

SPECIAL REPORT

of the

ACADEMIC MATTERS COUNCIL

concerning

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS UPDATES:

III. ACADEMIC STATUS

Presented at the
663rd Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
May 17, 2007

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ACADEMIC REGULATIONS UPDATES

III. ACADEMIC STATUS

1. BACKGROUND

In preparing the "Academic Regulations" 2006-2007 publication the Registrar was faced with several statements in the section addressing "III. Academic Status" of that document that needed to be modified into a shorter and clearer text that would also conform to already established practices on our campus. The recommended changes were submitted to the Academic Matters Council (AMC) for review.

2. AMC ACTIONS

After review, the AMC developed the revised text below. The changes are mainly to subsections III- A to III- I. The following subsections were revised only as to their identifying "letter," i.e., J to M became I to K. The old text is attached in **Appendix A**. The following text is to replace the old section on "III. Academic Status."

III. ACADEMIC STATUS.

Students' academic status is determined by their cumulative grade point averages. Effective with the Fall 1993 semester, the number of units (credits) completed toward the degree for students enrolled after 1993 will not be a criterion for academic good standing. However, see "Good Standing" below for restrictions. Academic Suspension, Academic Dismissal, and Immediate Reinstatement will be permanently recorded on students' official transcripts. An Academic Warning will not appear on the official transcript. However, all Academic Warnings, Academic Probations and Probations Continued, as well as all Academic Suspensions, Academic Dismissals and Immediate Reinstatements, will be permanently recorded on internal academic records.

A. Good Standing.

1. Students are in good academic standing when their cumulative grade point average is 2.000 or above. This requirement applies to full-time and part-time students, and applies equally to those who were admitted as first-year and as transfer students.
2. The average number of units earned per semester is not used in the determination of good academic standing. However, the Registrar's Office will issue a credit alert service indicator to all students who have earned less than an average of 12 graduation credits per semester (e.g., a student who has completed fewer than 48 credits after four semesters, fewer than 60 credits after five semesters). The Registrar's Office will continue to issue this service indicator every semester in which a student continue to fall below the 12-credit per semester minimum average.

In addition, if a student does not complete at least 48 degree credits by the end of four semesters, the student will be required to obtain approval of an academic plan for graduation by the departmental chief undergraduate adviser or college/school Academic Dean. The student will not be allowed to enroll in courses at the University until an

academic plan is approved. Students who fail to fulfill the conditions of their academic plan in subsequent semesters may be prevented from registering for courses by their Academic Deans.

B. Academic Warning.

Students whose cumulative average is 2.000 or above, but whose semester average is less than 2.000, will be sent a warning indicating that they should consult with their Academic Dean.

C. Academic Probation.

Students whose cumulative average falls below 2.000 will be placed on Academic Probation. Students who have been placed on Academic Probation or who have received a second consecutive Academic Warning should contact their academic dean.

D. Academic Suspension.

Students on Probation who fail to achieve or maintain good standing in any subsequent semester will be placed on Academic Suspension unless an appeal is granted (see Section G). Suspended students may not enroll in the succeeding Fall or Spring semester. Suspension is a one-semester separation from the University including the Division of Continuing and Professional Education.

Following one semester on Academic Suspension, students who file an Application for Readmission with the Registrar's Office (April 1 for the Fall semester or October 15 for the Spring semester) are entitled to re-enroll.

Upon readmission, students returning from suspension shall confer with their academic deans prior to re-enrollment.

1. Probation Continued.

Students who are subject to Academic Suspension, yet whose semester's work shows substantial improvement, may be placed on Probation Continued at the discretion of their Academic Dean.

2. Immediate Reinstatement.

Students who are suspended may be granted an Immediate Reinstatement by an Academic Dean or the Admissions and Records Committee (CAR). Immediate reinstatement status grants the student an additional semester to achieve good standing. Students on Immediate Reinstatement status who fail to achieve good standing will be dismissed.

E. Academic Dismissal.

Academic Dismissal is a permanent separation from the University. Students who are readmitted after any Academic Suspension and fail to achieve or maintain good standing in any subsequent semester will be placed on Academic Dismissal unless an appeal is granted (see Section G).

F. Academic Status and Grade Changes.

The academic status earned by a student shall remain in effect even if he/she receives a retroactive grade change that positively affects the cumulative and term GPA.

1. The following are exceptions to this policy: 1) The original grade was a mistake and is corrected by the professor, or 2) The original grade was an INC which is converted to a grade within 4 weeks of the start of the subsequent semester.
2. Suspended or Dismissed students are not eligible to enroll in the Division of Continuing and Professional Education.

