

Reference - PEMS Terminology

Letter Mark

Letter Mark. In the US, grades are usually awarded as letters, A, B, C, D and F. There is no grade of E. Other countries use a straight number system with a maximum of ten. It is normal to call letter marks just 'grades' in American English, but this can be confusing as a student's grade is also "kindergarten" or 6th grade. In other countries, this definition of grade is usually called a 'form', like the sixth form. Letter Mark refers to the letter given in the US for overall course scoring.

Grade Points

Grade Points. Because the US uses letter for marks, there needs to be a numerical system in order to determine how the student is doing over all. Grade points are awarded based on the letter grade. For example, 4 points are awarded for an A, 3 for a B, and so on.

Grade Point Average

Grade Point Average (GPA). The Grade Point Average is the unit-weighted average of the student's grades. Each class has a number of units (also called credits) assigned. If a student earns an A in a class worth 5 units, the total points awarded for that class is 5 (units) x 4 (points) = 20 points. For a given term all the points are added, then divided by the total units to arrive at the student's GPA. In this example, 20 (total points) / 5 (units) = 4.0 GPA.

Weighted GPA

Weighted GPA. students take more advanced courses, the grade points may be increased. For example, if a student earns a A in an advanced English class of 5 units, the student earns a 5 instead of a 4 for grade points for weighted GPA. The total points for that class is 5 (units) x 5 (points) = 25 points (total). Then divide this by totals (5) for a GPA of 5.0. The higher number of points are used to calculate the student's weighted GPA. Lower number of points (4 instead of 5 points) is used for unweighted GPA.

Academic Years

Academic years are the specific years the school is in operation. Academic years can be defined before the school is in operation. In this case the academic years are used to keep records on classes a student wants to transfer into the school that were taken at other schools prior to enrollment.

Terms

A **term** is the division of the academic year into grading periods. Terms may be semesters or quarters. The term record is a record that indicates the start and end date of each term. Multiple terms are related to academic years. Terms are also related to a Term Label record.

Term Labels

Term Labels are the names of the terms a school is running, like Spring, Fall, etc. The number of Term Label records indicates the number of terms the school operates. Term Labels indicate if that term is required or optional, like a summer term.

Student Terms

Student Terms. There is one term record for every term the school operates. A student term record contains student-specific information about how the student performed academically in the term, such as the student's grade point average for that term. All the classes a student takes (enrollment records) are linked to the student term. A student has a term record created for each term they are in attendance.

Grade Level

A **grade level** is the student's year in school, first grade, second grade, third grade and so on. The term 'grade level' is used to differentiate between the grade or mark a student received in a class and the year the student is in.

Grade Span

A **grade span** covers multiple years of school and can be defined by the administrator. A plan can not exceed a grade span. The purpose of defining grade spans is to help set academic goals and gates.

Schools

Schools refer to legal definitions in a jurisdiction of various grade levels. In the US this is Elementary School, grades K through 5, Middle School grades 6 through 8, and high school, grades 9 through 12.

Other Schools

Other Schools are the schools that student attend prior to starting at the school. Other schools will provide transcripts that must be incorporated into the student record. For this reason, each enrollment record on the transcript may be related to an 'other school' to show where the credit was transferred in from.

Classes

Classes. The name of the Class appears on the student's transcript. Classes are sometimes called *courses*. However, PEMS does not use the term 'course' in any of its modules. In general, the word 'course' can refer to a specific class, like Algebra 1, or it may also refer to the set of classes that lead to a degree or certificate. For example, "I followed a course at the University in wine making" could mean a series of classes. The word "class" also has a secondary meaning. A student can be in the "second grade class" which would mean all students in a particular classroom. PEMS uses the word class to mean the subject of study for which units are earned, commonly called a course, such as "Algebra I". **A class that is a subject of study for units can have different curriculum that fulfill it.**

Sections

In real life, **Sections** are a set of students taking a particular class. In a standard brick and mortar school, sections are like the physical classroom. There may be multiple teachers teaching English 9 in a school, each with their own physical classroom number. There are no traditional sections in the PEMS universe since there is no need to physically separate students into various classrooms. However, students from multiple learning locations can all be enrolled in the same Moodle Course, and only their own teacher should see their work. So PEMS uses the term **groups** to refer to a set of students assigned to a specific teacher. **In Summary: 1)** PEMS does not use the term sections. **2)** Instead Moodle uses the term (virtual) groups.

Sections: More important in traditional school as it meant multiple classrooms but same subject. In virtual school, the concept of sections is no longer applicable and groups is used instead.

Groups: Students taking different classes on Moodle, but have the same teacher? Is this is right conception of groups?

Curriculum

Curriculum generally refers to the books and exercises used by the teacher to further the student's knowledge. In Moodle, the curriculum is a Moodle Course. Any class may be taught with multiple curriculum, or different text books, and so there are multiple Moodle courses that may be used to teach a Class.

