than two consecutive semesters
- Violation of Drug and Alcohol Policy,
- Student Conduct Violations,
- Unfulfilled Financial Obligations.
- Failure to Maintain F-1 Status (International students)
- Excessive Absenteeism: If a student misses classes without notifying the school, American Language Center will contact the student. If after 14 consecutive calendar days (exclusive of school holidays), all attempts to contact the student fail, the student will be terminated from school. School Holidays are listed on our website www.americanlc.org and listed in **Error! Reference source not found.** section on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** Terminated students will be notified in writing.

Disruptive Behavior / Speaking Other Languages in Class

Students who are engaging in disruptive behavior in the classroom may be issued a Disciplinary Notice. A Disciplinary Notice can be given for speaking a language other than English in class with the teacher's permission, using a cell phone, or acting in a way that is disruptive to other student(s) or negatively affects the overall classroom atmosphere.

Once a student receives three notices, the student will receive a warning from the administration. The administration will give the student a specific time-frame in which the student has time to change their disruptive behavior. If the student continues being a disruption and receives another notice, a meeting will take place between that student and the administration where the appropriate disciplinary action will be determined. If the student does not comply, the student may be issued an Intent to Expel letter and he/she can respond/appeal to the Director by following the Complaint Policy as outlined in this Handbook.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is constituted by the uncredited use of another's ideas or writing (whether in whole or in part) in a student's academic work. This includes, but is not limited to, writing or ideas found online, in a book, or in another student's essay. *All* ideas and writing borrowed from another source must be clearly cited in the submitted essay.

Individual instructors are required by the school to follow this policy, and are therefore forbidden from issuing individual exceptions or allowances.

Instructors who suspect student plagiarism are required by American LC to inform administration of the offense.

Two instances of plagiarism by any student in any class will result in an automatic "F" in that class. The student will still be required to attend the class in accordance with American LC attendance policies; however they will not receive a passing grade.

Appeal Procedures

Students have the right to appeal an academic dismissal if they feel that their situations merit individual attention due to unusual circumstances that contributed to their failure of the course(s). The student who wishes to appeal must write to the Academic Coordinator stating the reason for the appeal prior to the start of the next course.

The letter must state the following:

- The unusual circumstances the student feels caused the failure.
- What he or she has done or plans to do to alleviate the problems he or she had in academic performance.

The Academic Coordinator may request additional information or documentation in support of the student's appeal of the academic dismissal. The Academic Coordinator then reviews the performance of the student appealing an academic dismissal. Every area of the student's performance is explored, and a decision is made at the end of the review. The Academic Coordinator has the final decision on student performance issues and may implement conditions for the student's continuation in the program.

A student may request a further review by the School Director if there is strong belief that the academic policy has been misapplied. The appeal must be received within seven calendar days of the receipt of notification of the original appeal decision. The appeal letter must state the student's reason for the appeal as well as any mitigating circumstances. The School Director will render a decision in writing within fourteen calendar days of the receipt of the student's appeal. This decision is final.

Transcripts

The transcript will reflect the grades for each course and a cumulative grade point average for the program. However, if applicable, the original failing grade for a course that a student successfully repeated will be excluded from the calculations of the cumulative grade point average. Students who have fulfilled their financial obligations to the school will be provided with an original copy of the official transcript, free of charge. Official transcripts will not be provided on behalf of any student who has not fulfilled all

financial obligations to the school. Requests for official transcripts from other schools or organizations must be accompanied by a signed release from the student.

Maximum/Minimum Class Size

The maximum class size for lecture and lab classes in all programs is 30 students per class. Most classes have a student/ teacher ratio of between 15 and 20 to 1. No class will exceed the maximum student/teacher ratio of 30:1. On rare occasions, when a class size is too small, American Language Center will require students to take either a half or a full load of classes in a different level.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is defined as being present for the regularly scheduled class during the regularly scheduled hours. American Language Center expects students to attend all scheduled classes. Poor attendance and tardiness deters students' ability to assimilate the subject matter and may result in failing grades.



Attendance of all classes is mandatory. A student may not be eligible to continue with his or her studies when the number of unexcused absences or lateness exceeds the school's guidelines. The student is considered to be on probation for "poor attendance," if his cumulative attendance falls below 80%. The student will be issued a warning(s) by the school. If the warning(s) is not resolved by the designated date, the student may be suspended from the school. An F-1 visa student's record will be terminated in SEVIS for "poor attendance" and the student will be required to leave the United States for "failure to maintain status."

When situation permits, students should inform their instructor(s) if they plan to be late or may be absent from class. The instructors are required to take attendance each class. Excused absences for all students include the following: approved academic events, official school business, approved field trips, severe inclement weather, serious illness and death in the family. Excused absences allow the student to make up tests and do not count toward a failure in the course. Absence from class does not release the student from work assigned.

Students are allowed 4 written explanation excuse notes per academic year. No more than 1 or 2 can be used in any one semester (fall or spring). There may be only 2 total absences during both summer sessions, with no more than 1 during either Summer I or Summer II. Students must submit the written explanation within seven days after he/she returns to school. Late letters may not be honored. In addition, if a student is late or leaves early 3 times, it is equivalent to 1 absence.

