

# Registration Procedures and Degree Requirements

Registration for graduate courses must be approved by a graduate advisor. Only those students who have been officially admitted may register for classes (see Admission to Graduate Study).

TCNJ offers students an online registration system. PAWS (Primary Academic Web Services) is a web-based application accessible worldwide at <https://today.tcnj.edu/>.

For assistance or more information, please visit our PAWS tutorials at <https://pawshelp.tcnj.edu/>.

Students should refer to the College's website for the most up-to-date information on registration procedures and degree requirements.

## Academic Advisement/Supervision

Students are encouraged to develop a collaborative relationship with their program advisors and/or graduate coordinators early in their graduate careers. Advisors help students plan their courses of study, comply with program requirements, and assess academic progress. They are also available for broader consultation and discussion. In instances when formal approval is required (some of which are identified below), students will need to obtain formal approval from their advisor before actions may be taken.

## Change of Registration

Students with advisor approval may change their registration before the registration process is terminated. Add/Drop continues through the first week of classes, after which only withdrawals are permitted. Pertinent registration deadline dates can be viewed at <https://academics.tcnj.edu/academic-calendars/>.

## Change of Program of Study

Students who are considering changing their program of study should consult the School of Graduate, Global, and Online Education for guidance. All requests for change of program must be signed by the graduate coordinator of the previous program, and approved by the graduate coordinator in the new program and the dean of the student's academic school. Students should remember that entrance requirements vary from one program to another and that there may be space limitations. Forms are available online through the School of Graduate, Global, and Online Education (<https://graduate.tcnj.edu/resources/forms/>) or through the Office of Records & Registration (<https://recreg.tcnj.edu/forms/>).

## Graduate Enrollment in Undergraduate Courses

Graduate students may obtain approval to take certain undergraduate courses for personal or academic reasons. Such courses do not normally count toward the graduate degree. Students should consult their graduate program advisors for guidance. Graduate students enrolling in undergraduate courses will be billed at the graduate tuition rate. Approval forms are available online

through the School of Graduate, Global, and Online Education (<https://graduate.tcnj.edu/resources/forms/>).

## Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses

Undergraduates are permitted, with approval, to take a maximum of three graduate courses, unless they are enrolled in an articulated bachelor/master degree program that includes more than three graduate courses as part of the undergraduate curriculum.

Eligibility Criteria: TCNJ undergraduates may petition to enroll in TCNJ graduate courses if:

1. they have a grade point average of 3.0 or above,
2. have accumulated at least 20 units (80 semester hours) at the undergraduate level,
3. have been recommended to take the course by their undergraduate advisor,
4. have been recommended by the coordinator of the graduate program and the department chair of the department in which the graduate program resides, and
5. have the approval of the academic school dean.

## Double-Counting Graduate Courses

A TCNJ undergraduate student may count up to three pre-determined graduate courses at TCNJ toward both a TCNJ undergraduate degree and a TCNJ graduate degree if:

1. All involved academic units allow double-counting and deem the coursework appropriate to both degrees,
2. double-counted coursework is approved by all involved academic units before the student takes the course,
3. and the student meets the eligibility criteria listed above.

Academic Units with graduate programs requiring more than 36 credits may petition the provost to allow undergraduate students to enroll in and double-count more than three graduate courses, up to no more than five graduate courses.

Academic units with graduate certificates (not leading to certification) of at least 12 credits may petition the provost to allow more than two courses to double-count towards their graduate certificate, up to no more than three graduate courses. When certificates are also leading to state certification, dean's approval is also required.

## Credit and Grading Guidelines

Any 3-credit TCNJ graduate course counted toward a TCNJ undergraduate degree (whether double-counting toward a graduate degree or not) will count as 1 unit of undergraduate credit. Graduate course syllabi will specify that undergraduates taking the course for undergraduate credit will satisfy their fourth hour

through the high level of reading and other work expected in the course.

Any grades earned in TCNJ graduate courses that are counted toward a TCNJ undergraduate degree will only be factored into the undergraduate GPA. When these courses are double-counted toward a TCNJ graduate degree, they will be listed as “T” on the graduate transcript, and the grade will not be factored into the graduate GPA.

For more on Undergraduates Enrolling in and Double-Counting Graduate Courses, please see the TCNJ Policy Manual online at <https://policies.tcnj.edu/>.

### Summer Session

Students who are interested in registering for summer courses should consult the TCNJ summer sessions website at <https://summer.tcnj.edu/>. The website provides complete course listings, procedures, and policies for registering that may differ from those for fall and spring semesters. The summer course schedule is available online at TCNJ’s summer sessions website and through PAWS using the “Class Search” feature.

