FACULTY COUNCIL PRE-READ, 10/30/26

Course Repetition and Grade Forgiveness

OVERVIEW

CESP is partnering with OAA to review undergraduate course repetition and forgiveness policy. Stakeholders are coalescing around two revisions:

- Remove grade thresholds for repeats; instead, create an enforceable limit that a course may only be repeated once without permission.
- Remove the petition process for forgiveness; automate the process when an eligible repeat is posted.

Key challenges raised by current policy:

- **Policy cannot be enforced:** Faculty Rules require approval to repeat previously passed courses, but this requirement cannot be enforced at the point of registration.
- **Petition processes create red tape:** Grade forgiveness requires a petition process, but President Bellamkonda has asked us to cut red tape wherever possible.
- **No guardrails for aid ineligibility:** Current process allows multiple fails and repeats that raise the risk of financial aid loss, regardless of whether the student uses forgiveness.

Decision principles for optimal policy:

- **Student success:** Create opportunities for advisor connection, academic recovery, and degree progression.
- **Aid preservation:** Put guardrails around student behaviors that can trigger a loss of financial aid.
- **Academic integrity:** Preserve meaningful academic standards and student accountability.
- **Efficiency:** Reduce red-tape and ensure access does not require navigation of complex processes.
- **Feasibility:** Establish a policy that can be enforced and implemented consistently across colleges, campuses, advising units, and university systems.

About this pre-read:

This pre-read was initially created for an OAA/CESP Policy Design Sprint Studio on 10/27/26. This version adds the “Overview” above, a few updates throughout, and an “Appendix” (p. 13) including a list of the Sprint participants, takeaways from the Sprint, and remaining issues to resolve.

- **Decision 1: Course Repeat Limits (p. 2):** An overview of two potential policy directions (maintain current policy or create an enforceable limit) considered by Sprint participants.
- **Decision 2: Forgiveness Process (p. 3):** An overview of three potential policy directions (abolish forgiveness, maintain current policy, or automate forgiveness) considered by Sprint participants, followed by an overview of top-public peers’ policies.
- **Decision 3: Forgiveness Cap (p. 4):** An overview of policy options the Sprint participants considered to maintain or edit the current cap, followed by an overview of top-public peers’ policies.
- **Relevant current policy & practice (pp. 5-6):** A practical summary of relevant Faculty Rules, financial aid regulations, registration enforcement mechanisms, and the forgiveness petition process.
- **Decision 1 Supplemental Data (pp. 7-8):** Patterns of undergraduate course repeat behavior.
- **Decision 2 & 3 Supplemental Data (pp. 9-12):** Patterns of undergraduate forgiveness behavior.
- **Appendix: Policy Design Sprint Studio Outcomes (pp. 13-15):** Provides a list of the 10/27/26 Policy Design Sprint participants, takeaways from the discussion, and remaining issues to resolve.

Decision 1: Course Repeat Limits

How many times can a student repeat a course? Does that depend on their grade? When do they need permission?

OPTION	POTENTIAL BENEFITS	POTENTIAL RISKS / CONSEQUENCES
A. Maintain current policy Undergraduates can re-take any failed course, but need permission to re-take a passed course.	• Although "permission" policy cannot be enforced, enhanced implementation (e.g., more informative warning messages, a dashboard that sends warning flags to advisors for multiple repeats) could help current policy have the intended impact (e.g., advisors reach out to help students avoid running into the financial aid prohibition on re-taking a passed course more than once).	• In many majors, students passing a required course with a D must re-take it to proceed. • "Permission" policy cannot be enforced at the point of registration without slowing system to a crawl for all students; cannot be enforced post-registration because it would trigger a very high volume of drops and overwhelm advisors; thus students merely receive a warning they can ignore. • Some students fail and re-take the same course many times over.
B. Second repeat requires approval Students may repeat any course once at their option; students who register to repeat a course for a second time (third non-W attempt) will be dropped from the course unless they have advisor approval.	• Relatively low volume of "second repeat" permissions should be manageable for advisors. • Student warning at point of registration, plus a flag in advisor dashboard, could push early advising meeting and allow permission to be granted before the student is dropped. • In contrast to option (A), <u>forces</u> students to an advising conversation about whether the student needs to re-consider their major or get additional academic support.	• Will require a variety of new implementation processes for Registrar staff, IRP (dashboard flags to alert advisors), and individual advisors. • Unclear how "repeatable" courses should be treated: Should they be exempt from this rule, or are there federal financial aid concerns regarding these courses?

10/30 note: Sprint participants were warmest to Option B; see the Appendix.

