

# MICHIGAN JEWISH INSTITUTE

## Policy and Procedure Manual

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Functional Area: **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

Policy No. **CM 1678**

Title: **Issuance of Incomplete (I) Marks**

Effective Date: **September 1, 2008**

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### **GENERAL PURPOSE:**

This policy is intended to provide guidance that will insure the appropriate use of the report card mark of Incomplete (I) by all members of the MJJ faculty. This policy will also inform all students of when the I mark may be available to them.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Issuing incomplete marks is a perilous practice that is often engaged in by faculty at the request of some students.

When students ask for or otherwise receive a mark of Incomplete (I) for a concluded course, a number of negative consequences can and often do ensue:

1. The student must now remember to complete the course within the permitted time frame (one additional semester). Often students fail to do so and the Incomplete mark may be automatically changed to the failing grade of F;
2. The student trusts that the faculty member issuing the Incomplete mark will be available for at least one more semester. If this does not materialize the student can end up with the failing grade of F on their transcript simply because there is no longer any way to complete the original course. If such a failed course is a requirement for graduation, it will have to be **repeated** with additional tuition expense and perhaps with a different faculty member whose course requirements may differ from that of the original instructor's;
3. There is no additional compensation for the faculty member once a course has concluded. The faculty member may ultimately discover that they do not want to take on this uncompensated burden even though by issuing the incomplete mark, the faculty member has assumed an ethical responsibility to do so;
4. Students are not permitted to take any follow up courses for which the course with the mark of Incomplete is a prerequisite. This could put the student at risk

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of having to wait up to a year or more before the follow up course will be again offered by MJI;

5. The mark of Incomplete remains permanently on the student's transcript. The final grade, when later issued, appears later on the transcript. If not careful, some MJI students may end up with an inordinate number of Incomplete marks on their permanent records. Consider what this communicates to potential employers or graduate/professional programs to which the student may apply;
6. Too many marks of Incomplete within a short period of time will place a student out of compliance with "Satisfactory Academic Progress" (see **Academic Catalog and Student Handbook** for details) possibly resulting in the loss of financial aid and/or the student being terminated from MJI.

### **POLICY and PROCESS:**

Faculty should explain the above risks and ensuing consequences to every single student who requests incomplete marks. Further, and to reduce these risks, MJI has instituted the following **requirements** before faculty may issue the mark of **I** at the scheduled conclusion of any course.

1. The mark of Incomplete (**I**) may only be given to students who have otherwise substantially **completed all their other semester work, absent their final exam or paper**. Incomplete marks cannot be given to students who have failed to attend many class periods or who simply have not completed earlier assignments or exams. Rather, the student should be graded solely on their actual performance or lack thereof, to date;
2. Implied by requirement number 1 is that courses contain multiple sources of student evaluation, such as class discussion, quizzes, tests, midterm examinations, oral and paper presentations, etc. In the rare instance that a

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particular course or directed study requires only one evaluated student deliverable, such as a final term paper, the mentoring faculty member should seek counsel with the Dean of Academic Administration before issuing an incomplete mark;

3. Students facing extraordinary or life threatening situations (such as **certified** medical problems or professionally **documented** domestic crises) that definitively prohibit them from keeping up with class work should be advised by faculty to “drop” courses rather than taking Incomplete marks or poor/failing grades. Students also should be reminded that they may only drop courses up until the 14<sup>th</sup> week of the semester. Thereafter, faculty **must grade** them based on performance to date or give them the incomplete mark with all its attendant perils **and** only if all other requirements for the issuance of the **I** mark have been met;
4. Students also should be reminded that dropping courses has financial implications. They should be advised to review the MJI tuition refund policy fully described in their *MJI Academic Catalog and Student Handbook*. They should be clearly advised that they will be **again** charged **full** tuition for any dropped course, the next time they register for it;
5. Upon meeting all the above mentioned criteria, the faculty member and the student **must** complete and sign both sides of the MJI “Incomplete Mark Contract” form, a copy of which is attached at the end of this policy. Marks of **I** delivered to the Registrar’s Office in the absence of a fully executed “Incomplete Mark Contract” will be returned to the faculty member, unrecorded in the student record. Further, the course status will remain as “grades not yet submitted”. Per the MJI core contract with faculty, final compensation for courses taught is only paid after “grades have been submitted”;

