

FACULTY GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC APPEALS IN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Approved By the Administrative Boards of the College of Arts and Sciences

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is committed to helping each student reach his or her full academic potential. Students are encouraged to give thoughtful consideration to their academic and personal goals leading them to take responsibility for their academic choices and decisions. The student's academic transcript is the official record of his/her academic achievement and progress. As such, any changes to the record are approached with caution. Nevertheless, on occasion, student academic performance is affected by circumstances beyond one's control. The University has authorized an academic appeals process to consider and act in these circumstances. The deans in each school have been given the authority to oversee this academic appeals process. The ultimate goals of this process are to promote student success and respond to student needs while maintaining academic integrity and equity.

Within the College of Arts and Sciences, the academic appeals process will be administered by the Office of Undergraduate Education. The faculty guidelines contained in this document will guide all decisions. This document will be reviewed periodically by the Administrative Board.

Course Drops

The following are appropriate grounds for submitting a request to withdraw from a course after the published drop deadline: serious illness, family-related illness, personal or family problems/emergencies, financial problems requiring employment, or other serious problems that prevent students from meeting their academic responsibilities.

Course drops may be granted when students present compelling explanations of the difficulties that kept them from meeting their academic obligations. Requests to drop for medical reasons must be accompanied by verification from a campus or other licensed medical provider, including an evaluation of the severity of the problems. In the case of financial difficulties or employment obligations, the student must present corroborating documentation.

Course drops should be granted only for extenuating circumstances that are beyond the student's control. Students must make a direct connection between those circumstances and their performance in the particular class and should also mention any steps they took to resolve the situation, including speaking with the course instructor, working with tutors, counselors, doctors or therapists, reducing work hours, and/or seeking other support or relief.

If a student has been approved for a course drop or withdrawal in the past, the reasons for a new request should be significantly different than the previous circumstances. Only in very rare instances should students be approved to drop more than one course. Students also have the option of withdrawing from the term. If a student is permitted to drop below 9 academic hours in any semester, that term will not be counted as a semester in residence.

For retroactive course drops, students should generally not be approved to drop courses they have passed with a C or better. In general, selective drops of some courses and retention of other courses in or across terms is not encouraged. The totality of the academic record will be considered to evaluate these requests.

Consequences of Dropping Below Twelve Hours

Students who request late course drops might not be aware of the potential consequences of their request. Dropping courses may leave students academically ineligible (insufficient number of hours passed or impact on completion rate) or in need of extra semesters or summer school to ensure academic eligibility or normal progress toward graduation.

Dropping below twelve hours during a fall or spring semester may yield additional complications, including possible loss of scholarships, loans, or financial aid (including possibly having to pay back money already spent), loss of medical insurance coverage, reduced veterans benefits, or affected International Visa status. Students should investigate these possibilities before requesting the course drop(s).

Transferring to Part-time Classroom Studies

Please note that Part-Time Classroom Studies is only an option for students admitted as part-time, degree seeking (<https://admissions.unc.edu/apply/types-of-applications/part-time-classroom-studies/>). Full-time undergraduate students who wish to reduce their courseload should contact their advisor for assistance.

~~Students who are unable to carry at least twelve hours during a spring or fall semester may consider transferring to Part-Time Classroom Studies (PTCS). This is a particularly good option for students who must support themselves financially and whose employment hours interfere with class scheduling and/or with fulfilling the academic obligations of a full-time course load. It may also be an option for students with chronic medical or personal/family issues. Students may request transfer to Part-Time Classroom Studies by seeing a full-time academic advisor or a dean before November 1 in the fall or April 1 in the spring. Students must be in good standing to transfer to Part-Time Classroom Studies.~~

~~Generally, students who request a transfer to Part-time Classroom Studies through the Academic Advising Program may not transfer back to full-time status until they have been away from the College of Arts and Sciences for a fall and a spring term. Students in PTCS as a result of academic probation status should consult the Office of Undergraduate Retention regarding the best time to return to full-time student status.~~

Retroactive Semester Withdrawals

A retroactive withdrawal of an entire semester is an alteration of the historical record. As such, it may be granted only when a student presents a very compelling reason of extenuating circumstances for his/her failure to meet academic responsibilities—for example, the death of a loved one, severe medical (including physical and psychological) problems, or other extreme situations. Written documentation from qualified professionals or employers must be provided. A request to withdraw for medical reasons should be accompanied by medical documentation and an evaluation of the severity of the problems by Campus Health Services, by Counseling and Psychological Services, or by a licensed medical provider in the community.