For data on undergraduate patterns of course repetition, see pp. 7 - 8.

Decision 2: Forgiveness Process

Should grade forgiveness be abolished, remain petition-based, or become automatic?

OPTION	POTENTIAL BENEFITS	RISKS / CONSEQUENCES
A. Eliminate grade forgiveness	• Reduces confusion between federal financial aid vs. OSU calculations of GPA	• Some majors or merit scholarships have high GPA maintenance requirements. Some students will be unable to continue in their major, or lack aid to continue at all.
B. Maintain current policy: Petition required	• Provides touchpoint to explicitly warn students that their second grade will replace the first (including: if they passed the first time but fail the second time, they will lose the original credit)	• Burdensome "red tape" for students. • Lack of awareness may result in eligible students not using forgiveness. • Advisor approval is pro forma based on clear eligibility criteria that could be automated. This takes up advisor time that could be better spent elsewhere.
C. Automatic forgiveness for a C- or lower (or D+ or lower) Forgiveness is automatically applied when eligible repeat posts.	• Applies policy consistently and removes a procedural barrier. • Typical among top publics that have a forgiveness policy.	• Students could unknowingly use up forgiveness on 1-credit courses. • Increased forgiveness usage could increase likelihood of confusion between federal vs. OSU GPA calculation. • Must decide whether to allow or disallow a few department-specific exclusions. • May require editing the "second grade replaces first" rule to "higher of two grades is used" rule.

If we opt for (B) or (C): Should we edit the "second grade replaces first" rule to a "higher of two grades is used" rule? 10/30 note: Sprint participants were warmest to Option C with a "higher of two grades is used" rule; see the Appendix.

Top-Ranked Public Institution (tied with or above OSU in USNWR) Benchmarking:

Definition group	Highest eligible passing grade	Institutions	Count
No forgiveness	Not Applicable	Michigan–Ann Arbor; UNC Chapel Hill; UT Austin; University of Florida; Wisconsin–Madison	5
Forgiveness by petition	Varies	Georgia Institute of Technology; University of Illinois; Ohio State	3
Forgiveness automatic	D+	UC Berkeley; U Virginia	2
Forgiveness automatic	C- (for some institutions: D or D+ for most courses but C- for writing courses)	UC Los Angeles; UC San Diego; UC Davis; UC Irvine; UC Santa Barbara	5

Practical summary: Top publics typically either do not allow forgiveness (5/15) or apply forgiveness automatically when a course is repeated and the prior attempt had a low grade (7/15).

For data on undergraduate patterns of forgiveness usage, see pp. 9 – 12.

Decision 3: Forgiveness Cap

Assuming we retain forgiveness: Should Ohio State revise the current 3-course forgiveness limit?

OPTION	POTENTIAL BENEFITS	RISKS / CONSEQUENCES
A. Retain current cap of 3 courses	Provides multiple recovery opportunities.	Three courses can represent different credit totals (perhaps disadvantaging non-STEM students in comparison to STEM students).
B. Change to equivalent credit-hour cap (e.g., 10 credits)	Eliminates credit inequities between majors with courses of different credit values.	Adds complexity for variable-credit courses and courses crossing the remaining allowance. A 10-credit cap would restrict many STEM students to a two-course maximum.
C. Retain 3-course cap and add maximum credit cap (e.g., 10 credits). Forgiveness is limited to whichever cap is hit first.	Eliminates credit inequities between majors with courses of different credit values.	Clarifies how to handle variable-credit courses. A 10-credit cap would restrict many STEM students to a two-course maximum.
D. Change to credits and increase cap (e.g., to 12, 15, or 18 credits)	Provides greater flexibility and recovery opportunity; reflects current situation for a small proportion of STEM students.	May increase repeats, time to degree, financial aid risk, and course-capacity pressure.

10/30 note: Sprint participants were warmest to Option A; see the Appendix.

Top-Ranked Public Institution (tied with or above OSU in USNWR) Benchmarking:

Institutions Allowing Forgiveness	Cumulative Allowance (standardized to semester credit hours)	Note
Georgia Tech	2 courses	Course cap; credits not specified
U Illinois	10 semester credit hours; maximum 4 courses	Both course and credit caps apply
Ohio State	3 courses	Course cap; credits not specified
UC Berkeley	12 semester credit hours	Credit cap
UC Davis	≈10.7 semester credit hours	Converted from 16 quarter units
UC Irvine	≈10.7 semester credit hours	Converted from 16 quarter units
UC Los Angeles	≈10.7 semester credit hours	Converted from 16 quarter units
UC San Diego	≈10.7 semester credit hours	Converted from 16 quarter units
UC Santa Barbara	≈10.7 semester credit hours	Converted from 16 quarter units
U of Virginia	9 semester credit hours	First 9 eligible credits

Practical summary: Top publics that allow forgiveness typically have a credit cap of between 9 to 12 semester credit hours, with 10-11 hours being most common.