Although academic standing is determined on the basis of prior course work, due to the timing of registration and academic discipline matters, students may complete a course for which they registered before suspension or dismissal occurred that is offered during the immediately subsequent Continuing and Professional Education session (Winter or Summer Session I only).

However, such a course would not be considered as supporting evidence in an appeal of a suspension or dismissal unless both of the following are true: first, a passing grade in the course would allow a student to reach a cumulative grade point average of 2.000 or higher (Good Standing); and second, the course has been identified by the Academic Dean as an appropriate choice toward achieving academic progress (e.g., course work that satisfies General Education or major requirements).

G. Appeals Process.

Students have the right to appeal their academic status. Authority for determining students' academic status resides with the Faculty Senate's Admissions and Records Committee (CAR). Students are urged to consult with their deans about petitions and appeals procedures.

1. All such appeals must be initiated in writing through the academic dean in the school or college in which the student is enrolled. Decisions made by the deans may be appealed to the Admissions and Records Committee (CAR)

2. Appeals of Suspension or Dismissal may be made on the following grounds:

- a) Substantial academic progress
- b) Course work completed after the initial decision
- c) Financial difficulties
- d) Health problems
- e) Extenuating personal circumstances
- f) Other academic reasons.

All cases will be reviewed individually. Ordinarily documentation will be required.

H. Academic Status and Financial Aid Eligibility.

Federal and state regulations require that recipients of financial aid maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward a degree or eligible certificate program of study. There are "qualitative" and "quantitative" standards that must be met to maintain eligibility for federal and state financial aid programs. These standards include maintaining a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.000 after four terms and the completion of the undergraduate degree within 10 semesters. (See section L, below, on how total terms, including transferred credits, are calculated.) This second criterion is measured continuously and students are expected to earn a minimum number of cumulative credits as follows:

Students who fail to satisfy SAP requirements will be notified that their state and federal aid eligibility may be revoked and advised of a financial aid conditional probation or an appeals process. This policy is reviewed and revised periodically to ensure compliance with federal regulations. Additional information is available at the Financial Aid Office or through the Web at www.umass.edu/umfa.

I. Academic Status and Student Athletes.

NCAA legislation requires satisfactory academic progress in order for an athlete to remain eligible. For guidelines, contact the Athletic Department.

J. Semester Count (Total Terms).

For the purpose of determining the ten semester statute of limitations for the completion of degree requirements, a semester count is determined as follows:

- 1. Each semester of enrollment as a full-time student at the University (see Section II, Enrollment Categories, Paragraph A) is counted as one semester, independent of the number of credits (units) taken or passed. However, students who enroll in fewer than 12

credits in a semester will not be certified by the University as full-time during that semester for financial aid or any other purpose.

2. For students engaged in part-time study (see Section II, Paragraph B), twelve (12) credits will be considered the equivalent of one semester. Students involved in part-time study must complete their last sixty (60) credits within five years.

3. Any credits earned prior to matriculation as an undergraduate student on the Amherst campus of the University and accepted as credits for transfer to the University transcript are converted to semester hours, totaled, and divided by 15 to determine an initial semester count. Zero to 14 credits will not count, but will be added to any credits transferred after matriculation for calculation according to number 4 of this section, below. If the number of credits beyond an integer multiple of 15 is 9 or more, they constitute another semester. (Fifteen through 23 transferred credits constitute one semester; 24 through 38 constitute two semesters; 39 through 53 constitute three semesters; 54 through 68 constitute four semesters; 69 through 83 constitute five semesters.)

4. Any other credits transferred to the University transcript after matriculation are converted, totaled, and divided by twelve to determine additional equivalent semesters. (For example, 24 through 35 credits constitute two semesters; 36 through 47 constitute three semesters). In this calculation, credits remaining beyond an integer multiple of twelve do not count as an additional semester. However, they will be added to subsequent transfer or part-time credits to determine semester count.

5. The sum of the semesters calculated in each of the categories above is the semester count, generally referred to in these regulations as semesters of enrollment or as Total Terms.

6. In determining semesters at the University, enrollment in courses after matriculation during summer sessions or January intersession on this campus does not affect the calculation of total terms.

K. Special Provisions for Reinstatement after Extended Absence from the University (Fresh Start).

Students who return to the University after an absence of at least three years may have their prior work not included in their cumulative grade point average subject to the following conditions:

1. Readmission to the University must follow normal procedures (e.g., a student who left the University on academic dismissal must petition the CAR and justify readmission on the usual grounds).

