

ACADEMIC

The academic policies and resources at River Parishes Community College (RPCC) are designed to support student success, ensure academic integrity, and maintain the high standards of our educational programs. This section outlines important guidelines and expectations related to academic performance, grading, attendance, course requirements, and student responsibilities. Students are encouraged to review and understand these policies to make informed decisions and stay on track toward achieving their academic goals. Reference should also be made to policies published at the following webpage: RPCC Policies and Procedures (<https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/index/>).

Academic Grades, Standing, and Status (Policy 1.006)

River Parishes Community College's faculty assign grades reflecting a student's level of academic achievement in a course. Letters are used to designate the quality of student achievement (grades) or to convey additional information about a student's achievement in a course. Students should reference RPCC Policy 1.006 Academic Grades, Standing, and Status (<https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/policy-academic-grades-standing-status/>) for information related to the following topics: grading system, computation of GPA, auditing courses, incomplete grades, repeating courses, academic status, student classification for academic purposes, and grade changes.

Academic Renewal

Academic Renewal is for students who have had an unsuccessful start in a degree or certificate program and stopped out for a period of at least one semester (fall or spring semester), without enrolling in an academic, for-credit program at any college or university. To apply for Academic Renewal, a student must not have been enrolled in college-level course work for at least one semester, demonstrate that the conditions that led to the academic deficiencies have changed, and complete the necessary steps to be considered for Academic Renewal. Academic Renewal can only be awarded once in an academic lifetime at any LCTCS college. Academic Renewal cannot be granted for any coursework that was previously used to earn a credential.

The following standards apply:

1. The student must apply for admission, be degree seeking, and be admitted to the college.
2. The student must apply for Academic Renewal (found on the RPCC website) along with supporting documents to the Registrar's Office.
3. Only those courses taken prior to the semester in which the student submits the Application for Academic Renewal will be considered.
4. Submission of an Application for Academic Renewal does not ensure approval.
5. The Registrar's Office will review the Application and approve or deny the request.
6. Denials may be appealed to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for a final decision.
7. A non-LCTCS institution may choose to accept or deny the transfer of Academic Renewal granted by RPCC. Students are encouraged to investigate the Academic Renewal policy of any college they may plan to transfer to.
8. Implementation of Academic Renewal (i.e., the actual implementation of renewal on the student's transcript) will be contingent upon successful completion of courses during the semester in which the Application for Academic Renewal is submitted. It is the student's responsibility to return to the Registrar's Office for review at the conclusion of the semester.
9. Successful completion is defined as the completion of at least six (6) credit hours with a "C" or better in every course attempted. Academic Renewal will be null and void if the student does not successfully complete courses during the semester in which the Application for Academic Renewal is submitted.
10. Academic Renewal will be implemented on the academic transcript if the student successfully completes courses (as defined in number 9) during the semester in which the Application for Academic Renewal is submitted. Academic Renewal implementation means:
 - a. Only credits with grades of A, B, C, S, and P will be used to satisfy requirements for awards and used in the cumulative GPA.
 - b. All other grades (considered unsuccessful passes) will be flagged for Academic Renewal, excluded from credit earned and will not be used in the GPA. These credits, however, will remain on the transcript as attempted hours and will be used to determine eligibility for financial aid. A student who receives Academic Renewal may or may not be eligible for financial aid at RPCC. It is the student's responsibility to contact Financial Aid for more information.

Students are cautioned that many undergraduate curricula and graduate professional schools compute the undergraduate grade point average on all hours attempted when considering applications for admission.

Grade Appeals

All grade appeals must be initiated within seven (7) business days of grades being posted (i.e., within seven business days from the "last day to report final grades" as stated in the Academic Calendar). Failure to appeal within the seven (7) business days will result in the waiver of the student's right to appeal the grade.

Only final grades in a course may be appealed. Final grades may only be appealed if at least one (1) of the following conditions exist:

- The instructor departed substantially from his/her previously articulated written standards, without notifying students, in determining the grade
- The instructor imposed criteria different from those used to evaluate the academic work of other students in the class as outlined in the course syllabus
- The instructor made a calculation error and the student has tangible evidence to support the claim that an error was made

The grade assigned by the instructor is assumed to be correct and the student appealing the grade must justify the need for a change of the grade assigned. The student is responsible for providing with their appeal relevant supporting evidence in his or her possession. For example, if on the appeal form, the student references an email exchange between themselves and the instructor, then the student should provide with their appeal a copy of the email.