For data on undergraduate patterns of forgiveness usage, see pp. 9 – 12.

Relevant Current Policy & Process

Faculty Rule 3335-8-27: Failure in a required course.

Practical Summary: Undergraduates who fail a required course should take it again in the next semester.

(A) An undergraduate or professional student who has not been dismissed from the university must repeat in a regularly scheduled class, at the first opportunity, a required course in which a mark of "E" or “EN” has been received, unless an equivalent course is recommended and approved by the authorized representative of the dean or director of the student's enrollment unit.

(B) A graduate student who has not been dismissed from the university must repeat in a regularly scheduled class a required course in which a mark of "E" or “EN” has been received only if this is required by the student's adviser.

(Board approval date: 6/7/2005)

Faculty Rule 3335-8-28: Repetition of courses.

Practical Summary: Undergraduates can re-take any failed course, but need permission to re-take a passed course (including a course passed with a D). Re-attempting a course after a W mark is not considered a repeat.

(A) Except as specified by rule 3335-8-27 of the Administrative Code, undergraduate students who have received a mark of "E," “EN,” or "NP" in a course at this university may repeat the course for credit at their option.

(B) Undergraduate or professional students, as defined in rule 3335-9-01 of the Administrative Code, who have received a mark of “A,” “A-,” “B+,” “B,” “B-,” “C+,” “C,” “C-,” "D+," "D," “EM,” “K,” or “PA” in a course at this university may repeat the course for credit only upon the recommendation of the authorized representative of the dean or director of their enrollment unit.

(C) A graduate student, as defined in rule 3335-9-01 of the Administrative Code, may repeat for credit any course when approval is given by the student's adviser.

(D) A student who has audited a course may subsequently repeat the course for credit only upon receiving permission of the authorized representative of the dean or director of the student's enrollment unit.

(E) The credit hours for a repeated course shall in no case be counted more than once in meeting graduation requirements. When a student repeats a course, both grades appear on the student's record and both are used in computing the point-hour ratio, except as modified by rule 3335-8-27.1 of the Administrative Code.

(Board approval dates: 4/7/2000, 6/29/2001, 6/7/2005)

Faculty Rule 3335-8-27.1: Grade forgiveness rule.

Practical Summary: Undergraduates can petition to have a repeated course grade replace the original grade, for up to three courses.

Undergraduate students may petition the authorized representative of the dean or director of their enrollment unit to repeat a course and, after completing the course the second time, have the original course credit and grade excluded from the calculation of the student's cumulative point-hour ratio, but remain on the student's official permanent record. This action will be subject to the following conditions:

(A) This rule may be applied for a maximum of three courses.

(B) Grade forgiveness used for a course during Exceptional Circumstances as defined in 3335-8-21 (L) will not count toward the three-course limit.

(C) The graduate school and graduate professional colleges may formulate appropriate modifications of paragraph (A) of this rule, subject to the approval of the council on academic affairs, and publish the rule in their bulletins.

(Board approval dates: 7/21/1978, 6/7/1985, 6/7/2005, 6/22/2012, 6/5/2015, 4/8/2016, 11/21/2019, 2/25/2021)

Federal Financial Aid Rules.

Practical Summary: Students may risk their financial aid (including Pell grants, federal loans, and institutional aid requiring federal SAP eligibility) if they repeat courses without careful thought.

- Students may receive federal aid for multiple repeats of a course they have failed; but after earning a passing grade, they may repeat that course only once more (the student loses aid only for that course, but if subtraction of those credit hours drops a student below full-time, it will impact the total aid package).
- Students should complete at least 67% of the credits they attempt; undergraduate students must maintain at least a 1.8 GPA for their first year and a 2.0 GPA in subsequent years. Institutionally forgiven grades still count against federal credits attempted and GPA.
- If a student exceeds their 150% degree limit of attempted credits – or it becomes mathematically clear that they *will* exceed that limit – they are no longer eligible for financial aid. Attempted credits include transfer credits, Ws, and failure grades (even if the failure grade is forgiven by the institution).

Ohio State "Repeatable" Courses.

Practical Summary: Many departments offer "repeatable" courses students can repeat toward the degree.

