



The Montreal School of Theology

Policy on Grading in M.Div 3/Diploma in Ministry

Approved by Academic Ctee: February 20, 2023	Approved by MST Board: February 21, 2023
Added to MST website: March 7, 2023	See also: N/A
Applies to: M.Div 3, Diploma in Ministry students and faculty	Effective: March 3, 2023
Summary: Specifies grades of assignments within a course, as well as final grades for courses and field placement.	

GRADING OF ASSIGNMENTS WITHIN A COURSE

Pass with Distinction	<p><u>Thesis or Stated Purpose</u> is solid, innovative, insightful, clearly posed.</p> <p><u>Structure</u> is clear, supports and advances the thesis/focus, has good transitions.</p> <p><u>Content & Analysis</u> is well-grounded, well-researched, evidence is used to support and advance the argument/purpose. Analysis is incisive and ventures new possibilities.</p> <p><u>Integration</u>: demonstrates sophisticated ability to integrate theory and theology with personal authenticity in the practice of ministry</p> <p><u>Overall</u>, is creative, innovative, advances the knowledge of the subject matter.</p>
Pass	<p><u>Thesis or Stated Purpose</u> is solid, careful, thorough (but not original).</p> <p><u>Structure</u> is logical and supports the thesis/topic /argument.</p> <p><u>Content & Analysis</u>: Content is on topic and analysis demonstrates adequate mastery of the subject and capacity to integrate main points.</p> <p><u>Integration</u>: demonstrates competence in integrating theory, theology with personal authenticity in application to the practice of ministry.</p> <p><u>Overall</u>: Demonstrates a solid awareness of the key points of the assignment and an ability to communicate clearly these major points.</p>
Pass with Notation	<p><u>Thesis/Stated Purpose</u>: Is on topic, but unclear, or confused, and requires more work to sustain the thesis.</p> <p><u>Structure</u>: is generally weak and does not adequately support the advancement of the thesis/argument (poor paragraphing, poor transitions).</p> <p><u>Content & Analysis</u>: Generally on topic but poorly organized with little supporting data. Analysis is existent but weak, inconsistent, or derivative.</p> <p><u>Integration</u>: ability to integrate assignment content with competent practice of ministry is limited, unclear or inconsistent.</p> <p><u>Overall</u>: Shows awareness of the key points of the assignment, and a base-line minimal competence to identify the issues, but with significant gaps or areas of weakness that will need further work.</p>
Fail	<p>The paper does not have a clear thesis statement or clear purpose, lacks a structure that supports an argument, is poorly organized with little support of any thesis, fails to achieve a meaningful level of integration, and/or has significant gaps such that learning outcomes are not demonstrated.</p>

A course instructor may, at his or her discretion, return an assignment to a student for additional work if that assignment has received a grade of “Pass with Notation” or a grade of “Fail.” In such circumstances, it is expected that the student will complete the additional work on the timelines provided by the instructor.

FINAL GRADES FOR COURSES

Pass with Distinction	A student’s work in all elements of the course (assignments, in-class work, field placement-based work, and integration with the practice of ministry) meets all identified learning objectives at a level deemed exceptional. Exceptional work demonstrates competency in all identified learning goals, and also exhibits originality, advanced integration, competency in the discipline’s relatedness to ministry, and creativity.
Pass	A student’s work meets all the key identified learning outcomes for the course. Student’s work demonstrates competency, and capacity to integrate course learning into the practice of ministry.
Pass with Notation*	A student’s work meets most, but not all, of the key identified learning outcomes for the course or A student’s work meets the key identified learning outcomes, but with a quality that is marginal in most key areas. This indicates area of concern about the student’s overall capacity for ministry.
Fail	A student’s work has failed to meet the minimum required learning outcomes for the course or a student has not completed the course requirements.

*Note that in order to successfully complete the M.Div. program or the Diploma in Ministry, a student may have not more than one course with a final grade of “Pass with Notation.”

FINAL GRADES FOR THE FIELD PLACEMENT

The Field Placement is graded on a continuum of Fail, Pass, and Pass with Distinction, according to the following rubric, and this evaluation is provided by the Director of Pastoral Studies. Students must have a grade of at least “Pass” to successfully complete the M.Div. or Diploma in Ministry.

Pass with Distinction	The student’s work shows an exceptionally high level of creative thought, self-reflection, and growth in meeting the key learning objectives of the Field Placement and the particular goals of the student’s Learning Contract
Pass	The student’s work shows a satisfactory to good grasp of all the key learning objectives and goals of the Field Placement, as indicated in the Field Placement syllabus. The student may have one or two areas that will require further attention in the first years of ministry to reach competence. (These will be noted in the final evaluation written by the Director of Pastoral Studies.)
Fail	The student’s work shows insufficient grasp of many or most of the key learning objectives and Goals of the Field Placement, as indicated in the Field Placement syllabus.

METHOD FOR INDICATING A PASS WITH NOTATION IN AN ASSIGNMENT OR COURSE

The instructor will, in the case of a Pass with Notation:

1. Identify the learning outcome(s) not met.
2. Write a brief statement showing how the outcome was not met.
3. Write a brief proposal/recommendation outlining remedial work or continuing education likely to help the student meet the learning outcome in the future.

COMPLETION OF COURSEWORK AND SUBMISSION OF GRADES

Instructors are responsible for giving clear deadlines for all work to be submitted within the framework of a given course. These deadlines will be presented to students at the beginning of the semester in the course syllabus.

An instructor has the authority to assign penalties for late coursework within the semester and is not obliged to accept work submitted after the deadline established in the course syllabus. Any penalties for late work must be clearly defined in the course syllabus.

All coursework for a given semester is expected to be completed within that semester.

Any coursework not received by instructors before the last day of the semester, in the absence of an extension (see below), will be given an automatic failing grade and the final course grade will be calculated in consequence.

COURSEWORK EXTENSIONS

At the discretion of the instructor, students may be granted a coursework extension beyond the last day of the semester. Such extensions must be requested in writing by the student and must be approved by both the instructor and the student's college. Such an extension must be requested before the last day of the term in which the student is registered for the course for which an extension is requested.

When an extension is granted, the new deadline for submission of coursework is negotiated between the student and course instructor, approved by the student's college, and noted in the student's file. The maximum length of extension is five (5) months after the last day of the semester of the course for which extension is requested.

The grade for the course will remain incomplete on the student's transcript (INC) until the student completes the coursework before the new deadline. Failure to meet the deadline means that the Incomplete on the transcript turns into a Fail.

Course instructors are required to include information on coursework extensions in their syllabi.

WITHDRAWALS AND INCOMPLETE COURSES

In cases where students withdraw from a course or courses before the published deadline (see Master of Divinity and Diploma in Ministry Regulations, 5.2.3), a grade of “W” (Withdrawn) will be assigned to the course or courses. A grade of “W” does not affect standing nor the calculation for graduation with the MDiv or the Diploma in Ministry “with Distinction.”

Under exceptional circumstances, a student can petition for a Compassionate Withdrawal (W) if they are unable to complete a course on account of illness, bereavement, or other compassionate grounds. In order to be granted a Compassionate Withdrawal, the student must make the request in writing. Such a request can only be granted by the Director of the Montreal School of Theology on the recommendation of the student’s College. If the Director is also the principal or other employee of the college to which the student belongs, the Director is expected to consult with the principal of the other member college(s). The deadline for such a request is five (5) months after the final day of the semester of the course for which a Compassionate Withdrawal is requested. A grade of “W” does not affect standing nor the calculation for completing the In-Ministry Year with Distinction.