### Release of Transcripts

Copies of the student’s official transcript are released only upon the written request (or request via PAWS) of the student and only after all obligations to the College, financial and otherwise, have been fulfilled. Instructions for requesting transcripts can be viewed at <https://recreg.tcnj.edu/transcripts/>. There is no charge for this service. Transcripts are issued within 3-5 business days of receipt of the request. Transcripts received from other schools are the property of the College and are not copied or released.

### TCNJ Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day that TCNJ receives a request for access. Students should submit to the director of records and registration written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The TCNJ official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the TCNJ official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the College to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the TCNJ official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the College will notify the student of the decision and advise

the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is defined as a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, or support staff position (including campus police and campus-wellness center persons); a person or company with whom the College has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; a student serving on an official school committee such as the All-College Academic Integrity Board; or a person assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by TCNJ to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

For further information, students may view the College’s student privacy rights (FERPA) website at <https://recreg.tcnj.edu/student-privacy-rights/>.

TCNJ considers the following as directory information and will release the following information upon request:

Name  
TCNJ e-mail address  
Campus address  
Hometown (city and state)  
Telephone listing(s)  
Degrees and dates received  
Honors and awards received (including Dean’s List)  
Major(s) and minor(s) field of study  
Classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate)  
Date of birth  
Dates of attendance  
Photograph  
Previous educational institution/agency attended  
Weight/height of athlete  
Participation in officially recognized activities and sports  
Enrollment status

To prevent the release of the above-referenced directory information, the student must file the Directory Information Release Form with the Office of Records and Registration each year: <https://recreg.tcnj.edu/student-privacy-rights/>.

### Course Session Cancellations

Students should assume that classes will be held unless notice of cancellation is given. When an instructor fails to appear and no notice of cancellation is evident at the start of a class, it is recommended that students wait a reasonable time before assuming that the class is canceled.

### Degree Requirements

#### Prerequisites

All courses listed in this bulletin are graduate courses that require competent preparation at the undergraduate level. Certain courses—typically at the 600 level—require that specific prerequisites (or their equivalents) be met. Students should consult individual course descriptions found on PAWS and confer with their graduate advisors to plan appropriate course sequences.

#### Academic Load

A full-time graduate student load is nine credits during the fall or spring semester. A graduate student may register for a maximum of 12 credits during the fall or spring semester. Graduate students may register for a maximum of nine credits for the summer semester, and a maximum of three credits (one course) for the winter session. If a program requires more than the maximum load during a given semester, students must submit written permission from their academic advisor with approval from the dean of the student's academic school at the time of registration.

#### Grading System

A student's academic standing in every subject is reported at the end of each semester in the form of a letter grade. Grades are assigned by the faculty member of record.

| Grade | Weight         | Description                                                            |
|-------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A     | 4.00           |                                                                        |
| A-    | 3.67           |                                                                        |
| B+    | 3.33           |                                                                        |
| B     | 3.00           |                                                                        |
| B-    | 2.67           |                                                                        |
| C+    | 2.33           |                                                                        |
| C     | 2.00           |                                                                        |
| C-    | 1.67           |                                                                        |
| F     | 0.00           |                                                                        |
| P*    | Not calculated | Passed (for transfer purposes, P is considered a B or better)          |
| U*    | Not calculated | Unsatisfactory                                                         |
| I     | Not calculated | Incomplete work                                                        |
| W     | Not calculated | Withdrew from course before the end of the ninth week of the semester  |
| WD    | Not calculated | Withdrew from college before the end of the ninth week of the semester |

| Grade | Weight         | Description                                                                     |
|-------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WF    | 0.00           | Withdrew from course before the end of the ninth week of the semester, failing  |
| WP    | Not calculated | Withdrew from college before the end of the ninth week of the semester, passing |
| CR    | Not calculated | Requirement met by examination                                                  |
| AU    | Not calculated | Audit                                                                           |
| IP    | Not calculated | In progress                                                                     |

\* Used only for courses graded on a Pass/Unsatisfactory basis.

### Incomplete and In-Progress Grades

#### I. INTRODUCTION

This Policy provides the rationale for when grades of Incomplete and In Progress may be assigned.

#### II. DEFINITIONS

- Incomplete (I): Grades of I are to be used for courses that have ended, but extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g. extended illness, personal injury or trauma, family crisis) have prevented them from completing the remaining course requirements.
- In Progress (IP): Grades of IP are to be used for courses in which the work extends beyond the semester (e.g. research, internships). A grade of IP should not be assigned for circumstances in which a course has ended and a student has not completed all of the course requirements.

