
Coffee with the Principal

Freshmen On-Track

Background Knowledge

Credits

- 1 year of class = 1 credit
- 1 semester = 0.5 credit

- At end of 1st *semester*, freshmen students should have 3.5 credits
- At end of one *year*, freshmen students should have 7.0 credits
- Need a minimum of 5.0 credits to be promoted to sophomore status

Graduation Requirements

- English – 4 credits
- Math – 3 credits
- Science – 3 credits
- Social Studies – 3 credits
 - 0.5 credit must be from a Civics or AP Government course
- Foreign Language – 2 credits
 - Must be from the same language
- Fine Arts – 2 credits
 - Can be from the same arts discipline or multiple arts disciplines
- Computer Science – 1 credit
- P.E. – 4 credits
- Electives – 2 credits

Other Requirements

- Service Learning Hours
 - 2 classroom-based Service Projects (1 will be through Civics)
 - PE I - Freshmen
 - World Language II - Sophomore/Junior
 - All Fine Arts (Drama, Music, Art) - Junior/Senior
 - Scholars need an additional 40 individual hours
- Driver's Education Classroom - Pass
- Constitution - Pass
- Consumer Education – Pass
- SAT – Junior Year

Freshmen On Track Overview

- Based on research from the University of Chicago on Chicago Public School students
- Freshmen are “on track” if they earn at least 5 full-year credits and have no more than 1 semester F in a core course
 - At Von, we consider freshmen to be on track if they have no Ds and Fs in ANY course
- Freshmen who are on track are 3.5 times more likely to graduate from high school on time
- Freshman year performance is a more accurate predictor of graduation than test scores or any other background factors

Freshman Year Performance

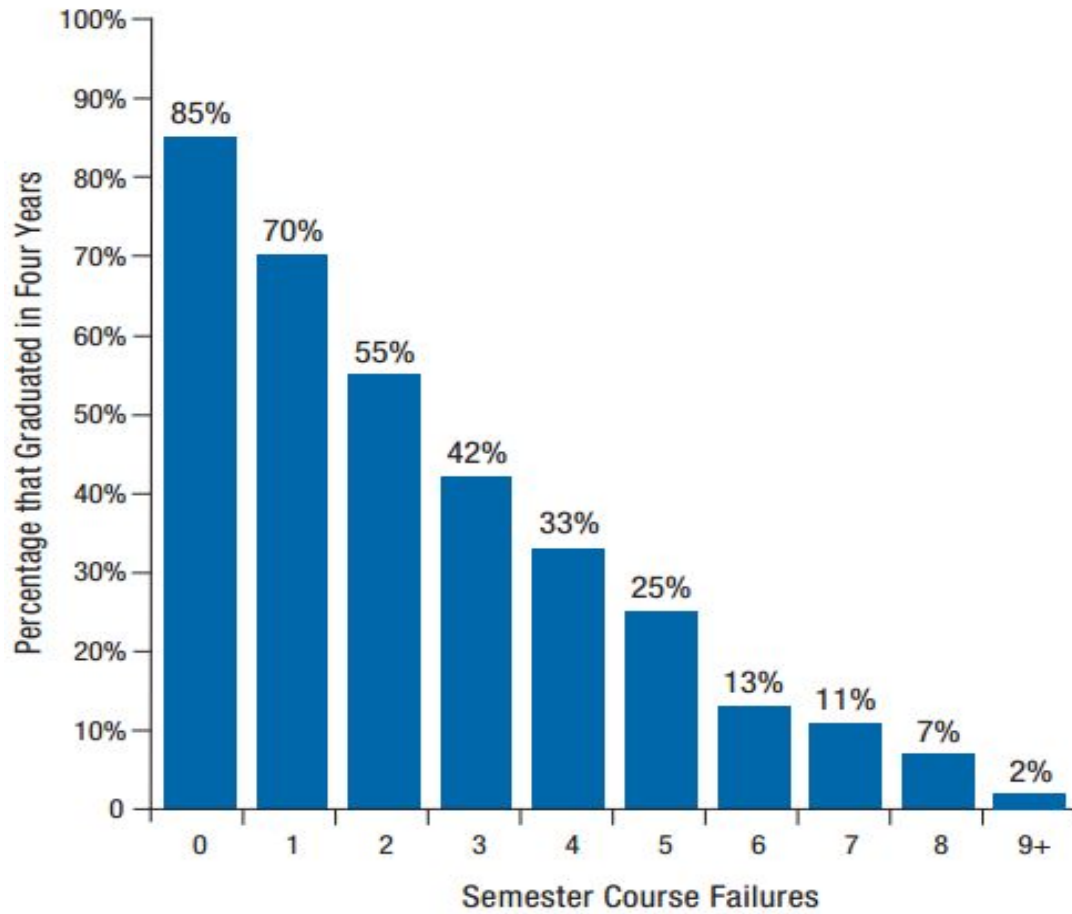
Grades:

- Freshman year lays the foundation for a student's grade point average (GPA)
 - At Von, we encourage every student to aim for at least a 3.0 unweighted GPA (B average)
- It is much harder to raise your GPA than students realize
- Freshmen who have 2 semester course failures have only a 55% graduation rate

