

## **SCHOOL POLICY**

**Section Title:** Academic Matters

**Policy Name:** Academic Standing

**Responsible Executive:** Associate Dean for Academic 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, 04/28/2021, 04/13/2022, 03/22/2023

### **I. PURPOSE**

This policy defines the minimum academic standing for all Rutgers School of Public Health matriculated students (accepted and conditionally accepted), as well as for students accepted into the articulated degree program (BA-BS/MPH).

### **II. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Chair of the Admissions and 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 Affairs.

### **III. APPLICABILITY**

Sound academic principles necessitate 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 Admissions and 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.

#### **A. Matriculated Students (Accepted)**

The Admissions and Academic Progression Committee shall evaluate the academic standing of both part-time and full-time students under the criteria outlined in IV. Standards of Academic Standing.

#### B. Matriculated Students (Conditionally Accepted)

The Admissions and Academic Progression Committee shall evaluate the academic standing of MPH students who have been offered a conditional acceptance at the Rutgers School of Public Health under the criteria outlined in IV. Standards of Academic Standing. Students with a conditional acceptance must demonstrate good academic standing after completing the first 9 credits, but no more than 12 credits, required for their concentration in order to be permitted to continue progressing in the MPH degree program.

If their performance is below the standards of Academic Standing for conditionally accepted students after completing a minimum of 9 credits, but no more than 12 credits, the Admissions and Academic Progression Committee shall evaluate their performance and make a decision on how they may proceed (i.e., remediate courses, take additional courses, transition to a post-baccalaureate certificate program, etc.). Conditionally accepted students will also not be permitted to register for the MPH Applied Practice Experience or the Practicum Capstone until the conditionally accepted student status is removed.

#### C. Articulated Degree Students (BA-BS/MPH)

The Admissions and Academic Progression Committee shall also evaluate the academic standing of articulated degree students (BA-BS/MPH) at the Rutgers School of Public Health. Although these articulated degree students will not be placed on Academic Probation at the School of Public Health, their performance in School of Public Health courses shall be evaluated at the end of each term and, if their performance is below the standards of Academic Standing for matriculated MPH degree students, they will receive a warning letter explaining that they will not be eligible for matriculation in the MPH program at the Rutgers School of Public Health, if they do not meet these standards. In addition, they will be reminded that only grades of B (3.0) or better earned in School of Public Health courses while matriculated at their undergraduate institution will be applied to their MPH degree.

### IV. STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC STANDING

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

Matriculated students (accepted and conditionally accepted) 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 for doctoral degrees.

Articulated degree students who have earned 3 credits or more are expected to maintain a minimum GPA of least 3.0 for their MPH coursework. Those that do not maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 will receive a warning letter.

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

Matriculated students (accepted) are 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.

Matriculated students (conditionally accepted) are expected to earn grades of “B” (3.0) or better in all of their coursework taken in the first 9 credits, but no more than 12 credits, in order to be permitted to continue progressing in the MPH degree program. If any credits bear grades less than B (3.0) then the Admissions and Academic Progression Committee shall evaluate their performance and make a decision on how they may proceed before progressing in the MPH degree program. (See Section III.C.)

A student who is placed on academic probation because they have earned too many grades below a B (3.0) must meet with their academic advisor to identify an appropriate Academic Recovery Plan. The academic advisor will identify a course in which the student earned a grade of less than B (3.0) that they should repeat for each course where they have earned too many grades below a B (3.0). (The expectation is that required courses with grades below a B (3.0) must be identified by the advisor for the student to repeat.) The student and academic advisor must send the signed Academic Recovery Plan to the Office of the Registrar and the signed Academic Recovery Plan will be placed in the student’s file. This Academic Recovery Plan will result in the student attempting more than the minimum number of credits toward the degree. If the student earns a grade of B (3.0) or better in a class taken for the second time, as approved, they will be removed from Academic Probation, if this satisfies the academic recovery plan. The student will register for and retake the identified class, and the grade that is earned the second time will be calculated into the student’s GPA. The original grade will remain on the transcript with an “R” (Repeat) grade [with no degree credit earned and the original grade will not be calculated into the student’s GPA after the second grade is recorded]. (See policy on Retaking Courses for more information.) 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.

Only MPH coursework where articulated degree students earn grades of B (3.0) or better will be accepted for credit towards the MPH degree at the School of Public Health. Articulated degree students who earn grades of B- (2.75) or lower in MPH coursework taken during their undergraduate program, but still meet standards of Academic Standing for matriculated MPH degree students, must repeat these classes if they matriculate into the MPH program.

