Policies for the International Foundation Year Program and Pre-Bachelor Semester

Version	Decision	Details	Valid as of
Version 1.0	Joint Academic Board	Complete document	2021-09-01
Version 1.1	Joint Academic Board	Adjustment of III.3 Grading, Passing and Failing of Modules (numerical grades)	2021-09-27
Version 2.0	Executive Board	Complete Document	2022-09-01
Version 2.1	/	Implementation of Name Change	2023-02-01
Version 2.2	Executive Board	Editorial Changes	2023-09-01
Version 3	Executive Board	Complete Document	2024-02-01
Version 3.1	/	Inclusion of the PBS Program	2024-09-01

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Disclaimer:

These policies are subject to compliance with Bremer Higher Education Act (Bremisches Hochschulgesetz - BremHG). Changes to these policies are possible under the provision of 1.2 "Changing these Policies".

I. General Terms

I.1 Scope of these Policies

These policies are the general regulations which apply to the International Foundation Year (IFY in the following) program and to the Pre-Bachelor Semester program (PBS in the following) at Constructor University. In addition to these general policies, regulations stipulated in the appropriate study program handbooks and program-specific regulations apply.

The modules of the IFY and PBS are listed in their individual study program handbooks. The study program handbook contains module data sheets that include module descriptions, aims, intended learning outcomes, functions, components, ECTS credits, and pre-requisites.

In cases of conflict, the policies for pre-degree programs at hand apply.

I.2 Changing these Policies

The IFY Executive Board of Constructor University decides upon changes to the Policies for IFY.

I.3 Qualification Aims

During their studies, IFY and PBS students will:
- Develop academic English reading, writing, and reasoning skills;
- Improve subject-specific mathematical knowledge;
- Strengthen foundational knowledge required for their academic discipline of choice;
- Improve their digital and computational competence;
- Properly prepare for a university environment;
- Select a fitting undergraduate program through targeted advising and personal development upon meeting the academic requirements;

I.4 Standard Study Period and Completion Requirements

The standard study period of the IFY program is two semesters, and one semester for the PBS program. The academic program provides a pathway to higher education at Constructor University and potentially other international institutions. All students will be full-time students, and the language of instruction is English, no prior knowledge of the German language is required for this program.

Requirements for successful program completion are defined in the study program handbooks. Pre-degree programs offer modules in different subject areas at Level 0. Successful completion of the IFY program and the PBS program is recognized by Constructor University as an element in progression onto the undergraduate major of choice.

Once successfully enrolled in the IFY program, a student may not apply for direct admission to the university's undergraduate programs at a later stage during the academic year. Only upon successful completion of the IFY program is a student allowed to progress to undergraduate education.

I.5 Definitions

I.5.1 Head

Is responsible for the operation and development of the IFY and PBS programs.

I.5.2 Deputy Head for Academics

Is responsible for the academic development within the IFY and PBS programs. Both Head and Deputy Head are identified as the IFY or PBS Administration and are the responsible contact persons with the Constructor University Administration. The IFY Deputy Head acts as interim for the IFY Head in their absence.

I.5.3 Program Coordinator

Implements the administrative management of the two programs while assisting both Head and Deputy Head.

I.5.4 Instructor of Records (IoR)

Is responsible for the delivery of the course material and assessments, as well as for the assessment evaluation within a module. The IoR should hold at least a master's degree relevant to the module's field.

I.5.5 Academic Advisor

Is responsible for guiding the student throughout the entire academic year in relation with courses to take, as well as regularly monitoring the student's academic development.

I.5.6 Academic Terms

An academic year is divided into two semesters and follows the official Constructor University academic calendar. For the IFY there is one student intake at the beginning of each academic year, and all required courses are provided in the subsequent two semesters. For the PBS

there is one student intake at the beginning of each spring semester, and all required courses are provided in this spring semester. Students are required to be present throughout the academic year to attend classes and exams within their modules. Although classes and examinations are scheduled within the working days at Constructor University, students should be prepared for Saturday session scheduling if needed. Specific dates and deadlines are always provided ahead of time to the students.

I.6 Modules and Credit Points (CPs)

I.6.1 Module Structure

A pre-degree program is organized in modules. A module is a formally structured teaching unit with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Students are awarded academic credit points through achieving the learning outcomes for a module. The number of credits assigned to a module is based on the estimated notional learning hours. One CP is considered the equivalent to 25 hours of student workload. A student earns 25 credit points per semester on average. Justified deviations are possible and specified in the respective study program handbook.

Typically, 2.5 or 5 CP credit points are assigned to a pre-degree module. Exception regulations are defined in the individual program-specific handbooks. Modules are characterized as core or subject area. Module-specific details are described within the handbook and syllabi.

I.7 Registration and Syllabi

I.7.1 Registration

Every semester, students must register for the modules relevant for their pre-degree program. The deadlines for registration are published in the academic calendar. The Administration reserves the right to cancel a module if less than 5 students have registered for it.

If a student is not formally registered for a module, no grades and credits can be awarded for that module, even if the student completed the work for it. If a student is formally registered for a module, the IoR must provide a result for that student at the end of the semester even if the student has not participated in the module.

Modules may have pre-requisites that must be fulfilled before registration. A student may be allowed exemption from the pre-requisite upon recommendation of the IoR and evaluation by the IFY and PBS administration.

A student in the IFY program can register for additional undergraduate modules. A student in the PBS program has mandatory elective undergraduate modules embedded in the program

requirements. These modules will be discussed with the student during academic advising. In general, students can change their study plan by dropping and/or adding undergraduate modules during two weeks after the beginning of classes. The drop/add deadline is published in the Academic Calendar. For certain modules, different deadlines might apply.