Sometimes students stop attending classes and as a result have all ABs or FAs on their record. In this case, students must explain why they did not seek withdrawal in a timely manner. Documentation of the circumstances or proof of leaving campus is required.

The Appeals Committee may consider in their decision-making whether the student has taken responsibility for addressing the issues that caused his or her poor performance. They may also consider whether the student has made an attempt to improve his or her academic record via subsequent coursework and whether he/she has made a turnaround in academic performance. If a student has been granted a previous retroactive semester withdrawal, he or she is not likely to be granted a second request for similar reasons.

Academic Eligibility Policy

All undergraduate, degree-seeking students enrolled at the University during or after the Fall 2016 term are required to meet certain academic eligibility standards to guide students toward timely degree completion.

Academic status is determined through four standards of satisfactory academic progress:

1. ***Grade Point Average.***

A cumulative UNC-Chapel Hill grade point average of at least a 2.000 is required.

2. ***Completion Rate.***

Students must successfully complete at least 2/3 of cumulative attempted credit hours. By-Exam (BE) and credits transferred in to UNC-Chapel Hill count as both attempted and completed hours. Withdrawals, temporary grades including AB, IN, or SP, and failed courses count as attempted hours but not completed hours.

Completed Hours/Attempted Hours = Completion Rate.

3. ***Cumulative Hours Passed.***

To enroll in courses, students must have earned the following:

- After one full-time semester: 9 academic hours
- After two full-time semesters: 24 academic hours
- After three full-time semesters: 36 academic hours
- After four full-time semesters: 51 academic hours
- After five full-time semesters: 63 academic hours
- After six full-time semesters: 78 academic hours
- After seven full-time semesters: 93 academic hours

Transfer students who transfer in the UNC-Chapel Hill equivalent of two or more semesters may enroll in up to 10 total semesters. Students who enter as first years are required to apply for a ninth or tenth semester.

4. ***Maximum Timeframe.***

Students must complete their degree within 180 attempted credit hours.

These standards are reviewed at the end of fall, spring, summer I, and summer II terms. Academic status indicates eligibility to enroll in any course in any term, including summer.

There are four academic statuses: good standing, warning, suspension, and probation.

- Students who meet each of the four standards at the end of an enrolled term will have an academic status of **good standing**.
- Students who begin an enrolled term in good standing but do not meet each of the four standards at the end of that enrolled term will receive an academic status of **warning**. Students with a status of warning may enroll in courses and must complete an academic intervention plan.
- A student who begins an enrolled term with a status of warning and falls short of the standards at the end of that enrolled term will earn an academic status of **suspension**. Students with an academic status of suspension cannot enroll in any courses in any terms. Students with an academic status of suspension may take some time away from the University or appeal for **probation**.

Requesting Probation

Suspended students with extraordinary circumstances may appeal for Probation to the Office of Undergraduate Retention. Probation may be granted to students presenting medical, psychological, financial or personal difficulties. The request for Probation must include a letter of appeal that contains a compelling explanation for the student's poor academic performance in the preceding term as well as an explanation of why the student believes he or she should be granted a probationary term. This request should be accompanied by supporting documentation, if appropriate (such as documentation from Campus Health Services or other records). The request should also be accompanied by the student's plan of action for the upcoming term if he or she is granted a term of Probation. In the rarest of cases, a student who has just completed a probationary term may appeal for an additional term of Probation after demonstrating significant academic improvement that results in the ability to restore to Good Standing within one additional term.

Appeals for probation are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with consideration to the following guidelines:

- Student should have a cumulative GPA above 1.9 and/or ability to restore to Good Standing within one term.
- Demonstrated academic improvement.
- Completion of previous academic intervention(s). Students requesting probation should have completed the appropriate academic intervention for students on Warning or Probation during the respective term.
- Engaged with resources and support.
- Submits a specific and reasonable Plan of Action for returning to Good Standing.
- Demonstrated resolution of problems that led to poor academic standing.
- Productive use of time away from the University, if appropriate.