By default, courses are designated in the registration system as "non-repeatable": that is, in accordance with Faculty Rule 3335-8-28 (E), credit hours for a repeated course shall not be counted more than once in meeting graduation requirements. However, many departments offer "repeatable" courses which a student may take more than once to meet graduation requirements; examples include performance arts, individual studies, and undergraduate research courses.

Registration Warnings, Bars, and Back-end Drops

Practical Summary: Besides a warning, the only feasible registration enforcement mechanism is a back-end drop for a relatively small volume of students.

Currently, if a student registers to repeat a non-repeatable course they've already passed, they receive a generic warning (based on the course catalog constraints only) that this exceeds the allowable attempts specified in the course catalog. Students may dismiss the warning and move on. Programming a more sophisticated course repeat logic that bars the student from registering for the course without permission would unacceptably slow the entire registration system for all students. An alternative is a separate batch process performed on a certain date that would drop students who are not allowed to re-take the course, requiring students to connect with an advisor to get permission for re-enrollment. This is feasible if the volume is small; large volumes would overwhelm advisors.

Forgiveness Petition Process

Practical Summary: Students must submit their petition by the 10th week of the repeated class; as long as petitions meet a standard set of criteria, they are approved. Students are warned their second grade will replace the first.

Advisors work with students on the petition process. Petitions are approved if the student submits it on time, earned an OSU letter grade (A-E) in the course to be forgiven, has not previously repeated the course, and hasn't exceeded the three-course forgiveness cap. A few departments have additional specific approval criteria, particularly: students cannot successfully complete a course and then go back in sequence to forgive its pre-req course. A key purpose of the petition is to make clear to students that the second grade will be used to replace the first (in particular: students who passed the course the first time but fail it during their forgiveness attempt will lose credit for the course).

Decision 1 Supplemental Data: Ohio State Undergraduate Course Repeat Behavior

Population:

- All undergraduates entering from 2018 to 2022 (e.g., Spring 2018, Summer 2018 and Autumn 2018 make up the 2018 cohorts of COL NFYS, REG NFYS, and Transfers)
- STEM course/student = ENG and ASC-NMS courses/primary majors
- Excluded (1) graduate courses, (2) repeatable course attempts according to SIS, (3) classes graded on a basis other than A-E (i.e., W, S, U, PA, NP, PE, I, etc. were excluded)

Note: about half of these repeated courses were previously passed; see p. 13.

What proportion of students repeat at least one course graded A-E?

Cohort	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
COL NFYS	29%	24%	23%	28%	28%	**26%**
REG NFYS	36%	30%	32%	37%	38%	**34%**
Transfer	28%	24%	22%	28%	29%	**26%**
Total	**30%**	**25%**	**24%**	**29%**	**30%**	**28%**

Note: Does not include re-attempting a course after a W, as this is not a "repeat." If we include re-attempts after a W, values in this table typically increase by about 5 percentage points.

Practical summary: About 28% of students repeat a course; this is slightly more common (34%) among regional entrants.

How many students repeat a course once, twice, or three+ times?

Cohort	Max Repeats	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
COL NFYS	None	5654	5949	6758	6187	5895	**30443**
	One	2164	1647	1741	2091	2057	**9700**
	Two	165	156	197	214	186	**918**
	Three+	35	30	41	50	32	**188**
REG NFYS	None	2105	2258	1942	1717	1451	**9473**
	One	1082	822	787	872	774	**4337**
	Two	89	104	97	106	108	**504**
	Three+	15	29	20	24	17	**105**
Transfer	None	2787	2997	2743	2514	2184	**13225**
	One	989	853	703	868	776	**4189**
	Two	74	70	77	103	102	**426**
	Three+	10	11	16	15	8	**60**
Total	None	**10546**	**11204**	**11443**	**10418**	**9530**	**53141**
	One	**4235**	**3322**	**3231**	**3831**	**3607**	**18226**
	Two	**328**	**330**	**371**	**423**	**396**	**1848**
	Three+	**60**	**70**	**77**	**89**	**57**	**353**

Note: Does not include re-attempting a course after a W, as this is not a "repeat." If we include re-attempts after a W, volumes re-attempting a course 2 or 3+ times increase significantly.

Practical summary: in a typical academic year, approximately 440 students repeat a course for the second or more time (this likely works out to about 200 in a given AU or SP semester).

How many students repeat the same course over and over?: Number repeating the course 3+ times

Max Repeats	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
3	48	58	71	78	49	**304**
4	11	11	4	8	7	**41**
5			2	3	1	**6**
6	1					**1**
7		1				**1**

Practical summary: Repeating a course over and over (repeating 3+ times, or taking 4 or more times) is not common, but happens more often than seems appropriate for a student's academic progress.

