



## Policy on Assessing Sigma Theta Tau International Academic Achievement Excellence Standards

The underlying principle for student membership in Sigma Theta Tau International (Sigma) is to honor high academic achievers in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs who have demonstrated leadership potential.

Some schools of nursing measure academic achievement using a grade point average system. Some do not. When a developing chapter from a school that does not use a grade point average system applies for a Sigma chapter charter or charter amendment, it is asked how it defines “academic achievement” within the grading system that is used by that institution of higher education, and an agreeable standard is approved.

This policy statement defines the academic excellence criteria for Sigma membership based on grading systems that have been evaluated and approved for chartering to date. This list is not finalized; new standards will be added as schools using different grading systems are evaluated and approved for chartering. In addition to these criteria, the Sigma bylaws require that basic students who are elected shall rank not lower than the highest 35 percent of their class in scholarship, basic students shall have completed at least one-half of the required nursing curriculum, and graduate students shall have completed a minimum of one-quarter of the required graduate curriculum.

<b>Grading System Description</b>	<b>Undergraduate Standard</b>	<b>Graduate Standard</b>
4.0 grade point average system	3.0 grade point average or higher	3.5 grade point average or higher
7.0 grade point average system	5.0 grade point average or higher	6.0 grade point average or higher
9.0 grade point average system	6.0 grade point average or higher	7.0 grade point average or higher
Highly competent, competent, non-competent	Highly competent	Highly competent
Honors degree classification: first-class honors, upper second-class honors, lower second-class honors, and third-class honors	First-class honors or upper second-class honors	Upper second-class or higher
Grading scale 0-110		Grade of 105 or higher
Grading scale 0-30	Grade of 26 or higher	
Grading scale of 0-20	Grade of 15 or higher	Grade 17.5 or higher
Grading scale of 1-5 (1=highest)	Grade of 1.0 to 1.75	Grade of 1.0 to 1.25

Grading scale of 5-1 (5=highest)	Grade of 4.0 to 5.0	Grade of 4.5 to 5.0
Percentage Grading System (Canada)	70% or higher	75% or higher
Percentage Grading System (Israel)	85% of higher	90% of higher
Percentage Grading System (UK)		70% or higher
Cumulative Average (CAV)	78 or higher	84 or higher
Cumulative Satisfactory Academic Progress	90% Cumulative SAP or higher (highly competent)	90% Cumulative SAP or higher (highly competent)

There are also some universities that grade nursing students at the end of the program as pass or fail. In these types of programs, the following guidelines offer examples to be used to assist chapters in determining membership eligibility according to Sigma's eligibility standards.

**Guidelines for How Institutions Can Demonstrate Excellence or Academic Achievement in Non-graded Assessment Systems**

- Identify mechanisms to determine attributes that characterize performance going beyond the requirement just to pass
- Recognize achievement of learning outcomes that are at levels well beyond the standard just to pass
- Use the feedback from educators on the achievements made that are beyond just a passing grade
- Ask educators to identify a group of students based on demonstrated advanced skills and aptitudes and/or demonstrated integrated understanding and application of knowledge and skills learned across the program
- Use demonstration of excellent leadership and scholarly attributes in areas such as:
  - Participation in class and labs
  - Student awards
  - Clinical practice reports
  - Publications
  - Community service
  - Voluntary work – local, national, international
  - Educator and clinical mentor/preceptor reports