The procedures for appealing a final grade are as follows:

1. The grade appeal begins with the student submitting, in writing, an appeal to the instructor of the class. If the instructor agrees that a course grade change is warranted, the instructor will complete a

"Grade Change Form" and forward the form to the Registrar. If the instructor does not agree to the grade change, the instructor's written response to the student must explain why the appeal is being denied. Email will suffice as written correspondence.

2. If the instructor denies the appeal or does not respond to the appeal within five (5) business days, the student may appeal to the Dean. Appeals to the Dean must be made using the "Grade Appeal to the Dean Form (<https://www.rpcc.edu/student-services/student-forms/>)" (found on the RPCC website) and must be submitted within (fifteen (15) business days from the "last day to report final grades" on the Academic Calendar). The Dean will review the appeal form and any supporting documentation provided and may contact the instructor, if additional information is needed, to decide on the appeal. Deans must respond, in writing, to student grade appeals within ten (10) business days of receipt. If the Dean grants the appeal, the Dean must complete a "Grade Change Form," forward the form to the Registrar, and provide a copy to the instructor. If the Dean denies the appeal, their written response to the student must explain why the appeal is being denied. Email will suffice as written correspondence.
3. If the instructor and/or the Dean deny the appeal, the student may appeal to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. Appeals to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs must be made using the "Grade Appeal to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Form (<https://www.rpcc.edu/student-services/student-forms/>)" (found on the RPCC website) and must be submitted within five (5) business days of notification from the Dean that a grade appeal has been denied. The Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs will review the appeal form, any supporting documentation provided, the instructor and/or Dean's response(s) to the appeal and make a final decision on the appeal. The Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs must respond, in writing, to student grade appeals within ten (10) business days of receipt, notifying the student, instructor, and Dean on the correspondence. If the Vice Chancellor grants the appeal, a "Grade Change Form" must be completed, forwarded to the Registrar, and a copy provided to both the Dean and the instructor. If the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs denies the appeal, his/her written response to the student must explain why the appeal is being denied. Email will suffice as written correspondence. The Vice Chancellor's decision will be the final decision on the grade appeal.

Unofficial and Official Transcripts

Unofficial transcripts reflect a student's academic history and can be viewed on the student's LoLA account. Official transcripts are prepared by the Registrar's Office upon request. To request an official transcript, please visit RPCC's Transcript Request page (<https://tsorder.studentclearinghouse.org/school/select/>).

Academic Honesty and Integrity (Policy 1.011)

As a student at River Parishes Community College, you should know that this school is committed to academic excellence. When students engage in academic dishonesty, they threaten the integrity of the entire institution, and they devalue the legitimate intellectual accomplishments of all students. The responsibility rests with the student to know the acceptable methods and techniques for proper documentation of sources and avoid cheating and plagiarism in all work submitted for credit, whether prepared in or out of class. Students should reference RPCC Policy 1.011 Academic Honesty and Integrity (<https://www.rpcc.edu/>

[about-us/policies-procedures/policy-academic-honesty-integrity/](https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/policy-academic-honesty-integrity/)) for additional details.

Academic Placement Chart and Math Pathways

To ensure student success, River Parishes Community College (RPCC) requires placement into English and mathematics courses based on standardized test scores, previous coursework, or other approved measures. This webpage outlines the minimum placement requirements, including ACT, SAT, and Accuplacer scores, as well as prerequisite course completions. Understanding these requirements will help students enroll in the appropriate courses that match their skill levels and support their academic progress. RPCC also offers guidance on mathematics course selection based on program of study. Students should reference the Academic Placement Chart and Math Pathways webpage (<https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/academic-placement-chart/>) for additional information.

Attendance Expectations

Students are expected to attend all classes regularly and punctually—or actively participate in online courses, when applicable. Attendance policies are determined by the instructor and will be clearly outlined in the course syllabus at the beginning of each semester. Students are responsible for reviewing and adhering to these published policies. Instructors have the discretion to define what constitutes "excused" and "unexcused" absences.