#### III. POLICY

##### *Incomplete (I)*

##### Request criteria and process:

In order to request an Incomplete grade, the following criteria must be met:

1. The withdrawal deadline has passed.
2. The student has experienced circumstances as defined in Section II that have prevented them from completing the work in the class.
3. The student has the potential to pass the course with the completion of the missing requirements.
4. The student makes the request by the final assessment date for that course.

The student must request an Incomplete grade from the instructor, and the student and instructor should discuss the remaining requirements to fulfill and what would be required to pass the course. It is the instructor's discretion whether or not to grant the Incomplete Grade request. In particular, some courses may not lend themselves to Incomplete grades (e.g., courses with mandatory in-person experiences, such as labs, studios, performances, student teaching, etc.). If the instructor agrees to the Incomplete Grade request, the instructor and student should discuss a plan for the work to be completed. It is strongly recommended that the student and instructor fill out and each sign an Incomplete Grade Contract (a sample can be found here) and file it with the Department Chair. The student should also discuss the impact of having one or more

Incomplete grades with their advisor. An instructor can assign an Incomplete grade using PAWS during the Grading Window by selecting "I" from the Roster Grade drop-down in PAWS.

**Deadline to complete the work:**

Instructors should discuss a timeline to complete the work with the student, and should specify in writing the soonest reasonable completion date (and include this date on the Incomplete Grade Contract if one is being used). However, this deadline should occur no later than the deadline in the table specified below. Instructors should endeavor to grade the work as soon as possible, no later than the deadline specified in the table below. Instructors must inform the student of their final grade, and send a grade change request through their official TCNJ email account to the Assistant Director of Enrollment and Transcripts in the Office of Records and Registration. If students fail to complete the work on time, the grade will automatically convert to an F. If there are extenuating circumstances that would prevent a student from meeting this deadline (e.g., persistent illness), the student can request an extension by providing documentation to support the request from the Accessibility Resource Center and/or the Dean of Students. The student and instructor should set a new mutually agreed upon due date for completion of the work. The instructor would notify the Assistant Director of Enrollment and Transcripts in the Office of Records and Registration of the new deadline. If requirements are not met by that date, the Incomplete grade will automatically convert to an F.

If an Incomplete grade is assigned by an adjunct instructor who is not returning to TCNJ the following semester, the Department Chair is responsible for resolving the student's Incomplete grade (either by grading themselves, or recruiting an appropriate faculty member to grade the completed work).

| <b>Semester with Incomplete Grade</b> | <b>Latest Deadline* for student to complete work before conversion to F</b> | <b>Latest deadline for Instructor to submit grade</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Fall                                  | First day of the Spring semester                                            | First Friday of the Spring semester                   |
| Winter                                | Fourth Monday of the Spring semester                                        | Fourth Friday of the Spring semester                  |
| Spring, Summer 1, Summer 2            | First day of the Fall semester                                              | First Friday of the Fall semester                     |
| Summer 3                              | Fourth Monday of the Fall semester                                          | Fourth Friday of the Fall semester                    |

***In-Progress (IP)***

**Request criteria and process:**

At the end of the semester, the instructor and student may agree that the work is ongoing (e.g., the student and instructor agree that more analyses of the data are warranted) and the student agrees to continue to work on the project. It is strongly recommended that the student and instructor fill out and each sign the In-Progress

Grade Contract (a sample can be found [here](#)) and file it with the Department Chair. An instructor can assign an In-Progress grade using PAWS during the Grading Window by selecting "IP" from the Roster Grade drop-down in PAWS.

**Deadline to complete the work:**

Students must complete the remaining work within one year of the In-Progress grade. If at the end of one year, the instructor and student agree that the work is still ongoing and the student wants to continue to work on the project, the student and instructor should set a new mutually agreed upon due date for completion of the work. The instructor should notify the Assistant Director of Enrollment and Transcripts in the Office of Records and Registration of the new deadline. The instructor should be mindful that the work demanded is commensurate with the number of credits/units for which the student has registered. If the work exceeds the credits the student would earn, it may be more appropriate for the student to enroll in a separate course with the instructor. When the work is completed, the instructors must inform students of their final grade and send a grade change request through their official TCNJ email account to the Assistant Director of Enrollment and Transcripts in the Office of Records and Registration. If requirements are not met by the deadline, the In-Progress grade will automatically convert to an F.

***Calculation of GPA***

A student's grade point average (GPA) is based only on courses taken at The College of New Jersey. Not included in the calculation of the grade point average are courses transferred from other institutions. The grade point average is calculated by dividing a student's total quality points by their total quality hours. Quality points are calculated by multiplying the number of credits for a course by the weight of the grade (see Grading System) in that course. Quality hours are the sum of credits a student attempts (regardless of whether the courses are passed) at TCNJ in letter-graded courses.

