

## SCHOOL POLICY

**Section Title:** Academic Matters

**Policy Name:** Academic Standing

**Responsible Executive:** Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs

**Responsible Office:** Office of the Registrar

**Originally Adopted:** 07/10/2013

**Revisions:** 09/23/2013, 01/15/2014, 12/08/2016, 06/08/2017

### I. PURPOSE

This policy defines the minimum academic standing for all Rutgers School of Public Health matriculated students.

### II. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Chair of the Academic Progression Committee and the Office of the Registrar are responsible for implementing this policy under the general direction of the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs.

### III. APPLICABILITY

Sound academic principles require that students be required to maintain a minimum level of academic standing. The standards of Academic Standing measure a student's performance in four areas: cumulative grade point average (GPA), the number of credits earned bearing grades of less than a B (3.0), performance in required courses and completion of degree requirements within a maximum time allowance. The Academic Progression Committee shall evaluate each matriculated student's academic standing at the end of each term. Students who fail to maintain a minimum level of academic standing may be placed on probation, or may be suspended or dismissed, in accordance with the policies of the School. Academic Standing for both part-time and full-time matriculated students will be evaluated under the criteria given below.

#### A. Grade Point Average (GPA)

Matriculated students who have earned 9 credits or more are required to maintain a minimum GPA of least 3.0 for Masters degrees (both MPH and MS) and Certificates; and at least 3.2 overall and 3.2 in the set of required courses specified by their department for Doctoral degrees.

#### B. Number of Credits Earned Bearing Less Than a B

Matriculated students are normally expected to earn grades of "B" (3.0) or better in their coursework. No more than nine (9) credits bearing grades less than B (3.0) may be used in meeting the requirements for an MPH or a doctoral degree; and no more than six (6) credits bearing grades less than B (3.0) for an MS degree. A student who is placed on academic probation because they have earned too many grades below a B (3.0) should meet with his/her academic advisor to identify an appropriate remediation plan. The academic advisor

will identify one of the classes for which the student earned a grade of less than B (3.0) that they should repeat. With the approval of the course instructor, the student shall register for a 3-credit Independent Study with the course instructor, retake the identified class, and the grade that is earned the second time will be the grade earned for the 3-credit Independent Study for which the student has registered with that course instructor. If the student earns a grade of B (3.0) or better in that class, they will be removed from Academic Probation. The academic advisor must send a note to the relevant staff member in the Office of Student Affairs describing the remediation plan and the note will be placed in the student's file. This remediation plan will result in the student earning more than the minimum number of credits toward the degree. Courses for which a student does not earn credit because they received a failing grade (F or 0 credits) do not count toward the number of credits earned bearing less than a B. Remediation for failing grades is addressed below.

#### C. Performance in Required Courses

Students who fail a required course (i.e., receive or earn a grade of F) must repeat the course and receive a passing grade if they wish to remain in the School. Upon receipt of a failing grade, an immediate appointment must be made with the faculty advisor for counseling. (The grade of F remains on the transcript and is averaged into the GPA, as well as the second grade received for the course.)

#### D. Maximum Time Allowances for the Completion of Degree Requirements

"Maximum time frame" is defined by the School as the maximum number of years a student may attempt courses in the pursuit of a degree or certificate at the School of Public Health. The Academic Progression Committee shall evaluate whether each student has made adequate progress toward his/her degree or certificate according to the following schedule.

The maximum time frames for all matriculated students (full-time and part-time) are as follows:

	Maximum Time From Matriculation in a Certificate or Degree Program to Graduation
Certificate (15 credits)	2 years
Master of Science in Biostatistics (30 credits)	4 years
Master of Science in Health Outcomes, Policy, and Economics (40 credits)	5 years
Master of Public Health (45 credits)	6 years
Doctoral Degrees (72 credits)	9 years

Additional requirements for doctoral students: A doctoral student should complete and pass the Qualifying Exam and be admitted to candidacy within three (3) years of admission, complete the dissertation proposal defense within one (1) year of candidacy (passing of the qualifying exam); and defend the dissertation within nine (9) years of admission. A doctoral student's entire course of study, including dissertation research and defense must be completed within nine (9) years of admission to the Doctoral Program.

Semesters on leave and those devoted to study at other institutions for a dual degree or at external scholarly programs are not included in these time allowances.

