

DOCTORAL POLICIES

Academic Policies

Academic Standing

Good Academic Standing is defined as students enrolled in a doctoral program who maintain a 3.0 or above cumulative GPA, as calculated at the end of the fall, spring, and summer terms.

Course Registration

Doctoral students register for courses following the doctoral program curriculum. If students do not complete their progression milestones, including defending the dissertation, they will need to register for 899 doctoral research every fall and spring semester until they defend their dissertation or reach the maximum of eight years in the academic program (Ed.D. students have a maximum of ten years). Doctoral students are required to register for a minimum of one credit during their terminal semester. The terminal semester is defined as the semester in which the student completes all degree requirements, not the semester in which the student is to graduate. If the requirements are to be completed in the summer term, students should register for 1 credit.

Time to Completion

Each student is expected to make academic progress toward the degree or certificate to remain in good standing. Students who exceed the time limit to complete their program will be dismissed from the program.

College of Arts & Sciences

Students enrolled in PhD programs in the Departments of Biology or Chemistry have eight years to complete their doctoral program. The time limit begins when the student enrolls in the doctoral program and begins their first course.

School of Education & Human Development

Students have a total of five years from the start of coursework to defend the dissertation proposal and ten years from the start of coursework to defend the dissertation and complete all degree requirements or be dismissed from the program.

School of Health Professions

Students enrolled in PhD programs in the Departments of Pharmaceutical Sciences have eight years to complete their doctoral program. The time limit begins when the student enrolls in the doctoral program and begins their first course.

Students enrolled in the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) program have a maximum of six years to complete their program, once in the professional curriculum (P1-P4).

Grievance Procedure

Students who have a concern regarding an academic matter may seek assistance. The procedure for resolving academic program concerns (see note of grade appeal process below) begins with the course instructor. A student who has a concern about a final course grade should first consult the grade appeal process in the following section. If the student is not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved at this first level, or if speaking with the faculty member presents a conflict of interest for the student, the student should proceed to speak with their Program Director. If the student is not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved

through the Program Director, the student should proceed to speak with the Department Chairperson. If the student is still not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved through the Department Chairperson, or if speaking with the Department Chairperson presents a conflict of interest for the student, the next step is to request a review of the concern in writing to the Associate Dean. All requests to present a concern to an Associate Dean must be first summarized in writing in the form of a petition by the student and submitted. A decision on a grievance by the College Dean represents a final level of review. During all stages of the process, the Graduate Program Director or representative designated by the Dean's Office will serve as the point of contact for the student filing the complaint.

Appealing a Course Grade

The instructor for a course has the responsibility for setting the requirements for a course and making an evaluation of students' work. Once a grade has been given, the instructor is not free to change the grade unless the instructor indicates to the Registrar that an error was made in the original grade transmitted. If a student believes that an error has been made, they must take the initiative in bringing about the necessary correction before the conclusion of the semester or immediately following the semester in which the course was taken. The typical procedure for requesting a correction would be through direct discussion between the student and the instructor. If redress cannot be attained through such discussions, the student may next appeal to the Program Director. If resolution cannot be attained through appeal, the student may next appeal in writing to the Department Chairperson. All requests to present a concern to an Associate Dean must be first summarized in writing in the form of a petition by the student and submitted.

Leave of Absence (LOA)

Under special circumstances (illness, family hardship, work or military service, etc.), a doctoral student may request a leave of absence from their doctoral program. An approved leave of absence does not automatically cancel a student's registration for courses. If the student has active registrations for the term(s) included in the approved leave of absence, a student must drop or withdraw their registration(s). The maximum time permitted for a leave of absence is two years (Ed.D. students have a maximum of 3 semesters). After the maximum period, the student will be deactivated and will be required to re-apply to be considered for reinstatement to a program. Doctoral students should discuss the impact of a LOA on their institutional support if such funding is received. Students are required to submit a completed Graduate Leave of Absence form.

Withdrawal from a Course/Courses

It is strongly suggested that students seek counsel from their Program Director or Advisor before submitting a course withdrawal. All withdrawn courses will be noted with a grade of "W" on the official transcript, and are not included in the grade point average calculation. Withdrawing from a course can have financial and academic implications that should be taken into consideration when making this decision. Changes in financial aid rules and veterans education benefits have further complicated the course withdrawal process; only trained representatives have the knowledge to help students make the best decision(s)—financially and academically.

Withdrawal from the University

A student may elect to file a total withdrawal from a graduate program of study at Saint Joseph's University. The student must not have any outstanding tuition debt, and must not meet the conditions for dismissal due to an academic violation or disciplinary action. Students are required to submit a completed Withdraw from University form.

Administrative Withdrawal

Students may be administratively withdrawn from Saint Joseph's University, after due notice, for an academic or disciplinary action or failure to satisfy overdue financial obligations or to comply with administrative requirements of Saint Joseph's University.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

Academic Probation and Dismissal

Students in doctoral programs are placed on academic probation when their cumulative GPA falls below 3.00.

At the end of each semester, the appropriate Graduate Office will notify the students who are either placed on academic probation or are academically dismissed via email. Probation notices will direct students to meet with their designated graduate advisor at the beginning of the probation period to create an academic performance improvement plan.

Graduate students placed on academic probation are given a maximum of two probationary semesters to raise their cumulative GPA to the minimum standard of 3.00.

The University reserves the right to refuse the privilege of further attendance to graduate students who fail to meet minimum academic requirements with or without a probationary period.

The University also reserves the right to change the requirements for retention and graduation for doctoral students, and every candidate for a degree or certificate program shall be held in compliance with changes, as far as the remaining portion of their course of study is affected.

Certain programs may have more stringent retention and dismissal standards. Students enrolled in these programs should consult with their program advisors for retention and graduation requirements.

College of Arts and Sciences

PhD students who fail to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher or receives a non-pass grade ("NP") in research from the Research Advisory Committee will be placed on academic probation. A doctoral student placed on academic probation because of a non-passing grade in research for two consecutive semesters or for any three semesters throughout the degree program will be dismissed from the graduate program. Students who fail to complete their program within 8 years may also be dismissed from the program.

School of Education and Human Development

Ed.D. students will be dismissed from the program for any of the following reasons: (a) students who do not meet a minimum of a 3.0 GPA after two semesters of academic probation, (b) students who receive the grade of C+ or lower in four or more classes, (c) students who do not defend their dissertation proposal within five years from the start of coursework, and/or (d) students who do not defend their dissertations within 10 years from the start of coursework. Students with a GPA of less

than a 3.0 will not be permitted to sit for the comprehensive exam during their third year.

School of Health Professions:

PhD programs in School of Health Professions

PhD students who fail to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher or receives a non-pass grade ("NP") in research from the Research Advisory Committee will be placed on academic probation. A doctoral student placed on academic probation because of a non-passing grade in research for two consecutive semesters or for any three semesters throughout the degree program will be dismissed from the graduate program. Students who fail to complete their program within 8 years may also be dismissed from the program.

Doctor of Physical Therapy

Doctor of Physical Therapy students must achieve a minimum grade of "B-" in all graded courses or a "Pass" in Pass/Fail courses in the professional phase of the curriculum in order to progress to any other course for which the completed course is a prerequisite. Grades below a B- are considered "Unsuccessful." Students who earn grades less than B- in two or more courses at any time in the professional curriculum will be dropped from the program and cannot reapply.

Students who do not pass a clinical experience may participate in the next clinical experience timeframe but will repeat the course in which they were unsuccessful.

Any student who does not achieve the minimum grade requirement in a didactic course in the professional phase of the program will not be permitted to progress in the professional curriculum. The student may be offered the opportunity to take the same course the following academic year. This situation will delay the student's progression for one year. The student should refer to the readmission policy in the Student Handbook and adhere to guidelines for submission of appropriate paperwork. Readmission is not guaranteed.

Doctor of Pharmacy

The expectations for student performance in the Doctor of Pharmacy program are more stringent than what is seen in undergraduate curricula. The following Academic Standards are in place to ensure successful completion of the Doctor of Pharmacy Program:

- The "C rule" for Doctor of Pharmacy students dictates that successful (satisfactory) completion of required non-elective PCP courses (with prefix PRX) is achieved by a minimum grade of "C". Pharm D students who achieve less than a "C" in a given course are given a second and final chance to demonstrate competency by retaking the course at its next offering.
- Since most professional courses are offered only once during an academic year, if a student requires a second attempt to be successful, most likely progression will be delayed and the student's graduation date will change. Students who are unsuccessful (i.e., achieve less than a C) the second time will be withdrawn (dropped) from the program. Students who are successful the second time will proceed with subsequent coursework.
- In the professional years of the PharmD program (i.e., P1-P4), students who achieve less than a semester GPA of 2.30 will receive a program probation. Students who exceed two program probations or do not complete program requirements within the maximum allowable residency time will be withdrawn from the program.
- All required PRX courses (except ESAR) must be successfully completed, including learning support reassessment expectations,

before the start of the next semester in order to progress to the next semester.

- All ESAR courses, including learning support reassessment expectations, must be successfully completed before the start of the next academic year in order to progress to the next academic year.
- All StEPP requirements for each academic year must be completed by the end of the spring semester in order to progress to the next academic year.

Appeal of Academic Dismissal

A formal written appeal may be submitted to the Program Director by a student based on one or more of the following grounds:

- Violation of official policy or procedural error by academic or administrative personnel.
- Special mitigating circumstances beyond the student’s control affecting the student’s academic progress.

