

Section:	II.3.27	
Title:	Mid-Semester Evaluation Policy	
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Approved By:	Provost	
Responsible Unit:	Academic Affairs (609) 771-3080; academic@tcnj.edu	
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2.0	March 8, 2019	Revised
1.0	Fall, 2011	New policy; Initial Release

I. INTRODUCTION

This policy establishes the guidelines for mid-semester progress reports. Like “The College of New Jersey’s Policies and Practices on Undergraduate Advising,” the Mid-Semester Evaluation Policy is designed to facilitate student development. Accurate information about student progress in a course is essential to effective academic advising.

Because “advising is a shared responsibility” at TCNJ, timely and accurate information about a student’s academic standing in a course at mid-semester is both desirable and useful, particularly in cases where the student’s academic success may be at risk. Submission of mid-semester progress reports is helpful for academic advising; an advisor who is copied on all “Caution” and “Unsatisfactory” reports can gain an understanding of the larger academic picture and connect a student with resources and support. For this reason, faculty should avoid indiscriminately giving every student a report of “Satisfactory,” “Caution,” or “Unsatisfactory,” since this practice undermines TCNJ’s commitment to effective advising. To ensure that faculty have an adequate basis upon which to determine a student’s mid-semester progress, assessments contributing to approximately one-third of the student’s final course grade should have been evaluated by mid-semester; ideally, this should include at least one large assessment such as a mid-term exam or other significant assignment.

Mid-semester evaluations provide a snapshot in time based on a student’s performance in the course up to that point. The evaluation is the instructor’s assessment of each student’s performance; it does not include a consideration of a student’s desired performance.

II. DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise defined and publicly indicated (see III.2 and III.3 below), mid-semester progress reports will adhere to the following definitions. Each definition offers examples of assessments that may be used to determine a student's mid-semester progress, but not all factors need to be considered.

Satisfactory (Green): Indicates that the student's academic performance in the course is currently adequate to earn a passing A-level or B-level grade. Performance is ideally based on graded assignments (e.g., homework, papers, quizzes, or exams) and appropriate grade weighting. If graded assignments are not sufficient or available at the time of mid-semester evaluation, other metrics indicative of class success may be used (regularly attends and participates in class activities, and/or appears to demonstrate the ability and willingness to meet the learning goals of the course).

Caution (Yellow): Indicates that the student's academic performance in the course is only minimally adequate to earn a passing C-level grade and that worsening performance may result in a failing grade. Contributing factors may be that the student has not submitted required assignments or has earned, at best, marginally passing grades on most or all of those assignments. If graded assignments are not sufficient or available at the time of mid-semester evaluation, other contributing factors may be considered (not regularly attending or participating in class activities, and/or not currently demonstrating the ability or willingness to meet the learning goals of the course).

Unsatisfactory (Red): Indicates that the student's academic performance in the course is currently inadequate and likely to earn a D-level or failing F-level grade. Contributing factors may be that the student has not submitted required assignments or has earned failing grades on most or all of those assignments. If graded assignments are not sufficient or available at the time of mid-semester evaluation, other contributing factors may be considered (not attending or participate in class activities, and/or unable or unwilling to demonstrate the ability to meet the learning goals of the course).

III. POLICY

The following defines essential requirements and process steps. Specific responsibilities are identified within.

1. Mid-semester progress reports are required for all students in all courses. Mid-semester progress reports offer only a snapshot of student performance at mid-semester; they do not predict or guarantee a student's final grade in the course.

2. Departments and programs should ensure that all new hires and part-time or adjunct faculty are aware of the guidelines and requirements stipulated in the Mid-Semester Evaluation Policy. Deans should ensure that departments and programs have fulfilled this responsibility.
3. To ensure consistency in student evaluations across multi-section courses, departments and programs may choose to establish course-specific guidelines for mid-semester reports of “Satisfactory,” “Caution,” and “Unsatisfactory.” In cases where such guidelines have been established, course-specific definitions should appear on all instructors’ syllabi. Individual faculty not teaching a multi-section course with departmentally specified designations may tailor the general definitions indicated in Section II, but any individualized definitions of “Satisfactory,” “Caution,” and “Unsatisfactory” must be included on the course syllabus. If no course-specific definitions are indicated on a syllabus, the course will adhere to the definitions of “Satisfactory,” “Caution,” and “Unsatisfactory” indicated in Section II.
4. Records and Registration will ensure the deadline for submission of mid-semester progress reports is coordinated with TCNJ’s official academic calendar to give students time to discuss their academic standing with instructor(s) and/or academic advisor(s). To ensure that students can make informed decisions about their academic performance in a course, the deadline for completed mid-semester reports shall occur at least five (5) weekdays before the course withdrawal deadline and the last day to request or rescind an ungraded option.
5. Faculty are strongly encouraged to add student-specific comments for use by the student and their advisor (e.g., in the “Note” option in PAWS), particularly when a report of “Caution” or “Unsatisfactory” is submitted. This annotation provides an explanation for mid-semester progress reports. If all significant assignments in a course occur after the deadline for mid-semester progress reports, faculty should similarly annotate their mid-semester progress reports.

Statement of student academic accountability: In support of TCNJ's mission to prepare students to excel in their chosen fields, faculty provide periodic assessments of student performance in each course. However, it is the students' responsibility to be aware of their standing in their respective courses. As advocates for their own academic success, students are expected to initiate and maintain open communication with faculty and advisors in an effort to continuously monitor their progress. Students experiencing academic difficulties must assume responsibility to seek appropriate resources and adjust their academic habits and dispositions accordingly to ensure meaningful progress toward a degree.