Top courses with 2+ repeats:

Top Courses with Students doing 2+ Repeats*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Calc 1 (MATH 1151)	42	26	19	41	32	**160**
Data Anly In Psych (PSYCH 2220)	12	16	17	28	23	**96**
College Algebra (MATH 1148)	27	8	7	24	25	**91**
Organic Chem 1 (CHEM 2510)	10	14	23	25	18	**90**
SW1: Components (CSE 2221)	7	9	8	21	25	**70**
Organic Chem 2 (CHEM 2520)	3	12	23	10	15	**63**
Gen Chem 1 (CHEM 1210)	8	4	6	19	20	**57**
First Yr English Comp (ENGLISH 1110.01)	3	14	9	18	7	**51**
Gen Chem 2 (CHEM 1220)	9	9	19	5	8	**50**
Engineering Math A (MATH 1172)	13	6	6	9	16	**50**

Note: Courses with high volumes of enrollment will tend to have a high volume of any given student behavior (such as multiple repeats). Most courses on this list have >1,000 enrollments per AU, with MATH 1151 having >2,000 enrollments per AU during this timeframe. In terms of the proportion of enrollments made up of students repeating 2+ times, the top classes were STAT 5732 and GEOG 5222 at 3% each, and MATH 4512 and PSYCH 2220 at 2% each.

Practical summary: Courses repeated over and over are typically requirements for STEM fields. At some point, these students need an advising conversation about whether they need additional academic support or whether this field is the best fit for them.

Decision 2 & 3 Supplemental Data: Current Ohio State Data on Grade Forgiveness

Population: All undergraduates entering between 2018 to 2022

Grade forgiveness usage

		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
COL NFYS	N using forgiveness	2033	1397	1473	1876	1798	8577
	% using forgiveness	25%	18%	17%	22%	22%	21%
	Proportion of repeats involving forgiveness	65%	55%	53%	60%	61%	59%
REG NFYS	N using forgiveness	817	629	563	667	597	3273
	% using forgiveness	25%	20%	20%	25%	25%	23%
	Proportion of repeats involving forgiveness	50%	43%	43%	47%	49%	46%
Transfer	N using forgiveness	813	636	489	647	601	3186
	% using forgiveness	21%	16%	14%	18%	20%	18%
	Proportion of repeats involving forgiveness	61%	52%	46%	50%	52%	52%
Total	N using forgiveness	**3663**	**2662**	**2525**	**3190**	**2996**	**15036**
	% using forgiveness	**24%**	**18%**	**17%**	**22%**	**22%**	**20%**
	Proportion of repeats involving forgiveness	**60%**	**51%**	**49%**	**54%**	**56%**	**54%**

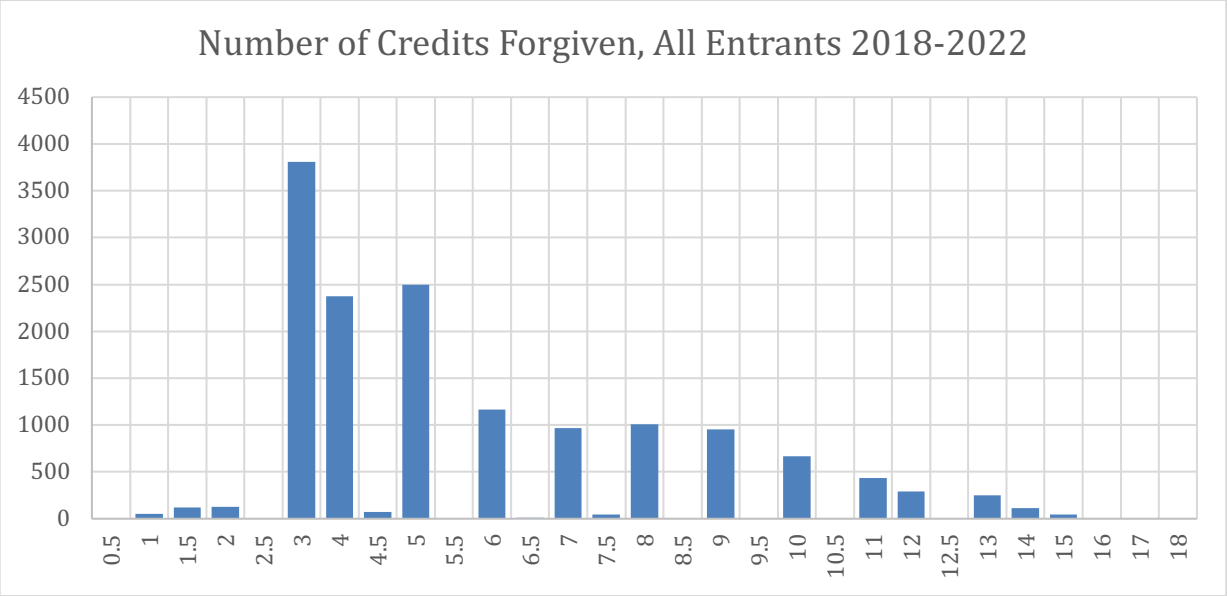
Note: Many students who have not exhausted forgiveness repeat courses without using it. The top course repeated without forgiveness even though the student hadn't exhausted forgiveness (N=302) is Calc 1; a handful of students have taken the course 3+ times and never applied forgiveness.