#### C. Performance in Required, Selective, and Elective Courses

Students who fail (i.e., receive or earn a grade of F) a required course for their degree or certificate program, including selectives, must repeat the course within one academic year 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 academic advisor for counseling. The original grade will remain on the transcript with an “R” (Repeat) grade [with no degree credit earned and the original grade will not be calculated into the student’s GPA after the second grade is recorded]. (See policy on Retaking Courses for more information.) Failure of a required course, including selectives, for the second time will result in dismissal from the School of Public Health. Students who fail an elective course will be permitted to retake that course for credit one time. Students who fail the same course twice will not be permitted to retake the course again.

#### 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 Admissions and Academic Progression Committee shall evaluate whether each student has made adequate progress toward their degree or certificate according to the following schedule.

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

	Maximum Time From Matriculation in a Certificate/Degree
Certificate (15 credits)	2 years
Master of Science in Biostatistics (30 credits)	4 years
Master of Science in Epidemiology (39 credits)	5 years
Master of Science in Health Outcomes, Policy, and Economics (40 credits)	5 years
Master of Public Health (45 credits)	6 years
Doctor of Philosophy Degrees (72 credits)	7 years
Doctor of Public Health Degrees (48 credits)	7 years

Additional requirements for doctoral students: A doctoral student must 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 seven (7) years of admission. A doctoral student's entire course of study, including dissertation research and defense must be completed within seven (7) years of admission to the Doctoral Program.

A doctoral student may request up to a 90-day extension between the time of advancing to candidacy (passing the qualifying exam) and the defense of the dissertation proposal, with the approval of their Dissertation Chair and the Executive Director for Doctoral Studies. Notification of such an extension must be sent in writing to the Chair of the Admissions and Academic Progression Committee by the Executive Director for Doctoral Studies. All other requests for deviations from the time limits for doctoral students must be made in writing to the Chair of the Admissions and Academic Progression Committee.

Semesters on leave and those devoted to study at other institutions for approved 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 Admissions and 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 Concentration Director/Leader, the academic advisor, the Department administrative staff, the Office of the Registrar, and the Office of Student Affairs. 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 (accepted or conditionally accepted), after earning 9 credits, is assessed as being in academic difficulty because they have a GPA of less than 3.0 (or 3.2 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 Admissions and Academic Progression Committee is empowered to place them on academic probation, or to recommend dismissal, after they have been given an opportunity for remediation. 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 student will be permitted to remain on academic probation for more than one calendar year unless, in the judgment of the Admissions and Academic Progression Committee, the remediation is likely to be achievable in the near future. The Admissions and 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 may not register for the MS Research/Capstone, MPH Practicum Capstone or Doctoral Research.

Articulated degree students who are having academic difficulty will not be placed on Academic Probation at the School of Public Health (this status is reserved for matriculated students only; accepted or conditionally accepted). However, the Admissions and Academic Progression Committee may recommend a decreased MPH course load when taking courses at the School of Public Health. The Admissions and Academic Progression Committee may recommend dismissal from the MPH program if an articulated degree student has not satisfactorily met the standards for Academic Standing in the School of Public Health while an undergraduate student.

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

The Admissions and Academic Progression Committee shall specifically review the progress of students who have been previously placed on academic probation and shall remove students from probation once they have remedied the academic deficiency that led to academic probation.

#### H. Dismissal or Withdrawal

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

The Chair of the Admissions and Academic Progression Committee shall forward the notice of dismissal to the affected student by registered mail, return receipt requested with a copy to the Department Chair, the Concentration Director/Leader, the academic advisor, the department administrative staff, the Office of the Registrar, and the Office of Student Affairs. 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, the letter shall also advise the student to withdraw with a promise of full refund of tuition.

I. Appeal for Reinstatement

Students who wish to dispute a recommended dismissal may appeal the decision by following the procedures listed in the Academic Progression Decision Appeal Policy.

J. Documentation

Documentation of decisions concerning probation, dismissal, appeal, or re-establishment of Academic Standing shall be recorded in the meeting minutes of the Admissions and Academic Progression Committee 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 Catalog 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. If a student leaves a program and returns, the standards in place at the time of return are applicable.

Conditionally accepted students who are accepted into the School of Public Health will be provided with the Academic Standing Policy upon acceptance and will be notified that the conditionally accepted student status is removed after completing the first 9 credits, but no more than 12 credits, required for their concentration is contingent upon having maintained satisfactory Academic Standing in the MPH coursework.

Articulated degree students who are accepted into the School of Public Health will be provided with the Academic Standing Policy upon acceptance and will be notified that movement to matriculated student status after completion of their undergraduate program is contingent upon having maintained satisfactory Academic Standing in the MPH coursework and that School of Public Health coursework completed while an undergraduate will be applied to the MPH degree, if the student has earned a grade of B (3.0) or better (for individual courses).