I.7.2 Module Syllabi

A syllabus must be published for each module component before the start of classes in any given semester. It is available for the students electronically and contains the most relevant information about the module, its topics and assessments.

II. Assessment Types

Every Pre-Degree Program module has by default a midterm and final assessment. Assessment delivery may be in written or oral form. Written assessments include written examinations, essays, and projects. Oral assessments include presentations and examinations.

An assessment may be conducted in or complemented by electronic and online forms and submission methods, upon the IoR's discretion. For computerized assessments, students will be offered an introduction to the system used to familiarize themselves with it.

Team projects may be applied in all assessment forms other than written examinations. In such cases, the IoR must clearly indicate the method of determining credit for the participants in the team. Such a method provides that the individual team members' contributions be clearly identifiable and therefore gradable.

III. Assessment Procedures

III.1 General Administration of Module Examinations

Students registered for a module are by default registered for the corresponding examinations. The IoR of a module is responsible for conducting its assessments. Details of the module examination are defined in the respective syllabus.

It is possible to determine 'required achievements' ("Prüfungsvorleistungen") for each module, defined in the Program's Rules and Regulations, as a condition to be admitted to the module final examination. Module achievements are monitored by the IoR during the semester. Students who fail to complete module achievements by the end of the semester are not admitted to the final assessment.

Module results are published in the campus management system (CampusNet). Students have

the right to obtain access to their examination files upon request.

III.2 Scheduling of Examinations

In general, the examination period is specified in the Academic Calendar. Exam dates and locations are assigned by the Program Administration and implemented on Campusnet by the Program Coordinator. Students with special needs have the right to request suitable examination arrangements (see section VI.2. Students with Special Needs). No student is required to take more than two examinations on any given day. Students who have more than two examinations on a single day may ask to be officially excused from all but two examinations.

In general, for each examination a first time slot (at the end of the lecture period) and a second time slot (in the intersession/summer semester) are offered in any given semester. The second time slot applies to students who either failed the original examination or were officially excused (see section III.4).

III.3 Grading, Passing and Failing of Modules

A Program module is graded by the IoR based on an integer percentage scheme. As stated above, each module has by default a midterm and final assessment. The weighted percentage of each assessment contributes to the final grade of the module. At the end of the semester, the percentages of all assessments are added to determine the student's overall grade. The passing grade required is 45% for all assessed modules.

The deadline for submitting the final grades for the fall and spring semester is published in the academic calendar, or a workday close to these dates as specified in the Academic Calendar.

If a module is failed in a first attempt, corresponding to a grade of 44% or lower, or the student is officially excused (see section III.4), the module's final assessment can be repeated only once with the aim of passing it.

The final percentages are converted to a numerical module grade (1.00–5.00). The university website lists the respective grading tables. The module grades are recorded on the transcript.

III.4 Excuse from Academic Obligations

Students may be excused officially by the IFY and PBS Administration (in consultation with Registrar Services) from taking examinations or from attending mandatory sessions for the following reasons only:

Illness or personal emergency: the illness must be documented with a certificate issued by a qualified physician. This certificate needs to verify the date and time of the clinical visit and confirm that the student is unable to fulfill their academic obligation. The Administration reserves the right to request a second medical opinion. Other emergencies must be appropriately associated with corresponding written proof. In case of absence from a class session, the physician certificates or proof of personal emergencies must be submitted to the Program Coordinator at the latest by the second calendar day from the return to class. If the second calendar day falls on the weekend or a public holiday, the deadline is extended to the next working day.

Regardless of the reason for their absence, students must inform the IoR and the Program Coordinator before the beginning of the examination that they will not be able to attend. Students who are not officially excused will receive a failing grade for the exam.

IV. Final documents

Upon successful completion of the IFY and PBS, every student will receive the following final documents:

IV.1 Certificate

The certificate states the name and date of birth of the certificate holder, the name of the pre-degree program, and the date of the conferral of the certificate. The certificate carries the seal of Constructor University and is signed by the Provost and President of Constructor University.

IV.2 Final transcript

The final transcript lists all modules a student has taken including their final grades. It also lists the cumulative GPA for the entire study, the date of the conferral of the certificate, and, if applicable, further special achievements. The transcript is provided by the Registrar services and carries the seal of Constructor University.

V. Administrative Details

V.1 Students with Special Needs

The rules and provisions of the "General Act on Equal Treatment" (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz - AGG) apply. Students with special needs should be able to complete their studies and examinations under conditions equivalent to those of any other student. To this end, as far as possible all study- and examination-related offers are designed

to be barrier-free. Students with special needs are entitled to special arrangements during their studies, study organization and design, and examinations. Consideration must be given to study- and examination-related effects, e.g., the need for special aid or assistance, and the provision of study and examination conditions in a form other than the intended organization. The academic requirements for study- and examinations achievements will not be affected. Students with special needs may apply for individual arrangements prior to any examination at Registrar Services using the corresponding form. If candidates can document that they are not able to take an examination wholly or partially in the offered form because of continued or permanent illness or disability, special arrangements are provided for. These may include a prolongation of the examination duration, the assignment of an individual room or a different design of the examination. The individual requirements must be registered with Registrar Services in advance. The submission of a medical certificate and/or disabled person card may be required.

V.2 Maternity- and Parental Leave

It is possible to make use of the protection periods according to the Maternity Protection Act (MutterSchutzGesetz - MuSchG), as amended, and in accordance with time limits for the parental allowance and parental leave (Bundeselterngeld- und Elternzeitgesetz - BEEG), as amended. When granting a leave of absence as well as calculating leave periods the provisions of § 40 BremischesHochschulgesetz concerning the period of maternity - or parental leave apply. Taking examinations during maternity- or the parental leave is possible, despite leave of absence. However, examinations are not mandatory during the leave period.