Grade forgiveness usage by first-generation status

		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
FGEN	% using forgiveness	28%	21%	20%	27%	28%	25%
	Proportion of repeats involving forgiveness	58%	49%	48%	53%	54%	52%
Not FGEN	% using forgiveness	23%	16%	16%	21%	20%	19%
	Proportion of repeats involving forgiveness	62%	52%	50%	56%	58%	56%

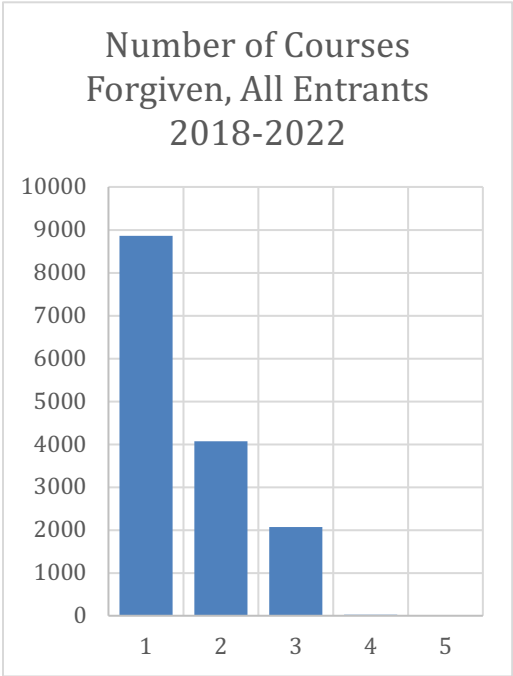
Practical summary: In a typical academic year, about 3,000 students use forgiveness (for about ~5,700 instances, see p. 12); thousands of petitions represent a significant burden on student and advisor time. Some students seem unaware they could / should be using forgiveness. This may be more common among first-generation students: They are more likely to repeat courses, but among those who repeat courses, they are slightly less likely to use forgiveness compared to non-FGEN peers (52% vs 56%).

Distribution of number of courses and number of credits forgiven



Differences between STEM vs non-STEM

- Students who ever pursued a STEM major and used forgiveness: used 6.3 forgiveness credits on average.
- Students who never pursued a STEM major and used forgiveness: used 5.3 forgiveness credits on average.
- 28% of STEM students used any forgiveness compared to only 17% of non-STEM students.



Practical summary: Among students who use forgiveness, the modal usage is 3 to 5 credits (one course), and the average usage is about 5 to 6 credits. Some students do exhaust forgiveness; for more detail, see the next page.

Forgiveness Exhaustion

How Many Students Exhaust Forgiveness (use it 3 times)?

Cohort	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
COL NFYS	202	146	206	277	227	**1058**
REG NFYS	72	70	68	80	78	**368**
Transfer	75	60	62	91	73	**361**
Total	**349**	**276**	**336**	**448**	**378**	**1787**

What Proportion of Students Exhaust Forgiveness (use it 3 times)?

Cohort	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
COL NFYS	2.5%	1.9%	2.4%	3.2%	2.8%	**2.6%**
REG NFYS	2.2%	2.2%	2.4%	2.9%	3.3%	**2.6%**
Transfer	1.9%	1.5%	1.8%	2.6%	2.4%	**2.0%**
Total	**2.3%**	**1.8%**	**2.2%**	**3.0%**	**2.8%**	**2.4%**

STEM vs Non-STEM Students Exhausting Forgiveness

Cohort	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
STEM – N Exhaust	205	135	179	218	203	**940**
STEM - % Exhaust	4.2%	2.8%	3.8%	4.4%	4.4%	**3.9%**
Non-STEM – N Exhaust	144	141	157	230	175	**847**
Non-STEM - % Exhaust	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	2.3%	1.9%	**1.7%**

STEM student = Ever pursued an ENGR or ASC-NMS major

Practical summary: Only 2% to 3% of undergraduates exhaust the 3-course forgiveness cap, but this is more common among STEM students (about 4%) than non-STEM students (about 2%).