At the end of each semester, a student can view and print a grade report showing a cumulative grade point average as well as a grade point average for that semester on PAWS.

***Transfer of Credit***

A maximum of 12 graduate credits may be accepted pending departmental approval. Individual graduate programs may have lower transfer limits due to accreditation or licensing requirements. Transfer courses must be applicable to the student's current program of study, and have been completed at an institutionally accredited graduate institution within the last six years with a grade of B or higher. The Course Authorization Form is available at <https://recreg.tcnj.edu/forms/> and completed forms should be submitted to the Office of Records and Registration in Green Hall 112.

***Transfer of Prior Coursework***

Students wishing to apply for transfer of previously completed graduate credits must do so during their first year of enrollment as a

matriculated student. Transfer of credits shall be understood to apply to credits previously earned at The College of New Jersey, as well as at other regionally accredited graduate institutions. The Course Authorization Form is available through Records and Registration. Completed forms should be submitted to the Office of Records and Registration in Green Hall 112.

### ***Approval of Future Coursework for Transfer of Credit***

Matriculated students must obtain written approval from their department chair before enrolling in graduate courses that are to be transferred for credit to the College. Only courses that are to be completed at a regionally accredited graduate institution shall be eligible for such approval. The Course Authorization Form is available at <https://recreg.tcnj.edu/forms/> and completed forms should be submitted to the Office of Records and Registration in Green Hall 112.

### ***Course Auditing***

A student who audits a course will receive a grade of AU. The same information will be placed on the student's record.

Students with graduate status at the College who wish to audit a graduate course must have the permission of the instructor or the approval of the graduate coordinator for the program in which the course resides. The Permission to Audit Form must be submitted to the Office of Records and Registration prior to the start of classes for final approval. Instructors determine the degree of class participation required of auditors in their classes.

Audit courses may not be counted in determining enrollment status or graduate assistant eligibility. Audit grades may not later be converted to any other grade.

### ***Withdrawing from a Course***

Students may withdraw from a course up to the end of the ninth week of the fall and spring semesters. The Records and Registration website documents specific dates for each semester and for summer school.

To withdraw, a student must complete the withdrawal process online via PAWS. Students withdrawing from courses within the withdrawal period will automatically receive a grade of W, which has no effect on the student's grade point average. Instructions can be found at <https://recreg.tcnj.edu/course-withdrawal/>.

**It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from a course. Failure to withdraw formally may result in failing grades and dismissal. Failure to withdraw from a course during the 100-percent-refund period will result in financial obligations.**

### ***Withdrawing from the College***

A student who wishes to leave the College and withdraw from all courses must complete an Intent to Withdraw form before the last four sessions of the course. Students who neglect to follow this procedure will receive a failing grade for any course they cease to attend.

Students who withdraw from the College before the midpoint of the semester will be given a grade of WD in all courses.

Withdrawal after that will result in the instructors' assigning the grade of WP (which does not affect a student's GPA) or WF (which is calculated as an F in a student's GPA). A student may not withdraw from the College in the last three weeks of a semester.

The College Withdraw form is available online at <https://recreg.tcnj.edu/student-withdrawal-process/>. Eligibility for refunds will be determined by the date on which the completed Intent to Withdraw form is received. The amount of the refund is based on the date of withdrawal. Dates for the end of each semester's withdrawal period are listed on the Office of Records and Registration website, <https://academics.tcnj.edu/academic-calendars/>.

**It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from the College. Failure to withdraw formally may result in failing grades, dismissal, and additional financial obligations.**

### ***Readmission***

Students who have been dismissed from a graduate program may apply for readmission after one calendar year from the time of dismissal. The matriculation application is to be used for readmission. In addition to the essay, students must cite the reason for dismissal and explain why they believe they will be able to perform successfully if readmitted.

Readmission must be approved by the department and endorsed by the dean of the student's academic school.

### ***Independent Study***

Students who wish to supplement departmental coursework by investigating a particular topic may do so under the direction and guidance of a faculty member who is considered an expert in the field. A final paper reporting the findings of the study must be submitted to the faculty member.

Requests for independent study must be submitted for approval to the faculty member and the department chair or designee. The resulting contract will describe the study, specify the format, length, and scope of the final paper, and determine the number of credits—from one to six—to be awarded.

No more than nine credits of independent study may be taken in any one graduate program.

