

Section 300 - Instruction

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Policy 305 - Degrees and Certificates

Lower Columbia College offers applied bachelor's and associate degrees as well as certificates in accordance with requirements of the State of Washington and the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Specific degree and certificate requirements are found in the current Lower Columbia College catalog.

305.1 Degrees and Graduation Requirements

- Degree and graduation GPA only includes courses taken at Lower Columbia College that count toward the student's degree plan and must be a minimum of 2.00.
- A maximum of 15 "Pass" credits may be used toward completion of associate degree requirements except when earned as non-traditional credits or when pass/fail courses are required by a specific program.
- Courses taken pass/fail may only be used to satisfy elective credit degree requirements

305.2 General Requirements

- A minimum of 90 credits must be earned in courses numbered 100 and above; a maximum of three physical education credits may be included in the 90; and a maximum of 15 credits in Cooperative Work Experience and/or Independent Study;
- A minimum of 24 credits, exclusive of credits by examination and academic credit for prior learning, must be earned at Lower Columbia College.
- A minimum of five credits of course work from the approved diversity list must be completed satisfactorily

305.3 Course Requirements

Course requirements in each degree program shall be consistent with the mission, vision and values of the College. Such requirements shall promote the larger purposes of college level education--to help students develop into individuals who can reason clearly, communicate effectively, think critically, and demonstrate effective interpersonal skills.

- Each degree shall incorporate reading, writing, and quantitative skills development consistent with its purpose.

305.4 Honors at Graduation

Upon graduation, Lower Columbia College students receive honors based upon their grade point average. This grade point average calculation includes only those courses completed at Lower Columbia College that count toward the student's degree plan:

- **Honors** – 3.5 to 3.79 GPA
- **Highest Honors** – 3.8 to 4.0 GPA

305.5 Second Associate Degree

Students may earn a second associate degree by completing an additional 45 quarter credits beyond those earned for the first degree. All degree requirements apply.

305.6 Waiver of Graduation Requirements

Petitions to have any graduation requirements waived shall be considered by the Academic Standards Committee on their individual merits.

305.7 Applications for Credentials

Candidates for credentials must complete and submit the application forms provided by the College within published deadlines..

Historic Information

- Reviewed - No Changes Needed: February 22, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: March 4, 2020
- Approved: February 18, 2020
- Adopted: February 23, 2009 (Replaces Policies 405-405.3 Approved 7/89 and 3/97)

Resource/Reference/ Procedure	Title	Unit Responsibility
LCC Catalog (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/catalog-archive)		VP Instruction

Policy 307 - High School Diploma

Lower Columbia College may issue the high school diploma under the authority of [RCW 28B.50.535](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28B.50.535) (apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28B.50.535) and in compliance with Chapter 180-51 WAC (apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=180-51) .

Historic Information

- Reviewed - No Changes Needed: February 22, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: March 4, 2020
- Reviewed by the Cabinet and Leadership Team: November, 2008
- Approved: February 23, 2009
- Adopted: July, 1989
- Replaces Policy 405.4

Resource/Reference/ Procedure	Title	Unit Responsibility
RCW 28B.50.535 (apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28B.50.535)	Community or technical college — Issuance of high school diploma or certificate	VP Instruction
WAC 180-51 (apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=180-51)	High School Graduation Requirements	VP Instruction

Policy 310 - Grading Policy

Lower Columbia College's grading system provides a method to indicate a student's performance and achievement in a variety of skills and programs. The system provides for a permanent record of grade evaluations, which reflect successful course and program completion. The College operates on a quarter system. The quarter hour of credit equals one unit of instruction.

Instructors shall distribute a written course grading plan to all enrolled students at the beginning of each quarter. Instructors are not obligated to use grading options, such as + or – in any specific course.