#### E. Notification of Lack of Academic Standing

The Chair of the Academic Progression Committee shall transmit written notification to all students who have not met the standards for Academic Standing, with copies to the Department Chair, the Department support staff, the Office of the Registrar, and the relevant Office of Student Affairs staff member. The notification shall indicate the nature of the deficiency, any methods that may be available for correcting the deficiency, and any consequences that have resulted or may result, such as probation, suspension or dismissal.

#### F. Academic Probation

If a matriculated student, after earning 9 credits, is assessed as being in academic difficulty because they have a GPA of less than 3.0 (or 3.2 overall for doctoral students and 3.2 in the set of required courses specified by their department for doctoral students); because they have exceeded the maximum acceptable number of credits earned bearing less than a B; because they have failed a required course, or they have exceeded the maximum allowable time to complete degree requirements, the Academic Progression Committee is empowered to place them on academic probation, or to recommend dismissal. The student will be allowed to remain on academic probation for nine (9) more credits, or one (1) calendar year, whichever comes first, in order to remediate the specific academic difficulty. No one will be permitted to remain on academic probation for more than one calendar year unless, in the judgment of the Academic Progression Committee, the remediation is likely to be achievable in the near future. The Academic Progression Committee may recommend that students limit the number of credits registered in subsequent semesters in order to allow students ample opportunity to remediate the academic deficiency. Students on academic probation due to GPA or grades may not register for the Practicum or Dissertation Research.

#### G. Review of Students on Academic Probation

The Academic Progression Committees shall specifically review the progress of students who have been previously placed on academic probation and shall remove students from probation if they have achieved a GPA of 3.0 (or 3.2 overall and 3.2 in the set of required courses specified by their department for doctoral students) or have remedied such other academic deficiency that led to academic probation.

#### H. Dismissal or Withdrawal

If a student fails to remediate the specific academic difficulty for which he/she was placed on academic probation, after being on probation for nine (9) credits or one calendar year, whichever comes first, the Academic Progression Committee shall normally recommend dismissal. However, the Academic Progression Committee in its judgment may make exceptions if it judges that remediation is feasible in the near future.

The Chair of the Academic Progression Committee shall forward recommendations for dismissal to the affected student by registered mail, return receipt requested with a copy to the Department Chair, the department support staff, the Office of the Registrar, and the relevant Office of Student Affairs staff member. The letter shall state the reason for dismissal, and shall provide notification that the student shall not be allowed to register in the next academic term; if the student is currently enrolled, it shall advise the student to withdraw with a promise of full refund of tuition. The right to lodge a written appeal of the dismissal decision within four weeks of the date of the dismissal letter shall be explicitly mentioned in the letter. Instructions to send the appeal to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the relevant Office of Student Affairs staff member shall be included.

### I. Appeal for Reinstatement

Students who wish to dispute a recommended dismissal may appeal to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs in writing with a copy to the relevant Office of Student Affairs staff member within four weeks of the date of the dismissal letter. Upon receipt of a timely written appeal, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall schedule a meeting for the student with an *ad hoc* faculty review committee at which the student may present his/her reasons why the dismissal should be reversed. The *ad hoc* committee shall be composed of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, a member of the Academic Progression Committee, and one other faculty member who is not a member of the Academic Progression Committee (both to be selected by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs). The decision of the *ad hoc* Committee either for or against dismissal shall be communicated to the student promptly after it is made. If the recommendation is in favor of dismissal, it shall be communicated to the student in writing by certified mail, return receipt requested. This notice shall indicate that the student has 10 working days from the date the notice is mailed to submit a further written appeal to the Dean of the Rutgers School of Public Health.

### J. Documentation

Documentation of decisions concerning probation, dismissal, appeal, or re-establishment of Academic Standing shall be recorded in the meeting minutes of the Academic Progression Committees and shall be transmitted to the affected student and maintained in the student academic file at the School of Public Health in accordance with Rutgers University record retention requirements.

### K. Dissemination

This policy shall be published in the same manner as other academic policies of the School, including online publication and inclusion in all new editions of the School Bulletin following adoption of the most recent policy amendment.

### L. Standards for Academic Standing Established upon Matriculation

Standards for Academic Standing distributed to a student upon matriculation are applicable for the duration of the student's continuous matriculation in the same program, unless any changes in standards are adopted.