2. A minimum of 45 credits must be taken in residence on the UMass Amherst campus after readmission and before graduation.

3. Courses taken and grades achieved in the first admission will appear on the transcript along with a notation that they are not included in the cumulative average.
4. General Education and free elective credits passed with a grade of C or better in the first admission will be counted toward graduation credit upon readmission but will not be included in the cumulative average.
5. Major program courses taken in the first admission must be approved as part of the major program for graduation by the major department. Courses accepted to the major will not be included in the calculation of the major grade point average.
6. Those who had left the University in Good Standing or on Probation will have Academic Standing calculations begin at the start of the progression upon their return. Students who, upon departure, had a suspension or dismissal in that final term will continue through the usual academic Standing progression after their return.
7. Students who qualify for and wish to choose this option must notify the Registrar as part of the Readmission application. Students may not change the option after they have been readmitted. If students choose this option, it will apply to all prior work at the University.

For the purpose of this policy, an "absence of at least three years" is defined as not having been enrolled in any courses on the Amherst campus for six successive fall and spring semesters or any of the intervening intersessions or summer sessions. Students may not have been enrolled in any regular University courses or any courses offered by the Division of Continuing and Professional Education during this period.

3. AMC RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Council unanimously supports the proposed changes in the "Academic Regulations" publication with the following Motion for the Faculty Senate:

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the changes to Section III (Academic Status) of the 50-07 Academic Regulations, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 07-045.

APPENDIX A

III. ACADEMIC STATUS.

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A. Good Standing.

1. Students are in good academic standing when their cumulative grade point average is 2.000 or above. This requirement applies to full-time and part-time students, and applies equally to those who were admitted as freshmen and as transfer students.
2. The average number of units earned per semester is not used in the determination of good academic standing. However, the Registrar's Office will issue a credit alert to all students who have earned less than an average of 12 graduation credits per semester (e.g., a student who has completed fewer than 48 credits after four semesters, fewer than 60 credits after five semesters). The Registrar's Office will continue to issue this alert on a semester basis as long as students continue to fall below the 12-credit per semester minimum average.

If a student has not completed at least 48 degree credits by the end of four semesters, the student will be required to obtain approval of an academic plan for graduation by the departmental chief undergraduate adviser or college/school undergraduate dean. The student will not be allowed to preregister for or enroll in courses at the University until an academic plan is approved. Students who fail to fulfill the conditions of their academic plan in subsequent semesters may be prevented from registering for courses by their undergraduate deans.

B. Academic Warning.

Students whose cumulative average is 2.000 or above, but whose semester average is less than 2.000, will be sent a warning indicating that they should consult with their academic adviser.

C. Academic Probation.

Students whose cumulative average falls below 2.000 will be placed on Academic Probation. Students who have been placed on Academic Probation or who have received a second consecutive Academic Warning should contact their undergraduate dean.

D. Academic Suspension.

1. Students who have been on Academic Probation and who fail to achieve or maintain good standing in any subsequent semester will be placed on Academic Suspension unless they meet the criteria outlined in Section H, Appeals Process, below. Academic Suspension means that a student may not be enrolled in the succeeding semester; it is a one semester separation from the University. Suspended students are not eligible to enroll in the Division of Continuing Education with the exception that they may complete any enrollment already recorded into a course offered during the immediately subsequent Continuing Education session.
2. Following one semester of Academic Suspension, during which they are required to be withdrawn from the University, students who file an application for readmission by April 1 (for the Fall semester) or October 15 (for the Spring semester) are entitled to re-enroll and pre-register. Students who file an application by June 30 (for Fall semester) or November 30 (for Spring semester) are entitled to re-enroll but will be unable to preregister. Upon re-enrollment, students returning from suspension shall confer with their undergraduate deans.

E. Academic Dismissal.

Students who are readmitted after any Academic Suspension and fail to achieve or maintain good standing in any subsequent semester will be placed on Academic Dismissal unless they meet the criteria outlined in Section H, Appeals Process, below. Academic Dismissal means that a student may not enroll in any succeeding semester, unless readmitted pursuant to the appeals process; it is a permanent separation from the University. Dismissed students are not eligible to enroll in the Division of Continuing Education with the exception that they may complete any enrollment already recorded into a course offered during the immediately subsequent Continuing Education session.

F. Probation Continued.

Students who are subject to Academic Suspension or Dismissal, yet whose semester's work shows substantial improvement, may be viewed as making substantial progress toward good standing and instead of being suspended or dismissed may be placed on Probation Continued at the discretion of their undergraduate dean.

