

CGSR Motion to Revise Academic Standing Policy for Graduate Students

Presented to the Faculty 4-12-2018

Current Policy

- Students do not get evaluated until 12 credits are attempted
- Overall GPA >2.75 for “satisfactory progress”
- Overall GPA <2.65 , only pass/fail
- Overall GPA <2.5 , dismissed
- **Program** GPA 3.0 or better required for degree

Current status:

25-45 graduate students/semester fall into these categories

6.9% of all graduate degrees are given to students with Overall GPA <3.0

Students with GPA <3.0 take more total credits to graduate with MS degree
(mean: 34+/-9)

Problems with current policy:

- Does not let underperforming students know until too late (12 credits might be 3 semesters for part-time students)
- Students with GPA <2.75 may be so far below that they have difficulty raising GPA to our graduation standard (Program GPA ≥ 3.0)
- Pass/fail policy does not allow underperforming students to raise GPA and results in many petitions/waivers.

Other Considerations

- Mirroring the Undergraduate policy does not work, because Graduate students take many fewer classes
- CGSR met with Graduate Coordinators over several months to develop current policy

Proposed Policy

Goal: Warn students early so they can recover. Help them stay on track. Allow truly failing students to be dismissed using objective and fair rules.

Maintain Cumulative GPA ≥ 3.0 . Evaluated after each semester of enrollment. If GPA < 3.0 :

1. Academic Warning: have 1 semester of coursework to improve GPA, if not student goes on Academic Probation. If GPA has improved but remains below 3.0, student stays in Academic Warning.
2. Academic Probation: have 1 semester of coursework to improve GPA, if not student is dismissed. If GPA has improved > 3.0 , student is in Good Standing. Else, student is in Academic Warning.
3. Academic Dismissal: there is an appeal process (petition to Registrar who submits to CGSR)

Note: It is possible for a student to graduate while on Warning or Probation, with GPA < 3.0 , if they do not count low-grade courses towards their degree. Students can also currently do this.

Proposed Policy, Continued

ADDITIONALLY, students will be dismissed if:

- Student earns a grade lower than C in 3 or more courses
- Cumulative GPA < 2.5 after attempting a minimum of 8 credits
- If a student is in otherwise good standing but fails to meet specified degree milestones. (e.g. failing the departmental Qualifying Exam)

There is an appeal process for dismissal.

Rationale: Programs must have objective criteria to dismiss underperforming students. Treating students on a “case by case basis” is a liability.