

University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy
Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences

Policies and Procedures for Grade and Academic Progression

The policies and procedures addressed in this document serve as guidance for actions of the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) and for faculty and students who assess performance and earn grades, respectively.

Each graduate student is required to review these Policies and Procedures upon entry into the School of Pharmacy and at the beginning of each academic year; students must sign that they have read and understand the policies and procedures. Any situation that arises that is not specifically addressed by these Policies and Procedures will be adjudicated by the dean after consultation with the AAC.

I. GENERAL POLICIES FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS

A. Course Load, Grading and Schedule

Students in the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences who are financially supported by teaching assistant, teaching fellow, or graduate student researcher appointments must be registered as full-time students and be taking 15 credits per term.

Domestic students who pay their own tuition and fees have the option to attend the program on a part- or full-time basis as approved by the Graduate Program Director and the student's advisor. International students not supported by the school must be enrolled as full-time students (i.e., 9 to 15 credits per term) in order to comply with visa and regulations of the Office of International Students. The option of part-time study is not available to students with a J-1 or H-1 visa.

B. Course Withdrawal

A student may withdraw from a course(s) only after written permission has been obtained from the course coordinator, the student's advisor, and the Graduate Program Director. The course withdrawal must be processed through the School Registrar within the time period according to University policy, which can be found at <https://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-01-07.html>. Students are not permitted to "unofficially withdraw" by merely not attending classes.

C. Academic Resignation

Students who wish to resign must officially communicate this in writing to the Director of the Graduate Program. Once approval is granted, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the School Registrar and withdraw from all courses. A student may not "unofficially resign" by failing to attend classes. Resignation constitutes withdrawal from all courses being taken. A student who has resigned from the program and requests readmission to the program must petition the Director of the Graduate Program, who will consult with the AAC.

D. Leave of Absence

Under special conditions, graduate students may be granted one leave of absence. A maximum leave of two years may be granted to doctoral students or one year to master's students. The student must write a letter to the Director of the Graduate Program requesting

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a leave of absence and must indicate the length and rationale for the leave of absence prior to the leave. The Chair of the AAC makes a recommendation to the dean, who approves the leave. If approved, the time of leave shall not count against the total time allowed for the degree being sought by the student. Readmission following an approved leave of absence is a formality.

The University of Pittsburgh provides accommodation for graduate students who become new parents. Information on the University's Graduate Student Parental Accommodation Guidelines can be found here: <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/pacwc/policies.html>. The parental accommodation period is not considered a formal leave of absence.

A student who does not intend on returning to the Graduate Program must submit in writing a request for academic resignation as outlined above in Section I C no later than one month prior to the date of return stated in the initial request.

E. Missed or Incomplete Course Work

A student who, for good and valid reasons, is unable to complete some portion of the required material in a course may request that the instructor submit a "G" or "I" grade for the course. A "G" or "I" grade is given entirely at the discretion of the instructor who must be convinced, by appropriate documentation, that the reasons for the incomplete work are valid.

The incomplete work must be made up as soon as possible, and at a maximum, within one calendar year.

A student who has been given a "G" or "I" grade in a course that is a pre-requisite for another course will generally not be permitted to take the next course in the sequence until the "G" or "I" grade has been replaced with an acceptable grade. Students cannot advance in the program until all "G" or "I" grades have been resolved. If a "G" or "I" grade is not resolved in the designated time, the student will be under academic probation as outlined in Section II below.

II. COURSE GRADES, ACADEMIC PROGRESSION AND ACADEMIC PROBATION

A. Course Grades

Students earning a grade of "C" or lower or a grade of "U" in one course will be evaluated by the AAC (and advisor if applicable).

Students earning a grade of "C" or lower or a grade of "U" in a *core or required course* will be placed on academic probation or dismissed from the graduate program contingent upon the evaluation by the AAC (and advisor if applicable). If allowed to continue in the Graduate Program, students will have one opportunity to re-take the core or required course(s). Students must achieve a grade of "B" or "S" in the repeated course(s).

Students earning a grade of "D" or lower or a grade of "U" in any *elective* course will be evaluated by the AAC (and advisor if applicable).

B. Cumulative Grade Point Average

The Grade Point Average (GPA) includes all required and elective courses taken while enrolled in the Graduate Program.

Cumulative GPA will be calculated at the end of each semester. All students enrolled in the graduate program must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher. The AAC will review the progress of students who fail to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or above after any term to determine if they will be permitted to continue in the Graduate Program. Students may be eligible to take additional courses to raise their GPA. Students who fail to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or above after any term will be placed on academic probation or be dismissed from the program. *Being placed on Academic Probation is cause for suspension of a student's financial support (tuition and stipend) from the school until such time as the GPA increases to 3.0.* If placed on academic probation, the AAC will work with the student to develop a plan of remediation or other actions.

Students failing to increase their cumulative GPA to 3.00 during one term of academic probation may be permitted a second term of academic probation (as courses are offered on an annual and not semester basis) or may be dismissed from the program.

Students who have a GPA of less than 3.0 are not eligible to sit for comprehensive exams and/or to defend the MS required project.

C. Dismissal from the Program

Students may be dismissed if they:

- a. Earn a grade of "C" or lower or a grade of "U" in one required or core course.
- b. Fail to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 after any three consecutive or non-consecutive terms.

The AAC may request, via phone, e-mail, or written letter, that a student on academic probation appear before the AAC to present his case prior to a final action by the Committee.

III. DUE PROCESS AND RIGHT OF APPEAL

Graduate students will be notified in writing of their placement on academic probation or dismissal from the program, including the reason for this action. A student may appeal this action by submitting a letter to Chair of the Graduate AAC within two business days of the date of notification by the AAC. Students may also request to appear before the AAC.

In the event that the AAC upholds the original decision, a student may make a written appeal to the dean within two days of notification by the AAC. The dean may choose to consult with

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the AAC, the student, and/or the student's advisor prior to arriving at a decision, which will be final.

IV. FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF STUDENTS ON ACADEMIC PROBATION

Any graduate student on academic probation will be responsible for financial obligations of remedial and other coursework and will no longer be eligible for appointment as a teaching assistant or a teaching fellow.

The decision to support a student as a graduate student researcher is made by the AAC with input from the advisor.

Approved July 2014

I, _____, have read and understand the Policies and
(Print Name)

Procedures for Grade and Academic Progression in the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Signature _____

Date _____