Course

The term **Course** is not used in any technical sense in PEMS. Courses are created on the LMS (Moodle) platform for students to take online, but PEMS refers to courses as curriculum. For example, two different English teachers could be teaching English 9, but they assign different books to read. The class is the same as far as the school is concerned, the material and activities the students turn in are slightly different, the classes use a different curriculum. If the teachers were making their own online courses, the activities would not be the same. Classes may use different Moodle courses to fulfill learning requirements, as they may use different curriculum.

Syllabus

The **Syllabus** is the outline of what a student will learn in the class or Moodle course. Usually this is handed out the first day of class and informs the students of the learning objectives. In the US, the course syllabus must be submitted to various regulatory organizations to gain approval. In PEMS, the class may have one syllabus, and the Moodle course may have a tailored syllabus for the specific curriculum. The administrator may use both or select one approach.

Subject

Subjects are families of classes. For example, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II are all in the subject of Math. Schools can define any subjects they need, and identify any class as belonging to that subject area. Subjects are mainly used to assist the administration in checking the student is meeting requirements when creating a plan .

Subject	Class	Course/ Curriculum
Indian Literature	Vedas 1A	Samhitas
Indian Literature	Vedas 1A	Brahmanas

Teacher of Record

The **Teacher of Record** is the 'official teacher' of the student for a specific class, or for multiple classes. Various regulatory agencies require the teacher of record to be in possession of certifications and credentials. PEMS is designed for virtual schools and so all Teachers of Record are virtual teachers. The teacher of record is legally responsible to give the student their grades.

Would we require all customers have their teachers be subject to regulatory certifications and credentials that traditional school teachers are subject to?

Enrollment

The term enrollment has two meanings in the USA.

- Enrollment is used to describe the process where a student joins the school
- Enrollment is also used to describe when a student enrolls in a specific class in a specific term

The term "**Enrollment Process**" will refer to the processes that are triggered with a student decides to come to the school.

The term "**enrollments records**" will describe the table in the database that keeps information of which classes students are taking in which term.

Enrollment is the process of signing up for a class. An enrollment record in the PEMS is the class a student takes in a specific term, and stores the student's final grade. The set of completed enrollments is the information displayed on the student's transcript.

Transcript

A **transcript** is a report of completed enrollments. Transcripts are formatted in various ways to use the minimum amount of paper. A transcript shows the classes the student has taken at the school, the grades received and the units earned.

Plans

The **plans** are sometimes referred to as "Programs of Study." Plans are defined by the administrator as a series of classes taken across all subjects to meet an educational objective or graduation requirements over a grade span. Any number of plans may be developed, and a student may be assigned only one plan at a time. The plan contains the information needed to auto-enroll student in their classes (create enrollment records) in each term covered by the plan.

Plans cannot go past a grade span and a grade span is determined by the administrator.

Templates

Templates are records that specify the sequence of classes to be taken under the plan. One plan will have multiple templates associated to that plan, each representing a class that must be taken to meet the plan's requirements. A template is a model of a student enrollment record. A template record specifies the class name, the corresponding curriculum, and the term the course should be taken in. PEMS copies all the template records associated with the student's plan to create the enrollment records for that plan. Enrollment records are copies of the template records that are associated with a specific student term (who and when).

As I understand it, a student plan can have multiple templates for various ways to achieve that plan? A student plan may have English and Math as a requirement while templates will have the sequences of classes (i.e. Old English, Shakespeare, Kipling) all required to meet the English portion of the plan?

Subject Requirements

Subject requirements are the number of units in total required in a subject area by a regulatory organization. For example, the NCAA may require 4 years of English and 3 years of math. The University of California may require 4 years of English and 4 years of math. The NCAA subject requirement for math is 3 years, the University of California subject requirement for math is 4 years. For University of California, the subject requirement is 4 years, the subject is math. *Note: sometimes requirements are described in 'years' of study, sometimes in credits, and sometimes in units.*

Subject requirements of different collegiate organizations are important for students who wish to qualify for those colleges and/or certain activities like collegiate athletics or a conservatory.

Compliance Tags

Compliance tags are used to help manage the different requirements of the various regulatory organizations. Not only do the regulatory organizations specify the subject requirements, they also must each approve the course description (syllabus). Students are not allowed to meet the subject requirements with any curriculum, they must meet the requirements with curriculum that has been submitted and approved to the organizations. The student's transcript must then show that the class & curriculum has been approved by the various regulatory organizations. So compliance is a property of the Moodle Course. The Moodle Course list in PEMS is called the curriculum table. There is one record in the curriculum table for each course available in Moodle. PEMS lets the administrator tag certain curriculum records with a compliance tag. If a student takes a class, English 9A, and is enrolled in a specific curriculum, or Moodle Course, the compliance tag from the associated Moodle course will appear on the transcript. Compliance tags are deliberately short to fit on the transcript pages.

Compliance tags populate on transcripts to show what collegiate regulatory body requirements the class has met.

Revision #41

Created 5 April 2023 10:28:13 by Victoria

Updated 12 April 2024 13:01:52 by ac06e6f6-5a9a-4083-854e-ed898a6be2f