Note:

The probationary status is valid in the specific term for which it is granted only. If a student is approved for Probation then withdraws during the probationary term for any reason, the student would be required to submit a new appeal to be considered for enrollment in any future term.

Grade Protest

A student who feels he or she has been awarded an incorrect grade should first attempt to resolve the matter with the instructor concerned. If this fails to result in a satisfactory agreement, the student should contact either the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Department Chair for assistance. If then the grade cannot be resolved at the departmental level, the student may submit of a letter of appeal to the Associate Dean of the Academic Advising Program no later than the last day of classes of the following (fall or spring) semester. The student should attach a copy of the course syllabus, copies of all graded work, and any other documentation he/she feels is relevant to their case. The Appeals Committee of the Administrative Boards meets several times per semester to review such cases. If the student has made a compelling argument about a change in his/her final grade, the Appeals Committee will request that the chair of the department concerned appoint a committee to review the student's argument and all submitted evidence. The departmental committee may consult with the course instructor, the student, and appropriate others concerning the student's allegations, attendance and performance. The departmental committee will then make a recommendation to the department chair, the chair will act accordingly, and will send the report back to the Associate Dean of the Academic Advising Program. The Appeals Committee of the Administrative Boards will make the final determination as to the final grade.

For a grade change to be considered, it must be based upon one or more of the following grounds and upon allegation that the ground or grounds cited influenced the grade assignment:

- Arithmetic or clerical error
- Arbitrariness, possibly including discrimination based upon race, sex, religion, or national origin of the student
- Personal malice
- Honor Court sanction

Non-traditional Readmission

Students who do not meet the GPA requirements for traditional readmission and who have not been enrolled at Carolina or at any other college or university as a full-time student for five calendar years may request non-traditional readmission through the Associate Dean of the Academic Advising Program. Students should submit a typed statement indicating their intention to return as a non-traditional readmit, the semester for which they would like to resume enrollment under this option, an explanation of their prior academic performance, an explanation of how they have gainfully used their time out of school, and some documentation of recent academic success. The latter can include approved summer school classes or Carolina Courses Online through the Friday Center for Continuing Education, or, secondarily, evidence of successful academic performance at other colleges or universities. Students should have met with an academic advisor to consider their progress toward the degree and the appropriateness of the intended major.

Students who are granted non-traditional readmission retain credit hours toward graduation for all transfer and BE coursework and for all Carolina courses completed with grades of C or higher (not C-). Any courses that have been passed at Carolina will be considered to fulfill general education and major requirements, but courses in which the student earned a C-, D+ or D will not be counted as hours toward graduation. Students will be granted a new semesters- in-residence count based on the number of credit hours they retain. Their cumulative GPA will begin to be calculated anew beginning with the term of their non-traditional readmission. Students granted non-traditional readmissions are not eligible for graduation with distinction. Students who lose their academic eligibility as a non-traditional readmit must then meet the current academic eligibility requirements before they will be permitted to continue their enrollment at the University. A non-traditional readmission is granted only once.

Approved Underloads

Students with major medical problems that interfere with their ability to maintain a full-time enrollment may request a medical underload for a semester, an academic year, or on a continuing basis. Students initiate this request with Campus Health Services or Counseling and Psychological Services, ideally before classes start for a term, but no later than two weeks into the semester. The Vice Chancellor for Campus Health Services (or his/her designee) will review these requests and, if deemed appropriate, will send a letter recommending an approved underload to the Associate Dean for Academic Advising Programs. The Associate Dean will inform the student of the approved medical underload.

Students with approved medical underloads may see a dean at any point up through the last day of classes to drop a course or courses during the approved terms. The student should be counseled that if he/she drops below twelve hours, his/her financial aid, insurance coverage, veterans' benefits or visa status may be affected. In rare instances, students with approved medical underloads will be allowed to drop below 9 credit hours during a fall or spring term. Students who do drop below twelve hours may face academic ineligibility and/or may need to attend summer school or complete Carolina Courses Online in order to maintain appropriate academic progress.