Grade outcomes: do students earn better grades when they repeat / forgive a course?

Non-Forgiveness Repeats

		Most Recent Attempt Grade					
		A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D+, D	E, EN	Total
First Attempt Grade	A, A-	787	94	26	5	29	941
	B+, B, B-	312	213	68	21	30	644
	C+, C, C-	509	731	362	88	151	1841
	D+, D	580	1453	1833	475	615	4956
	E, EN	1380	2248	3062	1630	3683	12003
	Total	**3568**	**4739**	**5351**	**2219**	**4508**	**20385**

- 70% earned a better grade (e.g., C+ is better than C, etc.)
- 23% earned the same grade
- 7% earned a worse grade

Note: Students who repeat a course and realize within the first few weeks that they'll perform poorly again may be unlikely to petition for grade forgiveness. However, it's unclear why students who earned an E or EN the first time did not petition for grade forgiveness when they were on track to earn an A or B the second time. This volume is too large to be explained by prior forgiveness exhaustion (see p. 11).

Forgiveness Repeats

		Most Recent Attempt Grade					
		A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D+, D	E, EN	Total
First Attempt Grade	A, A-	8	1	1			10
	B+, B, B-	459	123	10	1	1	594
	C+, C, C-	1766	1847	627	69	44	4353
	D+, D	1731	3234	3097	604	267	8933
	E, EN	2560	3720	4456	1836	1794	14366
	Total	**6524**	**8925**	**8191**	**2510**	**2106**	**28256**

- 90% earned a better grade (e.g., C+ is better than C, etc.)
- 8% earned the same grade
- 2% earned a worse grade

Note: Students who pass a course the first time, repeat it using forgiveness, and fail the repeat will lose their original credit for that course, which may require them to take the course yet again. During this time period, this happened to 312 students (approx. 62/year).

Practical summary: Across repeats, about half were previously passed by the student. Students typically improve their grade when they repeat the course, and seem more likely to apply for forgiveness if they expect to earn a better grade the second time. A small proportion earn a worse grade. Among those who used forgiveness, about 62/year passed the course the first time and failed it the second time, thus losing credit for the course entirely. Conversely, about 1,700 students/year passed a previously-failed course without applying for forgiveness, thus losing the opportunity to repair their GPA.

APPENDIX: Policy Design Sprint Studio Outcomes

Sprint Studio Participants

Name	Title / Affiliation	Representation Role
Leads		
Shanna Jaggars	AVP Student Academic Excellence, OAA	CESP – Provost designee
Norman Jones	Dean & VP, Undergraduate Education	OUE
Daniel Thompson	Professor, Mathematics	CESP – Chair
Participants in Attendance		
Cynthia Callahan	Assoc Prof English & Assoc Dean, Mansfield	Regional Campuses
Amanda Donahue	Director,Transition & Academic Success, OUE	OUE Academic Success
Kynthia Droesch	Senior Director, College Administration, CPH	CESP – USAC
Luke Grissinger	Undergraduate Student, Political Sci / JGC	CESP – USG
Ryan Hunt	University Registrar (OUR)	CESP – Provost designee
Liz McGinnis	Lead Undergraduate Academic Advisor, ASC	Outreach Playbook Project
Vicki Miller	Sr Assoc Director, Compliance, Financial Aid	Financial Aid
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Shannon Peltier	Assistant Director, Academic Advising, OUE	OUE Advising
David Stebenne	Professor, History & Law	Former CESP – Faculty
Michael Worth	Senior Systems Manager, OUR	Registration Systems
Participants Absent (reviewed pre-read, provided asynchronous feedback)		
Stephanie Brown	Assoc Dean Academic Affairs, Newark	Regional Campuses
Ebubechukwu Nwankwo	Graduate Student, Chem/Bio Engineering	CESP – CGS
Katie Smillie	Asst Dir Student Success Analytics, OAA IRP	OAA IRP
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Amy McCulla	Project Management Consultant, OAA	Facilitation Support
Tara Ward	Executive Assistant, OUE/OAA	Event Support

Decision 1: Course Repeat Limits

Group was warmest toward: Option B (may repeat any course once; require permission beginning with the 3rd non-W attempt).	
Why?	• There are good reasons for students to re-take courses they have passed; half of current repeats are for courses already passed. • Volume of first repeats (second non-W attempt) is too large to feasibly enforce advisor permission. • Outside of officially "repeatable" courses, a second repeat (third non-W attempt) of the same course is a clear red flag that the student needs support, such as counseling on major change. • A second repeat (third non-W attempt) of a previously passed course is not covered by federal financial aid (unless the course is officially "repeatable"). • The volume of second repeats (third non-W attempt) is small enough to feasibly enforce advisor permission.