Grades at Lower Columbia College are reported in numerical fractions to the nearest tenth. The numerical grades are based on the letter grade system and general equivalents are as follows:

Numeric Grade	Letter Grade Equivalent
4.0	A
3.7	A-
3.3	B+
3.0	B
2.7	B-
2.3	C+
2.0	C
1.7	C-
1.3	D+

Numeric Grade	Letter Grade Equivalent
1.0	D
0.0	F
n/a	I
n/a	N
n/a	P
n/a	W

Grade Symbols:

- **I (Incomplete):** Excluded from GPA/no credit. Incomplete grades may be issued only to those students whose work to date is passing, but not completed, at the end of the quarter. An instructor may submit a replacement grade up to one year from the date an incomplete grade was issued.
- **N (Audit):** Excluded from GPA/no credit. A student may enroll for no credit in any course as an auditor upon registration and payment of the regular fees. During the course of a quarter, a student may also change to audit status observing all of the required procedures for a change of registration. Auditors are exempt from taking examinations but may participate in course work.
- **Passing or Failing**
 - P = Excluded from GPA. Credit awarded for satisfactory completion equivalent to a passing grade. Satisfactory grade is defined as "D letter grade or higher.
 - F = 0.0 grade points for failing a course.
- **W (Withdrawal):** Excluded from GPA/no credit. Students may initiate an official withdrawal prior to the last day to withdraw as published in the quarterly class schedule. Official withdrawals are the sole responsibility and prerogative of the student and must be initiated by the student.

310.1 Academic Standing

These standards are used to identify students who experience academic difficulty and to provide additional support and assistance to improve academic standing. The policy also determines academic suspension in cases where students are unable to achieve satisfactory performance.

Students must earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher in the courses required for a degree or certificate in order to earn a credential at Lower Columbia College. Students must also maintain a quarterly GPA of 2.0 or higher each quarter. Students who fall below this minimum quarterly GPA will be alerted at the end of the quarter regarding their academic standing. As necessary, additional information about resources and support for improving academic standing will be provided. If a student is academically suspended, they will receive information about academic reinstatement.

- **Good Standing:** Quarterly GPA above 2.0

- Academic Concern: First quarter of a quarterly GPA below 2.0
- Academic Notice: Second consecutive quarterly GPA below 2.0
- Academic Suspension: Third consecutive quarterly GPA below 2.0

Students not in good academic standing may be required by the college to enroll in College Success or other courses as determined by the college to assist with academic success.

Students on academic suspension shall not be allowed to enroll in credit-bearing courses at the college for two consecutive quarters. Students who are academically suspended must petition for reinstatement to the Vice President of Student Services at least six weeks prior to the quarter the student is eligible to re-enter the college. Students returning from academic suspension who earn a quarterly GPA above 2.0 will return to good standing. Students returning from academic suspension who earn a quarterly GPA below 2.0 will return to academic suspension and must follow the academic standing policy to request reinstatement.

NOTE: Individual college programs and services, including but not limited to high school completion, financial aid, veteran programs, College and Career Preparation, Running Start, and certain professional/technical programs may have different academic standard requirements and appeal procedures. Students in these programs should contact their program advisor or specific department for information regarding those requirements.

Historic Information

- Approved: April 11, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: April 11, 2023
- Campus Review: March 28-April 11, 2023
- Reviewed by UMCC: March 21, 2023
- Reviewed by the Governance Council: March 1, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: February 22, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: March 4, 2020
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team per SBCTC Policy: June 29, 2016
- Revised by the Leadership Team: November 30, 2015
- Approved by the Leadership Team: November 25, 2013
- Approved: February 23, 2009
- Approved: July, 1989
- Replaces Policies 403-403.4

Resource/Reference/ Procedure	Title	Unit Responsibility
LCC Catalog (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/catalog-archive)		VP Instruction
Academic Standards Committee Guidelines (services4.lowercolumbia.edu/info/webResources2/Internal/Committees/AcademicStandards/2015ASC-OperationalGuidelines.pdf)		VP Student Services

Policy 315 - Academic Calendar

Every year, the appointed Calendar Committee shall prepare a draft academic calendar which best meets the needs of students and instruction. These calendars will be presented to the Executive Leadership Team and Governance Council for approval.

