

## **Grading and Ranking in the Faculty of Law, University of Calgary**

Most courses in the Faculty of Law are graded in accordance with the University of Calgary's 12-band letter grading system: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, and F. Details about this system, along with descriptors for each grade can be found here:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-1.html>.

Our Faculty does not employ a "bell curve" or grading "curve" of any kind (requiring, for example, a certain amount of grades to be in the C range). What we do have is a requirement for a "B median" for **final** grades in all courses with more than 10 students. This means is that the middle grade in the class must be a "B". For example, in a class of 31 students, the 16<sup>th</sup> grade, from the top *and* from the bottom, must be a "B". Meanwhile, in a class of 30 students, for example, the 15<sup>th</sup> grade from *either* the top or the bottom must be a "B." Although *de minimis* variations are sometimes approved, the rule is generally enforced and irregular grade patterns are adjusted when necessary.

The B median is our only grading rule. Therefore, there is no requirement that a certain number of grades be in a particular category (other than in the "B" group). The Faculty does, however, have two grading guidelines that instructors are encouraged to follow as appropriate.

- The first is an "A range" guideline, which provides that about 10-15% of **final** grades in a course with more than 10 students should be in the "A range". This includes A-, A, and A+ grades (with the latter being quite rare). As a guideline, there is some room for flexibility as appropriate.
- Secondly, instructors are encouraged to use the full range of grades in the University's 12-band letter system as appropriate, even in courses with ten students or less.

**Note:** LLM (graduate) students are subject to a different grading scale and are not included in the B median rule or A range guideline noted above.

### **CR/D/F grading system**

Our experiential learning and clinical courses are not, for pedagogical reasons, subject to the letter grading system above. Instead, they are graded on a CR/D/F system, with "CR" meaning "Completed Requirements", "D" being "marginal", and "F" signaling failure.

The following courses are graded on this CR/D/F grading system:

Law 407: Foundations in Law and Justice I  
Law 408: Foundations in Law and Justice II  
Law 508: Negotiation  
Law 591: Provincial Court Clerkship  
Law 602: Advocacy  
Law 610: Internship in French  
Law 620A & B: Public Interest Practice  
Law 674A & B: Business Venture Clinic  
Law 687: Criminal Justice Clinical  
Law 688A & B: SLA Clinical Practice

Law 689: Family Law Clinical  
Law 696.xx: Human Rights Clinical

### **Ranking our Students**

Our Faculty does not rank its students, either by course or by year. That said, the top ten students overall in each year (based on GPA) are placed on the Dean's List. However, this placement serves only as a record that they are in the top ten. There is no further ranking within the Dean's List, nor is there ranking outside of the List. We also do not compile any overall or aggregate ranking of the graduating class, except that a Gold Medal is awarded to the graduating student ranking first over their three years in the program. To provide some sense of overall Faculty grading norms, it can be noted that historically the cumulative GPA of the Gold Medalist has been in the range of 3.5-3.75.

### **CR/F Election for Winter 2020 due to COVID-19**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on the 2020 Winter term, the University of Calgary provided students with the option of requesting a "CR/F" grading scheme for each of their Winter 2020 courses. In this election, "CR" means completed requirements and "F" signals failure (*i.e.*, did not meet course requirements). In our Faculty, students were entitled to elect a "CR" grade if they obtained at least a C- final grade in our compulsory courses in the Winter 2020 term (namely, all 1L courses, Evidence, Civil Procedure and Administrative Law). They could elect a "CR" grade in an optional course as long as their final grade was at least a D. The University of Calgary was clear that this election was provided in order to recognize the difficult situation many students unexpectedly found themselves in, and adopted temporary regulations in regard to promotion, graduation, etc. to ensure that students who elected a CR were not disadvantaged.