Policy language/ wording issues discussed	• Officially "repeatable" courses would be exempt. This may not need to be explicitly specified in language, if we consider that a course being officially repeatable represents "automatic permission"? • Non-letter grades like PA, NP, I, U, S should probably all count against the 1st / 2nd attempt (however, a W mark would not count against it). • Need to decide whether transfer & credit exam should count against the 1st / 2nd attempt (probably yes, but IRP will run analysis to see if there is any important reason not to). • How do we best cross-reference with Faculty Rule 3335-8-27 (if student fails a required course, they must repeat at first opportunity) to clarify that they do need permission / should talk to an advisor before repeating the course yet again (third non-W attempt)?
Implementation (not in policy language) recommendations discussed	• Design implementation not as a "crackdown on repeats," but rather as "this is a point where students really need advising." • Enforcement mechanism will be a course drop for students who do not have permission as of a certain date. • Design warning processes and advisor dashboard flags that help push advisor meeting before the drop. • Far before this point, add warning processes to give students ample warning (e.g., starting with 2nd non-W attempt: this is your last attempt) • Ensure "warnings" inform students about the consequences of decisions and encourage them to talk to advisors /connect with available resources. • All departments must ensure "repeatable" courses are officially stated as such in the course description (e.g.: "Repeatable to a maximum of 9 cr hrs"). If not, students will run into the permission bar, plus lose federal aid coverage the third time they take the course. • Timing can be tricky for campus-change students who are "between" advisors; will need processes to clarify which advisor is responsible when.

Decision 2: Forgiveness Process

Group was warmest toward: Option C (apply forgiveness automatically for eligible repeats).	
Why?	• Burdensome "red tape" for students; lack of awareness results in approx. 1700 students/year not applying for forgiveness when they probably should do so. • Advisor / administrator approval is pro forma based on clear eligibility criteria that could be automated. This takes up personnel time that could be better spent elsewhere. • The petition process was originally meant to provide a meaningful touchpoint for student decision-making, but it does not serve this purpose.
Policy language/ wording issues discussed	• Maintain current practice of allowing forgiveness only once for the same course; maintain a cap on total amount of forgiveness (see Decision 3 for more).

	• Edit "second grade replaces first" rule to "higher grade is kept" rule. • Probably set the automatic forgiveness grade eligibility cutoff at D+ (but IRP will do analysis to see if C- would make sense instead… for SAP purposes, C- grades are of concern; but also some concern that students could use up forgiveness on 3-credit C- courses when they might need to save it for later 5-credit E courses) • Probably exclude 1-credit courses from automatic forgiveness (or apply it only to courses of 3 credits or more) – IRP will do analysis on this. • A few departments have specific restrictions (most commonly: can't forgive specific pre-req after moving past it in the sequence); need to decide whether Faculty Rule will allow / disallow more-restrictive departmental policy.
Implementation (not in policy language) recommendations discussed	• Make clear policy edits are not retroactive (will <u>not</u> affect forgiveness that happened before policy takes effect). • When students are notified their lower grade has been forgiven for Ohio State GPA, make clear the lower grade still counts toward federal financial aid course completion rates & GPA. • See how the seven top-public peers who have automated forgiveness handle the process and student messaging, and adopt their best practices (e.g., if 4 courses are eligible for forgiveness in the same term, which 3 are automatically selected?) • May want a process for students to opt-out if they don't want forgiveness automatically applied, or to opt-in if they want to forgive a C-,C,C+.

Decision 3: Forgiveness Cap

Group was warmest toward: Option A (retain current 3-course cap).	
Why?	• A credit cap without an accompanying course cap would be confusing to students, as a course crossing the credit cap would not be forgiven even if the student had forgiveness credits available. • From a practical standpoint, a 3-course cap allows up to 15 credits (i.e., three 5-credit STEM courses). Participants were comfortable with this; they felt raising the cap to 18 credits would be too high, but lowering it to 12 credits would be too low (as most STEM students would then only be able to forgive two courses).
Policy language/ wording issues discussed	• Make no edits to the current "3-course cap" language. • Current policy language doesn't mention the current practice of allowing forgiveness only once for the same course; should we specify this in policy?
Implementation (not in policy language) recommendations discussed	• N/A.