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6. Once an "Incomplete Mark Contract" has been received by the Registrar, the mark of **I** will be placed in the student's record for the course. No further action will be taken until either a final grade for the course is submitted by the faculty member or the contracted deadline plus two weeks has passed. Should two weeks pass after the contracted deadline without submission of a final grade by the faculty member, the "earned grade to date" shown on the contract will be posted to the student's record;
7. The **maximum** time allowed to complete any course for which an **I** mark has been recorded is one additional semester. That is, students must complete all course work by the last day of the immediately subsequent semester. However, it is recommended that Faculty contract with students for shorter periods of time than the maximum permitted. Doing so permits the faculty member and the student to have an optional further negotiable time frame before the ultimate deadline of one additional semester has concluded;
8. As shown on the MJI "Incomplete Mark Contract" form, the contract should include a description of the student deliverable still required to complete the course. This description should be brief - indicating the completion of the course "final exam" or a "final term paper" or similar final assignment. It may also include a single missing quiz, exam, essay, etc. Under no circumstances should an "Incomplete Mark Contract" be issued for students who have not completed larger portions of their course work. Where students have not completed more substantial portions of their course work, faculty should issue the **grade earned** based upon completed work - even if as is most often the case, only a failing grade is warranted;

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9. Per process item number 6 above, faculty members may voluntarily renegotiate an addendum to the "Incomplete Mark Contract" extending the deadline should a student fail to complete the required work by the initially contracted deadline. However, faculty are not required to renegotiate deadlines with students so in breach. Under no circumstances may an initial or extended deadline be longer than the maximum time allowed of one semester;
10. This revised Incomplete Mark policy will take effect at the beginning of Fall Semester 2008 and guide the issuance of this mark during that semester and forward.

**AUTHORIZATIONS:** (at least one signature is necessary to enact this policy/procedure)

\_\_\_\_\_  
President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean Of Academic Administration



## INCOMPLETE MARK CONTRACT

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester: Fall\_\_ Winter\_\_ Spring\_\_: Yr 20\_\_

An "I" mark is only given in cases where specific permission has been granted by the instructor to postpone completion of required work. **This request must be made prior to the end of the semester** and should be approved only in cases of extraordinary or life threatening situations (such as certified medical problems or professionally documented domestic crises). A student's general neglect of coursework during the semester may not be used as justification for this temporary mark.

TO BE COMPLETED BY INSTRUCTOR (name): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_

(This form should be submitted to the Registrar's Office with the final grade sheet indicating the "I" mark, but should be completed and signed before the end of the semester.)

**REASON FOR THE INCOMPLETE MARK** (see backside for summary of when an I mark may be issued:

\_\_\_\_\_

**TO COMPLETE COURSE REQUIREMENTS STUDENT MUST DO THE FOLLOWING:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION OF WORK:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_

(Faculty will specify the date for completion. This must fall within the maximum period permitted by MJI which is the last day of the subsequent semester).

When the coursework listed above is completed, the instructor will submit a final grade on the Grade Change Form to the Registrar's office.

**EARNED GRADE TO DATE IF INCOMPLETE WORK IS NOT COMPLETED BY THE ABOVE DEADLINE:**       . <<<If missing, this contract will not be accepted by the Registrar.

I certify that I understand the terms of this Incomplete Mark Contract.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_

Instructor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_

**(See over and initial)**

### SUMMARY OF “I” MARK TERMS AND CONDITIONS\*

1. The mark of Incomplete (**I**) may only be issued to students who have otherwise substantially **completed all their other semester work, absent their final exam or paper**;
2. Students facing extraordinary or life threatening situations (such as **certified** medical problems or professionally **documented** domestic crises) that prohibit them from completing course work should be advised by faculty to “drop” courses rather than taking Incomplete marks or poor/failing grades;
3. Upon meeting the above mentioned criteria, the faculty member and the student should complete and sign the MJI “Incomplete Mark Contract”;
4. Students should be reminded that dropping courses has financial implications;
5. Once an “Incomplete Mark Contract” has been received by the Registrar, the mark of **I** will be placed in the student’s record for the course. No further action will be taken until either a final grade for the course is submitted by the faculty member or the contracted deadline plus two weeks have passed. Should two weeks pass after the contracted deadline without submission of a final grade by the faculty member, the “earned grade to date” shown on the contract will be posted to the student’s record;
6. The **maximum** time allowed to complete any course for which an **I** mark has been recorded is one additional semester;
7. The MJI “Incomplete Mark Contract” should include a description of the student deliverable still required to complete the course. This description should be brief - indicating the completion of the course “final exam”, a “final term paper” or similar final assignment; and,
8. Under no circumstances will an “Incomplete Mark Contract” deadline be extended beyond the maximum time allowed of one semester.

\*See MJI Policy and Procedure for Issuance of Incomplete (**I**) Marks for complete details.

**I have read and understood the above terms and conditions:**

Student’s initials\_\_\_\_\_

<<<If missing, this contract will not be accepted by the Registrar.

Instructor’s initials\_\_\_\_\_