Unexcused absence/lateness includes but is not limited to traffic, public transportation schedule, sickness if not verified with a doctor's note or if the student was not allowed to leave the class by the instructor. Unexcused absences do not allow the student to make up tests and may negatively affect the final grade. Absence from class does not release the student from work assigned. Enforcement of these policies lies with American LC instructors.

Attendance is recorded each class. Late arrival, late return from breaks, late return from lunch, and/or early departure all impact daily attendance and contribute to the attendance figure recorded by the instructor.

If a student misses classes without notifying the school, American Language Center will contact the student. If after 14 consecutive calendar days (exclusive of school holidays), all attempts to contact the student fail, the student will be terminated from school. School Holidays are listed on our website www.americanlc.org and listed in **Error! Reference source not found.** section on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** Terminated students will be notified in writing.

How to Check Your Attendance

1. Log onto Gateway Online System at www.students.americanlc.org
2. Click on the "My Home" tab in the "Navigation" box on the left hand side of your screen.
3. After clicking "My Home" you will be taken to the "Course Overview" page. Click on a course name to access the page for that course.
4. Click the "Attendance" Tab at the top of the page.
5. Click "All Past" to view your complete attendance records.

Tardiness / Early Departures

Regular class attendance for all scheduled hours is vital to academic success. Lateness to class as well as early departure is discouraged as they can be disruptive to the learning environment of others, and they affect a student's attendance record. Repeated lateness or early departure may lead to a student being placed on attendance probation. Both lateness to class and early departure from class will affect the recorded hours present. Lateness and early departures are recorded as hours missed for attendance purposes.

Any student who arrives to class more than twenty-five (25) minutes after the class period has started will be recorded as being absent for that class period. Similarly, any student departing a class more than twenty-five (25) minutes prior to the conclusion of the class will be recorded as being absent for the period. Students who leave the classroom for prolonged periods of time during the class period or who exhibit disruptive or inattentive behavior during may also be marked as absent at the discretion of the instructor.

Additionally, all students attending approved makeup classes must attend the entire class in order for the makeup hours to be recorded as valid. Any lateness/early departure during makeup class periods may invalidate makeup classes. These invalidated makeup classes are not valid for subsequent makeup.

Attendance Probation

Students with unresolved attendance issues may be placed on formal Attendance Probation at a regular assessment point. The attendance assessment point is the middle and end of each semester with the exception of summer semester, where attendance is assessed only at the end of the semester.

When a student falls below the 80% attendance requirement at an assessment point, he/she will receive an Attendance Warning. If his/her attendance does not reach the 80% goal by the end of the next assessment point or deadline as specified in the warning, he/she will be placed on Attendance Probation and receive an Attendance Probation Warning. Failure to resolve Attendance Probation Warning may result in termination from school.

If a student returns to good standing at the end of an Attendance Notice or Attendance Probation Warning but later falls below the 80% attendance requirement, this two-step process will be repeated as needed. The Academic Coordinator or the School Director has the discretion to make exceptions to this policy in extenuating circumstances, and his/her decision is final.

Make-Up Procedures

Tests/Assignments: Tests and assignments may be made up by the students only for missed classes for which an acceptable doctor's note has been submitted. The student is responsible for soliciting missed assignments and/or tests from the instructor. A grade of zero will be issued in cases of unexcused absences, or in cases in which the delinquent student waits for a period of more than one (1) week before soliciting makeup work from the instructor. All unannounced quizzes or graded in-class work will be ineligible for student make-up, regardless of the nature of the absence. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Academic Coordinator. In all cases, all make-up tests and assignments must be completed by the end of the course in which work was missed. Students must arrange these make-ups to take place on their own time. Students cannot make up missed work during class time.

Class Hours (attendance)

Students cannot make up missed class hours **in excess of 20% of that semester's classes**. Additionally, students will be only able to make up missed class hours provided they do so within a week of the absence. **In no cases will students be allowed to preemptively make up missed classes.**

In order to get make-up hours approved, students will have to complete and submit a make-up form. On the form, the student must indicate the date they missed class and a detailed description of the reason the absence occurred. After the form's submission, the student must wait for approval from the Administration. All requests **must** be approved by the Administration. Instructors are not authorized to approve make ups. All completed Make-Up forms must be submitted to the Admissions Office for entry into the students' attendance records. Attendance is defined as being present for the regularly scheduled class during the regularly scheduled hours. Make-up hours are recorded under a separate code from class attendance in the student's permanent record.

Class syllabi identify the acceptable number of missed hours and/or class periods for each course. All student absences will be factored into overall attendance figures, and absences that number in excess of the specified absence allowances will be grounds for attendance warnings or dismissal.

Make-up time must be for one period/two academic hours for the student to be credited for the time. Any lateness/early departure during makeup class periods may invalidate makeup classes. These invalidated makeup classes are not valid for subsequent makeup.

Repeating the Course

The student may repeat the level of course he/she is in no more than one time if allowed/recommended by the instructor and approved by the Academic Coordinator. The student must make normal progress towards completing the course.

Graduation Requirements

In order to receive a Certificate of English Proficiency from American Language Center the student must fulfill all of the following requirements:

1. Complete all required course curriculum work
2. Satisfied all financial obligations
3. Complete required final examinations
4. Maintain minimum cumulative GPA (Grade Point Average) of 2.0

