

## San José State University

### Faculty Guide: Assigning WU vs. F Grades

The distinction between WU and F (or NC) is not about academic rigor; it is about the basis on which a grade is determined. The WU grade indicates that a student failed the course because they did not officially withdraw and completed insufficient coursework, rather than for evaluated academic performance.

#### Core Principle

The key to determining the correct grade to assign is the instructor's professional judgment of whether the student's participation and/or completion of coursework provides sufficient evidence to support a fair and valid evaluation of the student's achievement of the course learning outcomes.

**Ask yourself:** Has the student participated in and/or completed sufficient coursework to adequately evaluate their academic performance?

[CSU Executive Order 1037](#)

#### Key Definitions

##### Assign an F (or NC) when:

- The student **completed enough coursework** for you to evaluate their academic performance, even if the performance was poor, and
- The grade is based on **demonstrable academic work** (exams, assignments, projects, participation, etc.).

An F reflects **academic failure**, not failure to participate or withdraw.

##### Assign a WU when all of the following are true:

- The student did not officially withdraw from the course, and
- The student stopped attending or participating, and
- There is insufficient completed coursework to assign a grade based on academic performance.

A WU indicates that the failure resulted from **non-attendance or lack of participation and failure to withdraw**, rather than from assessed academic work.

When assigning a WU, faculty are required to report the **last known date of attendance or participation**, to the best of their ability.

#### Examples

- Student attends briefly and submits no assignments or exams: WU.  
Student completes minimal early work but stops participating and does not withdraw: WU.  
Student completes most assignments and exams but earns a failing average: F.  
Student attends irregularly but completes major graded work (enough to assess performance): F.