*Note:* Independent study will not be approved as a substitute for an existing graduate course. If under extraordinary circumstances it becomes evident that the conferral of the student's degree will be significantly deferred because a required course is not available, that course should be waived and another course of comparable content be used to fulfill the requirement. The student must seek permission for the substitution from the coordinator of their graduate program, who will forward it (if approved) to the department chair and the dean of the school for final approval.

### ***Department Project***

Students enrolled in master's programs may elect to do a department project, with the approval of the student's advisor, and will be awarded three credits upon completion of the project. Advisement is usually three credit hours for one semester. Those whose projects are In Progress (IP) will register for three credits of

project advisement each semester until the project is completed. Students should consult PAWS and the program coordinator for descriptions of department projects offered.

### ***Thesis or Creative Project***

In graduate degree programs, a thesis or creative project may be required or elected, based on program-specific criteria. A student must be registered to receive thesis advisement. Students planning to write a thesis should consult with their program's coordinator and department chair.

### ***Program Completion***

Students have a maximum of six years from the time of matriculation to complete a graduate program. Petitions for an extension will be considered by the dean of the student's academic school on merit. *Note:* length of years may vary by program due to accreditation requirements.

### ***Retention Standards***

Any student whose grade point average (GPA) falls below 3.0 during any semester (fall or spring), or summer session (1, 2, or 3), will be placed on probation. At the end of the next semester or summer session in which the student is enrolled in classes (excluding winter term), the student will be dismissed if an overall GPA of 3.0 is not achieved. Students may appeal dismissal according to the procedures provided with the notification of dismissal.

### ***Retention Supplements***

Some programs, departments, and schools maintain supplements to the college-wide graduate retention standard. These supplements may include letter grade minimums in key courses, required satisfaction of assessment tools, and others. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to these standards. Any dismissal from an academic program based on program, department, or school retention standards also serves as a dismissal from the College.

### ***Comprehensive Examinations and Other Culminating Experiences***

Every graduate degree program concludes with a mandatory culminating experience, which requires candidates to synthesize and apply knowledge acquired throughout the program. Unless a program has been approved to offer another type of culminating experience, the culminating experience takes the form of a comprehensive examination. All Incomplete (I) and In Progress (IP) grades should be cleared prior to registration for the comprehensive examination.

Each program will provide its students a written description of its culminating experience, including eligibility, grading standards, and procedures for evaluating the experience. These must be posted on the department/program website. Departments will do everything possible to ensure fair review of student work within their program standards. Those standards could include the number of raters, guidelines of expectations, and criteria for passing.

Candidates who fail the comprehensive examination on the first attempt may retake the comprehensive examination a second time at the next or a subsequent scheduled offering within the six-year limit from the candidate's matriculation date into a program. A second option is to appeal the outcome of the comprehensive examination as per the Student Complaint and Grade Appeals policies (see TCNJ Policy Manual, <https://policies.tcnj.edu/>).

Candidates who fail the examination on the second attempt may appeal the outcome of the second attempt. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the candidate will be dismissed from the program. Candidates who fail any other type of culminating experience may appeal per the Student Complaint and Grade Appeals policies, with the graduate coordinator serving as the faculty member in step A of the process.

Candidates who are unable to take the scheduled comprehensive examination must consult with the graduate program coordinator. If the next offering is beyond the student's six-year limit to program completion, please see policy on Program Completion Limit and Retention Standards above. Comprehensive exams are scheduled by individual programs. Students must register for the comprehensive exam during registration. Specific exam dates may be obtained from the appropriate program.

### ***Application for Conferral of Degree***

Candidates for the master's degree must apply for graduation via PAWS. Additional instructions may be found at <https://pawshelp.tcnj.edu/undergraduate-students/graduate-students/>. The application is managed by the Office of Records and Registration.

Degrees are conferred in December, January, May, and August. For deadlines, please consult the Academic Calendar at <https://academics.tcnj.edu/academic-calendars/>, or contact the Office of Records and Registration.

*Note:* To qualify for January conferral of degree, a student must apply for Winter graduation and must take and complete their final course during that winter session at TCNJ.

### ***Graduation***

Commencement exercises are held in the spring of each year. Students are not required to attend but are encouraged to do so, including those whose degrees were conferred after the date of the previous commencement.

### ***Obligations and Holds***

Obligations to the College (e.g., tuition, fees, outstanding library books, parking fines, etc.) which have not been fulfilled will result in a student being prohibited from registering for courses or in the withholding of a student's transcript and diploma. Students may view their financial obligations and registration holds on their PAWS "Student Center." Please see the Student Accounts website for more details: <https://studentaccounts.tcnj.edu/holds/fines/>