RPCC recognizes that attendance and participation play vital roles in the ultimate success and achievement of a student's educational goals. RPCC is also committed to compliance with the rules regarding the Return of Title IV funds based on attendance. As a result, RPCC has created a show/no show policy (Policy 1.053) (<https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/policy-show-no-show/>) to report student attendance.

Course Classification (Policy 1.001)

Courses offered at River Parishes Community College (RPCC) are identified and recognized by their title, a 'rubric' consisting of a four-letter prefix and a four-digit number, and a classification of instructional program (CIP) code. These features are important indicators of coherence in RPCC's educational programs. Students should reference RPCC Policy 1.001 Course Classification (<https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/policy-course-classification/>) for additional details.

Credit and Instructional Contact Hours for Courses (Policy 1.019)

Consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education, River Parishes Community College adheres to the definition of a credit hour in Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, §600.2, in accordance with the Credit Hour Policy of the College's accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Additionally, RPCC determines instructional contact hours according to the definition of a clock hour for establishing instructional contact time for courses and programs. Finally, RPCC recognizes the definition of academic engagement in federal regulations when offering courses via distance education modalities. Students should reference RPCC Policy 1.019 Credit and Instructional Contact

Hours for Courses (<https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/policy-defining-credit-hours-awarded-for-courses/>) for additional details.

Credit for Validated Skills/Learning and Prior Learning Assessment (Policy 1.023)

River Parishes Community College (RPCC) recognizes that learning occurs in a variety of settings and under many different circumstances – in the traditional college setting as well as in non-traditional settings – and believes all learning is valuable. RPCC reviews evidence of an individual's knowledge and skills to award credit for validated skills and learning, traditionally referred to as "prior learning". Academic integrity is assured by adherence to the policies of the Louisiana Community and Technical College (LCTCS), Board of Regents, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). To be responsive, transparent, and consistent in the application of policies and standards, RPCC's processes align with the standards of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). Students should reference RPCC Policy 1.023 Credit for Validated Skills/Learning and Prior Learning Assessment (<https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/policy-prior-learning/>) for additional information about the following topics: Residency/Number or Amount (Percentage) of Credit, Validated Methods for Assessing Prior Learning including (1) Transfer Credit from Another College/University, (2) Credit by Testing or Examination, (3) Credit by Evaluation of Training and Credentials, (4) Credit by Evaluation of a Portfolio or Demonstration of Skills and Learning (Life Experience Assessment Program [LEAP]), (5) Military Credit.

Bypassed Credit

If a student is placed into an advanced-level course based upon a test score the student must pass with a "C" or better in that course the first time taking it to receive credit for the bypassed (pre-requisite) course. If the student does not earn a "C" or better in the advanced-level course during the first attempt, the student must take and pass the bypassed course with a grade of "C" or higher to enroll in the advanced-level course again.

Example: If a student places out of ENGL 1013 English Composition I, in order for the student to receive the credit for ENGL 1013 English Composition I, the student must take and pass with a "C" or better ENGL 1023 English Composition II. If the student does not earn a grade of "C" or better in ENGL 1023 English Composition II, the student must take ENGL 1013 English Composition I and earn a "C" or better in order to enroll in ENGL 1023 English Composition II again.

Credit for bypassed courses will be recorded as a grade of "P" and will be applied toward graduation but will not be considered in computing the overall grade point average.

NCCER Certification Credit

Students who have completed NCCER credentials and certification may apply for articulation of certification into credit. To petition for credit articulation, students should complete the NCCER Verification Request (<https://rpcc.jotform.com/221214086320139/>) form located on the RPCC website.

General Education (Policy 1.002)

River Parishes Community College (RPCC, the College) upholds the Western tradition in higher education of including General Education coursework in associate degrees and specific certificate level awards that foster development of its students' willingness to respect and accept behavior or opinions different from their own and to be open to new

ideas. By upholding the General Education tradition and philosophy, RPCC complies with the Louisiana Board of Regents' Statewide General Education Policy and with the Core Requirement of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges' Core Requirement on General Education Requirements. Students should reference RPCC Policy 1.002 General Education (<https://www.rpcc.edu/about-us/policies-procedures/policy-general-education/>) for additional details.