

Probation and Termination Policy

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In order to remain in good academic standing, graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 once they have a total of 9 credit hours attempted* and any additional or higher academic standards established by their program of study. Students who fail to meet their program's criteria may be placed on probation or dismissed from the program.

Students who are admitted by exception are automatically placed on academic probation by the Graduate School. Students who fail to remain in good academic standing in accordance with the paragraph above are automatically placed on academic probation by the Graduate School. During the probationary period, students will have an opportunity to correct their academic deficiencies. The probationary period will last for the term(s) in which the next nine credit hours are attempted. Enrollment in the Graduate School will be automatically terminated for students who fail to correct their academic deficiencies by the end of the probationary period. Graduate students will not be allowed to take classes and subject to immediate dismissal once it becomes mathematically impossible to achieve an overall cumulative GPA of 3.00 by the end of the remaining probationary period.

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Students may appeal dismissal decisions except for reasons of insufficient GPA by following the process outlined in the Graduate School Appeals Procedure.

*Total credit hours attempted is the sum of credit hours for all graduate courses in which a graduate student is enrolled as of the tenth day of each semester (the Official University Enrollment Report Date or "Census Date"). Courses with a grade of "I" (incomplete) or dropped after census date are included in the calculation of credit hours attempted. Thesis and dissertation courses are not included as they may be repeated multiple times and no grade is assigned until the thesis or dissertation is defended.

Graduate School Appeals Procedure

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Graduate students may appeal decisions concerning unsatisfactory performance on comprehensive assessments, academic probation for reasons of unsatisfactory progress toward the degree other than insufficient grade point average or dismissal from the graduate program except for reasons of insufficient GPA. This policy does not apply to the appeal of decisions regarding course grades.

Informal resolution of appeals concerning unsatisfactory performance on comprehensive assessments, academic probation for reasons of unsatisfactory progress toward a degree or dismissal from the graduate program is always the most desirable approach, and encouraged whenever possible. Before initiating a formal appeal, the student should discuss the problem with the person or persons whose actions are being challenged, henceforth referred to as the 'academic officer', within ten business days following the adverse recommendation or decision. The student should keep the head/chair of the department in which the student's program resides apprised of the situation and progress of negotiations. For matters concerning unsatisfactory performance on comprehensive assessments, academic probation for reasons of unsatisfactory progress toward a degree or dismissal from the graduate program, the appropriate academic officers are the student's advisor, the graduate advising committee, and/or the student's supervisor. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction within twenty business days following the informal discussion between the student and the academic officer(s), the student may initiate a formal appeal by submitting the matter in writing to the dean of the Graduate School. The student shall have five additional business days to file this appeal. In the written appeal, the student must clearly address three important aspects of the appeal: 1) the action(s) being challenged, 2) the person(s) against whom the complaint is being made, and 3) the redress sought. A decision shall be deemed final on the expiration of the period for filing an appeal, or if an appeal is filed, upon issuance of a decision in such an appeal, whichever is later. No adverse recommendation or action shall be effective until such date.

The dean of the Graduate School, together with the director of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, shall examine the appeal and jointly determine whether the actions complained were disciplinary or academic. If the challenged action is deemed to be disciplinary, the dean of the Graduate School shall refer the complaint to the appropriate university officers responsible for disciplinary matters within five business days. If the challenged action is deemed to be an academic matter, other than a grading decision, the dean of the Graduate School shall implement the procedures defined below, keeping all records associated with the case.

A review panel comprised of two faculty members and a graduate student will be appointed. One faculty member, from a college other than the one in which the student's academic department resides, will be appointed by the dean of the Graduate School. The other faculty member, from the college in which the student's program resides, will be appointed by the dean of the college. However, this representative will not be from the student appellant's department. In the event that either of the two aforementioned deans is a complainant in the case, the vice chancellor for research and graduate studies will appoint the appropriate faculty members. The Graduate Student Council will provide a list of graduate students who expressed a willingness to serve on review panels from which the dean of the Graduate School will appoint a student from a department other than that of the student appellant. In the event that the dean of the Graduate School is a principal in the case, the vice chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies will appoint the student member.

The review panel will consider the case in detail. It must review any and all written records of the case. It must afford the student appellant an opportunity to appear in person before it, and consider any written materials the student may wish to bring to its attention. The review panel will hear from the academic officer(s) whose action is being appealed and may confer with other involved parties. It shall evaluate any other information it deems important to its deliberations. Written summaries of the deliberations will be kept. To overcome the presumption of good faith in the performance judgment by the advisor, supervisor, and/or graduate committee, an appeal must demonstrate that the evaluation was based upon matters that are inappropriate or irrelevant to academic performance and applicable professional standards and that consideration of those matters was the deciding factor in the evaluation. Should the review panel find in favor of the student, it will submit a report, making appropriate recommendations, to the dean of the Graduate School, e.g., reassignment to a different advisor and/or graduate committee, administration of another examination. The dean of the Graduate School and the dean of the appellant's college shall jointly review the case, giving due consideration to the review panel's report and recommendation. Following consultation with the vice chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies, the dean of the Graduate School shall make the final decision of the university. In the event that the dean of the Graduate School is a principal in the case, the duties of the dean of the Graduate School, with respect to this case, shall be transferred to the vice chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies.