

# GRADUATE POLICIES

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## Academic Policies

### Academic Standing

Good Academic Standing is defined as students enrolled in master's or non-degree programs who maintain a 3.00 or above cumulative GPA, as calculated at the end of the fall, spring, and summer terms.

### Course Load

Full-time graduate students are those who enroll for six or more credits each semester. Half-time graduate students are those who enroll for at least three credits, and fewer than six credits each semester. A student who is employed full-time is encouraged to take six credits (two courses) each semester, and must receive permission from the student's Graduate Program Director before registering for nine or more credits (three or more courses) each semester.

### Course Overload

Requests to enroll in 15 credit hours (five courses) in a fall or spring semester from a full-time graduate student with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) below 3.50 will not typically be approved. All graduate course overloads must be approved by the Graduate Program Director and Associate Dean. No overload requests will be considered for the summer term. Certain graduate programs restrict students from registering for more than nine credit hours (three courses) in the summer terms. Students enrolled in a first semester of graduate study are not granted permission to take course overloads.

### Course Repeat

A graduate student may voluntarily repeat one course while enrolled in a program, and it can only be a course in which a grade of C or below was received. The course may be repeated only once. Students who are placed on academic probation may be required to repeat one or more courses as part of their plan for reinstatement to good academic standing—see policy on Levels of Academic Progress, Probation, and Dismissal. Courses that students are required to repeat as part of their academic probation or reinstatement do not count as “voluntarily” repeated courses. When a course is repeated, both the original and repeated grade appear on the academic record; both grades will be used in calculating the grade point average. Course credit may be applied toward degree requirements only once, even if a course is repeated.

### Time to Completion

Each student is expected to make academic progress toward the degree or certificate to remain in good standing. After the establishing of degree candidacy, a maximum of five years will be allowed for the completion of the degree requirements. Under extenuating circumstances, a student may request an extension of this time frame.

Students who exceed the time limit to complete their program will be dismissed from the program.

### Haub School of Business

Students enrolled in the MBA or MS programs have six years to complete their MS degree from Saint Joseph's University. This six-year limit begins with the student's first core course. Extensions beyond this limit may be

made only with the approval of the Program Director, and only for unusual and serious circumstances.

Students who exceed the time limit to complete the MS Program will be dismissed from the program. Such students must reapply for admission into the program as new students and start the program with no credit from previous courses taken.

## 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 Graduate Program Director. If the student is not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved through the Graduate 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 Graduate 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 student may request a leave of absence from their graduate 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). Failure to do so will result in billing and assigned grades for the term(s). Students are not permitted to enroll at another institution while under a leave of absence status. The maximum time permitted for a leave of absence is two years. After a two-year period, the student will be deactivated and will

be required to re-apply to be considered for reinstatement to a program. Students are required to submit a completed Graduate Leave of Absence form.

MSPAS students should consult the PA Student Handbook for all options for Leave of Absence or Temporary Separation.

## Withdrawal from a Course/Courses

It is strongly suggested that students seek counsel from their Graduate 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 a Course/Courses for MSPAS Program

Students must advance sequentially within their cohort; therefore, individual course withdrawal is not allowed without automatically decelerating. Please see the Program Deceleration Policy (p. 4) for details regarding deceleration. All other course withdrawals effectively end matriculation in the program. For additional details, please see PA Student Handbook.

## 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

Graduate 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.

## Readmission After Withdrawal or Dismissal

When seeking readmission, students who have voluntarily withdrawn from Saint Joseph's University or are no longer active due to prolonged absence from the University are required to reapply. Students should contact [gradaute@sju.edu](mailto:gradaute@sju.edu) for more information.

Students who have been dismissed from a Graduate Arts and Sciences program due to failure to meet academic progress or because of an academic integrity violation may not reapply to their previous program or any other graduate program offered by the College of Arts and Sciences.

## Statistics Proficiency

All students in the MSBIA Program must demonstrate proficiency in statistics prior to the start of DSS 610 through an online learning module (ALEKS). Students with strong statistical background may test out. Students must complete 100% of the module before the start of DSS 610. Further details can be obtained from the MSBIA Program Director or the HSB Graduate Program Office.

## Academic Probation and Dismissal

Students in graduate certificate and master's 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.

## Haub School of Business

The grading system in effect at Saint Joseph's University will apply to courses in master's programs. As per University guidelines for graduate study, a student enrolled in a master's program who receives a single grade of C or below for three (3) credit hours will receive a warning letter. Students who receive a grade of C or below for six (6) credit hours will be placed on academic probation and will be so notified in writing. Students who receive a grade of C or below for nine (9) credit hours will be dismissed from the program.

Graduate students must fulfill all credit hour requirements for the master's degree. Each candidate for graduation must have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA, no more than two grades of C, and no F grades outstanding in order to be certified for graduation. The student, with support from the Program Director and Student Records Offices, is responsible for monitoring their own academic progress throughout the course of the program.

## Continued Academic Probation - Second Probation

When placed on academic probation, graduate students are given one probationary semester to raise their cumulative GPA. Graduate students are required to achieve required achieve an overall GPA of 3.00 to be taken off probation, regardless of progress made during the probationary semester. Failure to do so will result in the student being placed on continued or second academic probation.

If the overall GPA remains below 3.00 after a second probationary semester, the student may be academically dismissed.

Students on academic probation may be asked to repeat the course(s) that caused the cumulative GPA to drop below 3.00. The course(s) should be taken within the next two semesters of enrollment after the academic probation status is applied. The Graduate Program Director will make this determination as part of the student's performance improvement plan.

## Academic Dismissal

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 graduate or 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 graduate 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

**Master of Science in Psychology:** Students enrolled in this program who receive two final course grades of C+ or below will be dismissed from the program.

### Other Master's Degree Programs (M.A. & M.S.):

30-36 credits: Students enrolled in master's programs requiring between 30-36 credits who receive one final course grade of C+ or below for three graduate courses (9 credits) will be dismissed from the program.

42-48 credits: Students enrolled in master's programs requiring 42-48 total credits who receive four final course grades of C+ or below or (12 credits) will be dismissed from the program.

## School of Education and Human Development

### Certificate Programs and Graduate Teacher and Administrative

**Certifications:** Students enrolled in a certification bearing program requiring 16 or fewer credits who receive one final course grade of C+ or below will be dismissed from the program. Students enrolled in a certificate or certification program requiring 18-30 credits who receive two final course grades of C+ or below will be dismissed from the program.

## School of Health Professions

See MSPAS Program Policies (p. 4).

## Graduate Appeal of Academic Dismissal

A formal written appeal may be submitted to the Graduate 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.

## Graduate 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 Graduate 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 Graduate 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 Graduate Arts and Sciences graduate program due to failure to meet academic standards or because of an academic integrity violation may not reapply to any graduate 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 Graduate 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

Undergraduate and graduate 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 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 (<https://sju.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/1942/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet/?ID=51080>) for 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](mailto: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) (<http://sju.edu/sap/>).

## Satisfactory Academic Progress

### Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

In addition to the academic levels of progress outlined in the Policy, graduate 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.

## MSPAS Program Policies

### Academic Standing

Students are placed into one of the following two categories based upon their academic performance:

#### 1. In Good Standing:

- Has completed satisfactorily the requirements of all courses of all previous semesters
- Is passing all courses in which they are enrolled
- Is not on probation for either academic or professional reasons

#### 2. Not in Good Standing:

- Has not fulfilled the requirements of one or more courses of a previous semester
- Is not passing one or more courses in which they are enrolled
- Is on academic or professional probation

## Academic Probation

Any student whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below a 3.00 or receives one course grade below a 70% (C) will be notified that they will be placed on programmatic academic probation and referred to the Student Progress Committee.

**Note: Once a student is placed on programmatic academic probation, that student will maintain this probationary status until graduation. A student can only be on programmatic academic probation one time during the course of the program, a second failed course for any reason, or more than 2 semesters (consecutive or nonconsecutive) with a cumulative GPA below 3.0 is grounds for dismissal from the program. This includes failure of a clinical rotation for any of the above stated reasons.**

**Therefore, a student is only afforded the opportunity to remediate one course throughout the entire duration of the program.**

The student may be asked to appear before the Student Progress Committee within fifteen (15) business days of the notification. The Student Progress Committee, with assistance from the Course Director and the student's faculty advisor, will review the student's case and create a contract with the student, setting forth the terms of probation. This contract will need to be signed by the student and kept on file within the PA program. The student will need to maintain compliance with the contract to allow the student to demonstrate competency in all required areas, if applicable.

All didactic phase courses must be satisfactorily completed before the student is allowed to progress into the clinical phase.

- Students who fail to meet the terms of the contract of probation within the designated time frame will be dismissed from the program
- Students who do not achieve a grade of "C" or better in any repeat of a PHA course will be dismissed from the program
- A student cannot go on programmatic academic probation twice for a GPA less than 3.0 and a failed course, or two failed courses. In the event that a student meets both criteria of a GPA < 3.0 and a failed

course, or two failed courses that student will be recommended for dismissal from the program.

Students may only be placed on programmatic academic probation once during the entirety of the program. If it is required that a student be placed on programmatic academic probation for a second time in either the didactic or clinical phase of the PA program, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Depending on the state, the status of being placed on academic probation may be required to be documented on the student's records when applying for licensure.

For additional details, please refer to the PA Student Handbook.

## Academic Dismissal

Failure to meet conditions for removal from programmatic academic or professional/behavioral probations or being placed on either probation status more than once while enrolled in the program, will result in dismissal from the PA program. Please see the previous sections for a more in-depth discussion. Dismissal is effective upon the receipt of the letter of notification from the Program Director. If a student is dismissed, their registration for courses will be voided and tuition for such courses shall be refunded, as per University policy.

For additional details, please refer to the PA Student Handbook.

## Academic Grade Appeals

Students and course directors occasionally disagree on final course grades. Sometimes this is the result of a mathematical error on the part of the course director; an issue that can readily be resolved by the student taking the relevant exam to the course director or otherwise pointing out the error. The course director then acts to change the erroneous grade. Sometimes the student and the course director disagree on a substantive issue, such as the evaluation of an exam answer or the course letter grade. The student should first think through the grade and ensure that they can identify the nature of the disagreement clearly. The student should then make an appointment with the course director and discuss the issue. In this way almost all disagreements can be resolved.

For additional details on the Grade Appeals Process, please refer to the PA Student Handbook.

## Requirements for Progression within the Didactic Phase

A PA program student must complete the following requirements by the end of each semester in which they occur in order to complete the PA program:

1. PHA courses must be passed with a minimum grade of 70% (C)
2. Satisfactory completion of all written and/or practical Summative exams with a minimum grade of 70% (C)
3. Remediation of any grade below a 70% (C) on a written, practical, or combination examination will be required. The contents will be determined by the Course Director(s)
4. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required for progression within the program. See section regarding programmatic academic probation in Student Handbook
5. Demonstration of required skills necessary for clinical practice as determined by the program

6. Compliance with all policies of the Saint Joseph's University and the PA program
7. Compliance with the Professional/Behavioral Performance Standards in this section, and Standards of Conduct for the PA student located in the General Information section of Student Handbook
8. Satisfactory completion of BLS/ACLS

Deadlines for completion of all Didactic Phase requirements must be completed by the end of each semester in which they occur. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in delayed graduation, dismissal from the program, or need to take leave of absence (if applicable – see corresponding section of the PA Student Handbook).

All didactic phase courses must be satisfactorily completed before the student is allowed to progress into the clinical phase.

## Requirements for Progression within the Clinical Phase

In addition to the requirements for promotion within the didactic phase, a PA program student must complete the following requirements by the end of each semester in which they occur in order to complete the PA program:

1. Satisfactory remediation for a grade below 65% (scaled score, or below "Satisfactory Medical Knowledge" on any PAEA end of rotation examination
2. Satisfactory remediation for a grade below 70% (C) on any other examination
3. Preceptor evaluations must be passed (graded) with a minimum grade of 80% (B)
4. Each PHA course/rotation must be passed with a minimum grade of 70% (C)
5. Demonstration of proficiency of all required skills necessary for clinical practice as determined by the PA program
6. Compliance with policies of the Saint Joseph's University and the PA program
7. Compliance with the Behavioral Standards and Professional Performance Standards contained in the Student Handbook

Deadlines for completion of all Clinical Phase requirements must be completed by the end of each semester in which they occur. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in delayed graduation, dismissal from the program, or need to take leave of absence (if applicable – see corresponding section of the PA Student Handbook).

## Requirements for Graduation

The PA program and the University will review all student records prior to graduation. Any outstanding financial balance must be reconciled with the University prior to graduation.

Students must fulfill all PA department and University requirements before being awarded a diploma and to be eligible for the PANCE examination. Specific requirements include:

1. Satisfactory completion of all Saint Joseph's University PA courses
2. Satisfactory completion of all courses in the curriculum with a grade of 70% (C) or better
3. Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00

4. Satisfactory completion of a comprehensive summative end of curriculum written examination, with a score of "Satisfactory Medical Knowledge" or better
5. Satisfactory completion of a comprehensive Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE)
6. Completion of the PA Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT) examination, twice
7. Compliance with behavioral and professional performance standards
8. Successful completion of comprehensive clinical skills evaluation
9. Successful completion of Capstone Project
10. All registrar and student health holds must be lifted

Deadlines for completion of all requirements for graduation must be completed by the end of each semester in which they occur. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in delayed graduation, dismissal from the program, or need to take leave of absence (if applicable – see corresponding section of the PA Student Handbook).

## Deceleration Policy

For additional detail, please see the PA Student Handbook.

Deceleration is the loss of a PA student from their entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the PA program. The Saint Joseph's University PA Program curriculum is designed to be delivered and completed on a full-time basis and allows for deceleration ONLY during a temporary separation from the university (leave of absence).

Deceleration may occur for the following reason:

- Deceleration secondary to a university-approved temporary separation (leave of absence) request. Depending on the terms of the request, a student may be able to take a leave of absence and join the following cohort at the beginning of the semester that the student exited during the year prior. If this occurs, it is required that the student audit all coursework that precedes this point within the next academic calendar year.
  - Of note, an audit of a semester may require additional tuition and fees.
- During the semester audit, the student is required to participate in all course work, exams, practicals, skills, OSCEs, assignments, and other assessments and follow all required due dates/times. Failure to comply with may result in a professionalism review and recommendation for professional probation.
- It is important to note, no new grades will be submitted to the registrar based on the outcome of any assignments/assessments during an audited semester. During a semester audit, the student is not permitted to retake any PHA level course for a new grade.
- At the time of official re-entry, the student must successfully complete a comprehensive examination which demonstrates competency in all preceding coursework to be eligible to restart. If required, the student will be provided one attempt to remediate an initial failure of the comprehensive examination to demonstrate competency.

Under no other circumstances will a student be allowed to decelerate.