The following circumstances could prevent a student from satisfactorily completing a course:

- A severe illness or other debilitating condition.
- A student who is the primary care provider for a sick, injured, or needy person in family or friend circle.
- The death of a family member, friend, or someone in their relationship circle.
- The active duty service as a member of the National Guard or the armed forces of the United States.
- The change of the student’s work schedule beyond the control of the student.
- Other good cause as determined by the Dean of the College or their designee.

Poor performance in coursework, poor work/study habits, missed deadlines, or change of major or concentration are not appropriate grounds for appeal. A student submitting an appeal based on mitigating circumstances is also required to provide specific evidence in support of the issue or event that impaired the student’s academic performance.

The student must also provide objective documentation about the events and/or situations with respect to the subsequent impact on their learning.

Document Examples:

- Newspaper notice, copy of death certificate or obituary.
- Physician’s letter explaining a medical condition and its effects or medical records.
- Photos, witness statements, copy of police report, etc.
- Court documents, bail documents, letter from a lawyer, police, reports, etc.
- Clinic notes, prescription receipts, and physician’s notes are not considered sufficient documentation.

Students are not required to appear in-person for a formal appeal hearing.

Dismissal Appeals Process

First Level Review

Submitted academic dismissal appeal forms will be reviewed by the Graduate Program Director and Department Chair. The reviewers will make a decision to either recommend or reject the appeal. Recommended appeals will be forwarded to the second level of review. Appeals with a

rejection status will be considered final, and the dismissal action will stand. The Program Director will notify the student in writing of the decision.

Second Level Review

If recommended for a second level of review by the academic department, an active appeal will be reviewed by the divisional Associate Dean. The Associate Dean will make a decision to recommend or reject the appeal for further consideration for the third level of review.

Third Level Review

The College of Arts and Sciences Appeals Reviews Committee headed by the Dean of the College constitutes the final level of review of an academic dismissal appeal. If an appeal is approved, the student may be considered for reinstatement to a graduate program with probationary standing.

If an appeal is denied, the dismissal action will stand. Students who have been dismissed from a program due to failure to meet academic standards or because of an academic integrity violation may not reapply to any program within the College of Arts and Sciences.

Student Point of Contact During the Appeals Process

During all phases of the appeal review process, the student’s Program Director will serve as the point of contact for the student. Students will be notified by letter about the outcome of their appeal.

Reinstatement

Students who are approved for reinstatement will be placed on academic probation and must return to good academic standing within one semester.

Students approved to resume their current program of study may be required to repeat the course(s) with earned grades that caused their cumulative GPA to drop below 3.00.

Additional conditions may be placed on students who have been approved for reinstatement including, but not limited to, referrals to learning resources support or tutoring, enrollment in the appropriate course(s), etc.

Reinstated students who fail to meet the specified criteria of the academic performance improvement plan, and/or do not achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher, or who achieve a term GPA of below 3.00 during the probation term will be academically dismissed without possibility of a second appeal or reinstatement.

Academic Forgiveness

Students who return following an absence of at least one calendar year may request academic forgiveness. If academic forgiveness is granted, each grade of C- or below for undergraduate students, and B- or below for graduate & doctoral students will be eligible to be replaced with a grade of “AF”. Courses with a grade of AF will no longer count for credit or be included in the GPA calculation. Additionally, the student’s transcript will have a comment added denoting that academic forgiveness was granted in the applicable semesters. To apply for academic forgiveness, the student must submit a letter to the appropriate Dean explaining how they will achieve successful degree completion. This explanation may involve addressing the reasons for their poor original performance and lessons learned during their time away. Application for Academic Forgiveness must be completed at least 4 weeks before registration for courses. Please see application form for (<https://sju.teamdynamix.com/>)

TDClient/1942/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet/?ID=51080)additional details. (<https://sju.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/1942/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet/?ID=51080>)

Guidelines

- Students may only receive academic forgiveness once.
- Courses that a student withdrew from are not eligible for academic forgiveness.
- Once a student has been approved for academic forgiveness, the action is irreversible and final.
- Failing grades that result from violations of the Academic Honesty Policy cannot be changed under the terms of this policy.
- Federal guidelines allow Title IV Federal Financial Aid to be applied for only one retake of a course with a passing grade. Questions related to financial aid eligibility following academic forgiveness can be directed to finaid@sju.edu (<https://academiccatalog.sju.edu/programs/finaid@sju.edu>).
- A student's Satisfactory Academic Progress is not impacted by academic forgiveness as it relates to federal, state, and institutional financial aid requirements. Please review the SAP policies relative to financial aid at sju.edu/sap (<http://sju.edu/sap/>).

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

In addition to the academic levels of progress outlined in the Policy, doctoral financial aid recipients are also required to meet the standards outlined in the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy.

Satisfactory academic progress for financial aid recipients enrolled in degree programs is assessed annually at the conclusion of the spring semester. For eligible programs of one academic year or less, satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is evaluated at the conclusion of the fall and spring semesters. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress will result in cancellation of financial aid awards and the subsequent repayment of the funds already received.