G. Immediate Reinstatement.

1. Students who are placed on Academic Suspension may be granted Immediate Reinstatement at the discretion of their Undergraduate Dean, if the Dean determines that extenuating circumstances exist. Although these students will have been formally suspended (the Suspension is noted on the academic

record), they may enroll for the succeeding semester. However, if students again fall below good standing in any subsequent semester, they will be subject to Dismissal.

2. Students who are placed on Academic Dismissal may appeal this status to the Committee on Admissions and Records. The Committee may grant immediate reinstatement if it determines that extenuating circumstances exist. Although these students will have been formally dismissed (the Dismissal is noted on the academic record), they may enroll for the succeeding semester. However, if students again fall below good standing in any subsequent semester, they will again be subject to Dismissal.

H. Appeals Process.

Authority for determining students' academic status lies with the Faculty Senate's Committee on Admissions and Records. The Committee on Admissions and Records may delegate certain of its powers to the Undergraduate Deans. Students are urged to consult with their Deans about petitions and appeals procedures.

1. Students have the right to appeal their academic status. All such appeals must be initiated in writing through the Undergraduate Deans in the school or college in which the student wishes to enroll; the deans will make a decision using powers delegated by the Committee on Admissions and Records, or will refer the appeal, normally with a recommendation, to the Committee on Admissions and Records. Decisions made by the deans may be appealed to the Committee on Admissions and Records, but such appeals must be routed through students' Undergraduate Deans.
2. The following categories may constitute reasons for exceptions to Suspension or Dismissal. All cases will be reviewed individually and a decision made by the student's Undergraduate Dean or by the Committee on Admissions and Records. Ordinarily documentation will be required.
 - a. Substantial academic progress
 - b. Financial difficulties
 - c. Health problems
 - d. Extenuating personal circumstances
 - e. Other academic reasons.

I. Continuing Education Enrollment.

Suspended or Dismissed students may not enroll in courses in the Division of Continuing Education.

J. Academic Status and Financial Aid Eligibility.

Federal and state regulations require that recipients of financial aid maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward a degree or eligible certificate program of study. There are "qualitative" and "quantitative" standards that must be met to maintain eligibility for federal and state financial aid programs. These standards include maintaining a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.000 after four terms and the completion of the undergraduate degree within 10 semesters. (See section L, below, on how total terms, including transferred credits, are calculated.) This

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3. Any credits earned prior to matriculation as an undergraduate student on the Amherst campus of the University and accepted as credits for transfer to the University transcript are converted to semester hours, totaled, and divided by 15 to determine an initial semester count. Zero to 14 credits will not count, but will be added to any credits transferred after matriculation for calculation according to number 4 of this section, below. If the number of credits beyond an integer multiple of 15 is 9 or more, they constitute another semester. (Fifteen through 23 transferred credits constitute one semester; 24 through 38 constitute two semesters; 39 through 53 constitute three semesters; 54 through 68 constitute four semesters; 69 through 83 constitute five semesters.)
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6. In determining semesters at the University, enrollment in courses after matriculation during summer sessions or January intersession on this campus does not affect the calculation of total terms.

M. Special Provisions for Reinstatement after Extended Absence from the University. (Fresh Start)

Students who return to the University after an absence of at least three years may have their prior work not included in their cumulative grade point average subject to the following conditions:

1. Readmission to the University must follow normal procedures (e.g., a student who left the University on academic dismissal must petition the CAR and justify readmission on the usual grounds).
2. A minimum of 45 credits must be taken in residence on the UMass Amherst campus after readmission and before graduation.
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5. Major program courses taken in the first admission must be approved as part of the major program for graduation by the major department. Courses accepted to the major will not be included in the calculation of the major grade point average.
6. Those who had left the University in Good Standing or on Probation will have Academic Standing calculations begin at the start of the progression upon their return. Students who, upon departure, had a suspension or dismissal in that final term will continue through the usual Academic Standing progression after their return.
7. Students who qualify for and wish to choose this option must notify the Registrar as part of the Readmission application. Students may not change the option after they have been readmitted. If students choose this option, it will apply to all prior work at the University.

For the purpose of this policy, an "absence of at least three years" is defined as not having been enrolled in any courses on the Amherst campus for six successive fall and spring semesters or any of the intervening intersessions or summer sessions. Students may not have been enrolled in any regular University courses or any courses offered by the Division of Continuing Education during this period.

