Everything You Never Wanted to Know About Incompletes!!

We have seen the number of "Incomplete" grades issued to students exceed the 1,000 mark this year and have received numerous phone calls about whether or not to give a student an "Incomplete" grade. I thought I would put this document together for easy reference.

Some facts:

- Over 1,000 Assignment of Incomplete Grades were made in 2006-2007
- Less than 5% of students receiving Incompletes actually finish the work
- More than 95% of Incompletes turn into Fs
- Many faculty are being contacted because they did not complete the required steps to give an "Assignment of Incomplete Grade"
- Division Deans are being notified of missing paperwork for Assignment of Incomplete Grade forms that were not printed, signed and submitted to Admissions and Records
- Incomplete grades are not placeholders for students who did not complete assignments. Using them in this fashion violates Ed Code and Board Policy.
- Incomplete grades are considered in computation of progress probation.
- Incomplete grades create problems for students on academic probation, especially if the student is being dismissed.
- Incomplete grades are treated as failing grades for financial aid computation.
- Incomplete grades, once turned into an "F", generally result in a petition requesting a "W."

According to California Education Code, and College policy:

Incomplete academic work for unforeseeable, emergency, and justifiable reasons at the end of the term may result in an "I" symbol being entered in the student's record. The condition for removal of the "I" shall be stated by the instructor in a written record. This record shall contain the conditions for removal of the "I" and the grade assigned in lieu of its removal. This record must be given to the student with a copy on file with the Admissions and Records Office until the "I" is made up or the time limit has passed.

A final grade shall be assigned when the work stipulated has been completed and evaluated, or when the time limit for completing the work has passed. The "I" may be made up no later than one semester following the end of the term in which it was assigned. The "I" symbol shall not be used in calculating units attempted nor for grade points. The student, under extenuating circumstances, may request an extension of the time limit for making up the "I" by submitting a General Petition for consideration.
When you should give an "Incomplete"

- When the student contacts you after the final date to drop the class with documented, extenuating circumstances that prohibit the student from finishing the class.

When you should NOT give an "Incomplete"

- When the student misses the final examination
- When the student fails to turn in assignments by the end of the class
- When the student tells you a good story, but has no documentation to back it up

Your responsibility:

- Give the student a grade of "I" on the Grade Roster
- Complete the "Assignment of Incomplete Grade" form
- Document, on the Assignment of Incomplete Grade form, all assignments that must be completed for the student to receive a passing grade.
- Note the timeframe allowed for complete of missing work. Students have one semester after the posting of the Incomplete grade to complete the work. Your contract with the student may specify a lesser amount of time.
- Submit the Assignment of Incomplete Grade electronically with your Grade Roster.
- PRINT the Assignment of Incomplete Grade form.
- Sign the Assignment of Incomplete Grade form.
- Turn in the original Assignment of Incomplete Grade form to the Admissions and Records Office
- Provide a copy of the Assignment of Incomplete Grade form to the student.
- Ensure that the student has "access" to you the following semester, so that he or she may make arrangements to complete the work.

Some Suggestions:

- Don't give incomplete grades without documentation.
- Give the grade the student earned.
- Provide an opportunity for students to "complete" assignments after the end of the class if you would otherwise give an Incomplete.
- If assignments are completed, you can change the grade. If not, you have no responsibility for follow up. (Giving a grade instead of an incomplete is a great "motivator" for students to finish the class.)

Ultimately, the grade you give a student is your decision. This document is simply provided for informational purposes. If you need assistance, or have any questions, please contact me at 954-5635.