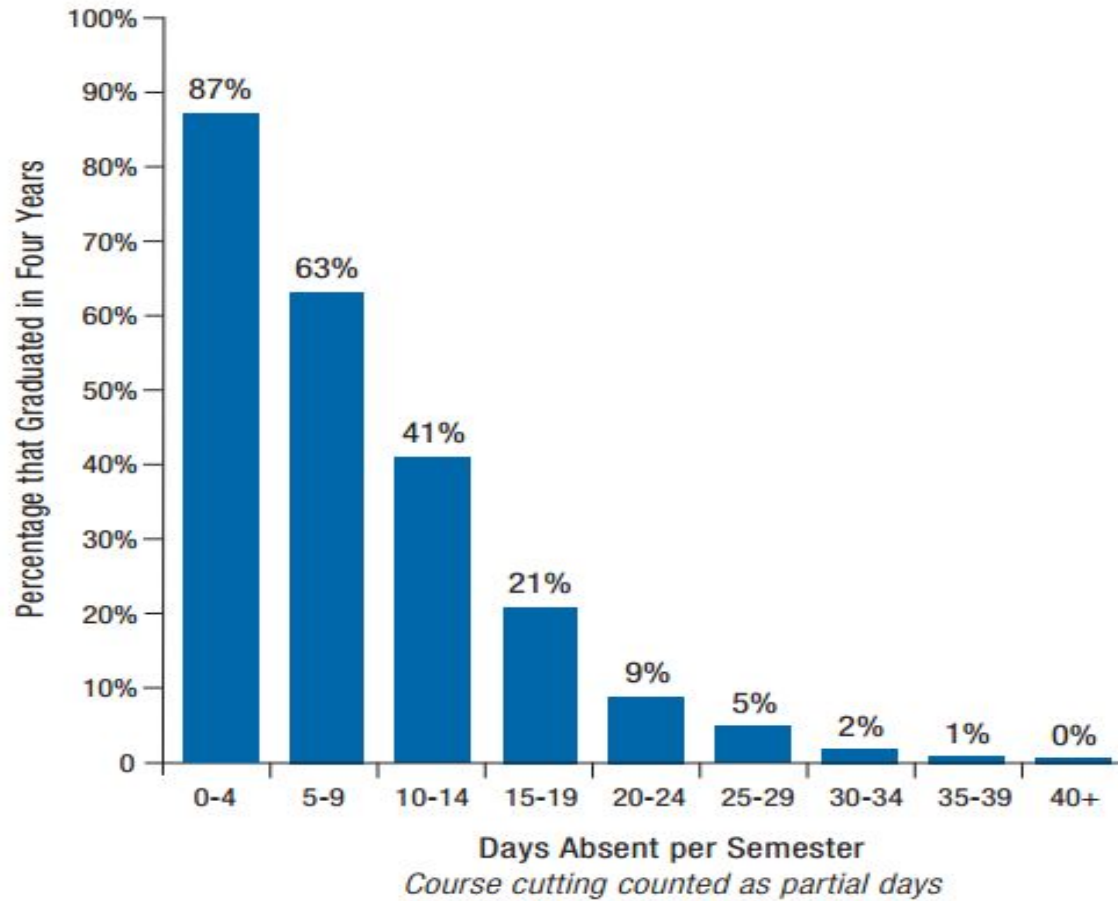
Attendance:

- High absence rates are strong predictors of dropping out
- Freshmen who miss about 1 week of school (five to nine days) have a 63% chance of graduating on time

Four-Year Graduation Rates by Freshman Course Failures



Four-Year Graduation Rates by Freshman Absence Rates



**Why worry about
attendance and GPA
*now?***

GPA & College Acceptances

- Maintaining a strong GPA puts you on track for college acceptances
- Aim for at least a 3.0 *unweighted* GPA

School	Avg. Unweighted GPA (Von)	Avg. Weighted GPA (Von)	Selectivity
Northwestern University	3.9	4.5	Very Selective
University of Illinois - Urbana	3.6	4.0	Very Selective
University of Wisconsin - Madison	3.5	4.1	Very Selective
Lake Forest College	3.4	4.1	Selective
Knox College	3.3	4.0	Selective
University of Illinois - Chicago	3.2	3.7	Somewhat Selective/Selective
Northern Illinois University	2.9	3.2	Somewhat Selective

GPA & Scholarships

- Maintaining a strong GPA puts you on track for merit-based aid from colleges and private scholarship opportunities, such as:
 - **Jack Kent Cooke** – 3.5 unweighted to apply – up to \$40,000 per year
 - **Pullman** – 3.0 unweighted to apply – up to \$10,000 per year scholarship
 - **Wentcher** – 3.0 unweighted to apply – up to \$10,000 per year scholarship

Monitoring Grades & Attendance

- Parents should carefully monitor student grades and attendance during freshman year to help students remain on track
- Ensure students come to school every day, on time
- Set up your Parent Portal
- Set up triggers for attendance and grades
 - Example: get an email or text if your child's grade drops below an 80 (B) or a 70 (C) in a class
- Pay attention to attendance robocalls
- Communicate with teachers
- Promote strong study habits:
 - Provide a quiet space
 - Limit phone use
 - Encourage students to write down assignments and deadlines in their agenda book and plan out time for homework and studying

Supports at Von

- Classroom lessons on Freshman On Track & high school requirements
- Individual counseling meetings with off-track freshmen
- Homework help/tutoring PAWS Program

POSITIVE ACADEMIC WORK SESSION

PAWS will be held from 3-4pm
Monday-Thursday each week.

Students are encouraged to bring
a friend, do homework, and get
support in academic areas!



English - Room 420

History - Room 316

Math - Room 104

Computer Science - 212

Fine Arts - Various

Drama - Tuesday (Room 224)

Chorus - Wednesday (Room 303)

Art - Wednesday (Room 324)

Band - Thursday (Room 305)

Foreign Language - 220

Spanish - Monday and Wednesday

French - Tuesday and Wednesday

Chinese - Wednesday

Science - Various

Chemistry - Monday, Wednesday, Thursday (Room 413)

Biology - Tuesday and Thursday (Room 315)

Physics - Wednesday (Room 215)