

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
SCHOOL OF NURSING
ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
FOR THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

TITLE OF POLICY: ACCEPTABLE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, WARNING, PROBATION AND DISMISSAL: GRADUATE STUDENTS

ORIGINAL DATE: DECEMBER 2018

LAST REVIEWED/REVISED: AUGUST 2025

POLICY: Acceptable Academic Status

- Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or better throughout the program.
- Students must earn a grade of B- or better in all required courses and a C- or better in any elective courses.
- To sit for comprehensive exams and to graduate, students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 and a grade of B- or better in all required courses.

Course Repeat

- With permission of the area of concentration coordinator / program director up to 2 courses may be repeated throughout the entire program of study. No course may be repeated more than once.
- The repeated course (s) must be the same as the one(s) in which the original grade was earned. In extenuating circumstances, a major/area of concentration coordinator, with the Dean's approval, may substitute another course of similar content. If another course is substituted, the grade in the original course is not removed and continues to be included in calculation of the GPA.
- If the same course is repeated, the original course and grade remain on the transcript (identified by a statement below the course "Repeated: Excluded from GPA"); however, the grade and credits originally earned are not counted in the calculation of the GPA.
- A "W", "R", or "N" grade reported for the repeated course will not be identified as a course repeat, and the original grade earned will continue to be counted in the GPA. Incomplete ("G" or "I") grades will not be identified as repeated courses until the course work is completed.
- The repeated course does not increase the number of credits counted toward meeting the degree requirements unless an "F" is replaced by a passing grade.

Warning

Full status students shall receive an academic warning if they have completed less than nine (9) credits and achieves a term GPA below 3.0 or if they earn a grade lower than a B- in a required course or lower than a C- in an elective course.

Academic Probation

- Full status students shall be placed on academic probation if they have completed nine (9) credit hours or more and achieves a cumulative GPA below 3.0.
- Only letter grades with GPA values will be used to compute the GPA and to determine academic warning or probation.
- To be removed from probation, a student must have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above after completion of nine (9) additional credits, the equivalent of one full-time term.
- A student can be on probation only once during the program of study.

Dismissal

- A student who (1) has been on probation and subsequently does not maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above, (2) fails more than two courses (earning lower than a B- in any required course or C- in any elective course), or (3) fails any course (earning lower than a B- in any required course or C- in any elective course) twice will be dismissed from the School of Nursing. Accommodation to continue in the program may be offered, if extenuating circumstances exist and a recommendation for program continuation is made by the department chair (or designate) and the academic advisor or the School of Nursing Academic Issues Hearing Board and approved by the Dean.

- A student who exhibits a pattern of unsafe or incompetent clinical practice in any clinical course as identified by the clinical instructor may be dismissed from the School of Nursing ([Policy 305: Unsafe Student Clinical Performance](#)).
- A student may be placed on probation or dismissed for illegal or unethical professional conduct. The student shall be referred to the School of Nursing [Policy 307: Academic Integrity: Student Obligations](#) and the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity for appropriate procedures for adjudication.

PROCEDURE:

1. Course grades and the term GPA will be reviewed at the end of each term by Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education or designee for MSN and DNP students and the Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship or designee for PhD students. The cumulative GPA will be reviewed at the end of each term for full-time students and at the completion of each block of nine (9) credits for part-time students.
2. Students receiving an academic warning or notice of probation will be notified by Student Affairs with a recommendation that they seek guidance from their academic advisor. The letter, signed by the Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education for MSN and DNP students and the Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship for PhD students, is copied to the area of concentration/major coordinator for MSN and DNP students and the PhD Program Director for PhD students and the student's academic advisor.
3. When students are placed on probation, the academic advisor meets with the students to determine what courses the students may be allowed to enroll for or remain in if they are already enrolled. The decision must be made before the add/drop period in case the students need to drop or add courses. If the course to be repeated is a prerequisite course or foundational to subsequent courses, students will need to attain an acceptable grade before attending classes in subsequent courses.
4. Students on academic probation who achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above after completion of nine (9) additional credits will be removed from probation and will be notified by Student Affairs. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education and the area of concentration/major coordinator for MSN and DNP students, Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship and the PhD Program Director for PhD students, and the student's academic advisor.
5. A student who (1) has been on probation and subsequently does not maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above, (2) fails more than two courses (earning lower than a B- in any required course or C- in any elective course), or (3) fails any course (earning lower than a B- in any required course) twice will be notified of dismissal from the School of Nursing by the Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education for MSN and DNP students and by the Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship for PhD students.
6. When extenuating circumstances exist the student may request permission to continue in the program by writing to the department chair of the department where the student's major or area of concentration is located with a copy to the Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education for MSN and DNP students, the Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship for PhD students and their academic advisor. The request must describe the extenuating circumstances and include a plan to address the reason(s) for dismissal.
 - a. If the request is approved by the department chair, they submit the request with a supporting letter to the Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education for MSN and DNP students and to the Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship for PhD students. The Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education for MSN and DNP students or the Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship for PhD students, in consultation with the Department Chair, determines the time period that the student will be given to demonstrate acceptable academic performance and the requirements that must be met and notifies (in writing) the student, the major/area of concentration coordinator for MSN and DNP students, the PhD Program Director for PhD students, and the department chair.
 - b. If the request is not supported by the department chair, the student may appeal the decision by filing a written appeal to the Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education for MSN and DNP students or Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship for PhD students, with a copy to department chair.
 - c. The Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Education for MSN and DNP students or Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship for PhD students will convene an ad hoc committee comprised of members of the Academic Issues Hearing Board. The ad hoc committee will be comprised of 3 faculty members (none of the faculty members will be from the major/area of concentration in which the student is enrolled). The ad hoc committee will meet with major/area of concentration coordinator and the student's advisor to discuss the basis for the dismissal. The committee may also elect to meet with the student.

- d. The ad hoc committee will send its recommendations to the School of Nursing Dean, who will approve or reverse the department chair's decision to dismiss the student. The School of Nursing Dean's decision is final and this appeal exhausts all appeals available to the student.

Approved by Total Faculty Organization: 10/08, 01/19

Reviewed: 07-08, 08-09, 17-18, 23-24, 08/25