Historic Information

- Approved: April 11, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: April 11, 2023
- Campus Review: March 28-April 11, 2023
- Reviewed by UMCC: March 21, 2023
- Reviewed by the Governance Council: March 1, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: February 22, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: March 4, 2020
- Reviewed by the Leadership Team: October, 2008
- Approved: February 23, 2009
- Adopted: July, 1989
- Replaces Policy 406

Resource/Reference/ Procedure	Title	Unit Responsibility
LCC Academic Calendar (lowercolumbia.edu/calendar/academic)	Student Academic Calendar	VP for Student Services

Policy 320 - Use of Human Subjects

It is the policy of the College to act in an ethically responsible manner when conducting research involving human subjects. To that end, an Institutional Review Board has been established to provide a process to ensure that the normal and prudent policies established for the protection of human subjects is followed at Lower Columbia College.

This policy applies to any and all research (i.e., activities that are procedures, demonstrations, and/or experiments which use human subjects) conducted by College faculty, staff, or students as well as to any non-College entities performing research upon College faculty, staff, or students with the expressed consent of the College. Persons conducting such research are known, for the purpose of this document, as investigators.

320.1 Basic Principles

The basic principles adhered to by the College are drawn from the *Belmont Report*, written by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research in 1979.

- a. **Autonomy:** The investigator has an obligation to each participant to treat them as a person fully capable of making an informed decision regarding his or her participation in the research. Each participant must be given a full disclosure of the nature of the study, including any risks or benefits. To ensure the autonomy of the subject, the College requires a signed informed consent form from each participant in the study unless the study meets the exception criteria outlined in the section on exemptions.
- b. **Beneficence:** The investigator has an obligation to each participant to attempt to maximize benefits for each participant and/or society, while minimizing the risk of harm to each participant.
- c. **Participants (i.e. avoiding unfair coercion).** The investigator is also obligated to provide for equitable distribution of benefits and burdens among the selected population.

320.2 Specific Requirements

The investigator shall present to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) a description of his or her research project's goals, objectives, and procedures to (Lower Columbia College: Institutional Review Board), along with documentation addressing each of the following (taken from Ethics in Medicine at the University of Washington)

1. **Disclosure:** The potential participant must be as fully informed as possible of the nature and purpose of the research, the procedures to be used, and the expected benefits to the participant and/or society, the potential of reasonably foreseeable risks, stresses, and discomforts, and alternatives to participating in the research. There should also be a statement that describes procedures in place to ensure the confidentiality or anonymity of the participant. The informed consent document must

also disclose what compensation and medical treatment are available in the case of a research-related injury. The document should make it clear whom to contact with questions about the research study, about research subjects' rights, and in case of injury.

2. **Understanding:** The participant must understand what has been explained and must be given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered by one of the investigators. The informed consent document must be written in lay language, avoiding any technical jargon.
3. **Voluntariness:** The participant's consent to participate in the research must be voluntary, free of any coercion or promises of benefits unlikely to result from participation.
4. **Competence:** The participant must be competent to give consent. If the participant is not competent due to mental status, disease, or emergency, a designated surrogate may provide consent if it is in the best interest of the participant.
5. **Consent:** The potential human subject must authorize his/her participation in the research study, preferably in writing

320.3 Exemptions

Some research with human subjects is exempt from the requirements of this document if it meets the following criteria (taken from Belmont Report referenced above in 320.1).

1. Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
2. Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostics, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior unless (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified directly or indirectly through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subject's responses outside of the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Investigators must request approval for all proposed projects from the [Institutional Review Board \(lowercolumbia.edu/disclosure/institutional-review-board\)](https://lowercolumbia.edu/disclosure/institutional-review-board) (IRB). The Institutional Review Board will consider all requests and may approve the project, decline to approve the project, or grant a Certificate of Exemption indicating that the criteria detailed in 320.3 has been met.

Historic Information

- Reviewed - No Changes Needed: February 22, 2023
- Reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team: March 4, 2020
- Approved: February 23, 2009
- Reviewed by the Cabinet and Leadership Team: November, 2008

- Adopted: June, 2005
- Replaces Policy 408

Resource/Reference/ Procedure	Title	Unit Responsibility
Institutional Review Board (lowercolumbia.edu/disclosure/institutional-review-board)		