

University Policy on Satisfactory Graduate Program Progression	Effective date: Fall 2018  Replaces: New
Application: All Master's Programs by NU  Access: Public	Position responsible for facilitating compliance:  Office of the Provost

**Good Standing**

Students are considered to be in good academic standing as long as they have met all of the requirements to continue in the program, have not been placed on academic warning and are permitted by their Dean to remain in a graduate degree program. Students who do not maintain good standing are subject to the following:

**POLICY**

Students enrolled in Master's programs must meet all the following criteria to advance in their programs of study:

1. Maintain an overall Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) of not less than 3.0. Students who do not meet this criterion will not be eligible to continue in the program and will be subject to the process identified below;
2. Successfully complete all coursework;
3. Maintain the professional and ethical standards of the profession, the College, and the accrediting agencies as applicable to the specific program of study.

**I. Grievances Specifically Excluded from this Process**

- a. Complaints directly related to Academic Integrity, Grade Appeal, Student Grievance, Student Code of Conduct, Student-Athlete Code of Conduct, and matters controlled by NUSGA bylaws are exempt from this policy and should be resolved via the procedures in the relevant policies and controlling documents.
- b. Students concerned that their lack of progress was based in part or wholly on the basis of discrimination based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation, military status, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, marital status, or other status, should consult the Title IX Coordinator before taking any action under this policy.

**III. Oversight of the Graduate Student Eligibility Policy**

If any situation occurs that is not covered in the procedure of this policy, the Academic Dean of the College in which the program resides, in consultation with the Provost, will issue guidance consistent

with the overall fair and respectful spirit of the policy. This decision regarding the procedure to be followed will be final.

#### **IV. Revision of this Policy**

Any revision of this policy must be approved by the Provost in consultation with the Academic Deans for each College and from the Academic Senate.

#### **V. General Student Guidelines**

1. Under no circumstances should a parent, friend, fellow student, or other individual be authorized by the student to contest a dismissal on his or her behalf;
2. To demonstrate adherence to deadlines, students are required to make requisite submissions via official Niagara University e-mail accounts.

#### **Procedure**

1. Notification to all students of the policy in effect for the Fall 2018 semester. Email sent to all students and placed in the course catalog online (and in print as new catalogs are printed)
  2. At the end of the semester, Information Technology would run a report of all graduate students falling below the 3.0 threshold, along with number of below B- students had received. This would be a master report generated by Information Technology to the Graduate Studies Designee for the university, to be disseminated to the Deans of each college and then onto the program coordinators as needed. Any violation of ethical standards shall be reported to the Dean. (Note- Each program may have specific requirements that need to be taken into account regarding their program and this procedure recognizes the need for those specific requirements).
  3. Requirements regarding what is expected are listed below, with the expectation that the Dean of the College and the program coordinators meet to determine appropriate course of action.
  4. All letters regarding warnings and dismissals would disseminate from the Dean's office, following the approval of both the dean and program director of the necessary step.
  5. A committee of the Associate Deans or Dean's designee for each college would need to be created to meet to handle any appeals regarding the new policy. The requirements of the policy are listed below.
  6. If no appeal is requested by the student within 10 university days, the dean will notify the Registrar of the Dismissal of the student.
  7. The Registrar will note Dismissal on the transcript.
- I. **Actions Resulting in Warning and/or Dismissal**
- i. **Failure to achieve a minimum G.P.A. of 3.0 in each semester of study**

Students will be reviewed for satisfactory academic progress after attempt of nine (9) graduate credit hours. If the student's GPA is below a 3.0, the student will be placed on Academic Warning. A student who is placed on academic warning must, during the next nine (9) attempted credit hours of study, raise his or her **overall** GPA to a minimum of 3.0. This may require students to retake certain courses. Students may, in accordance with the Graduate Course Retake Policy, repeat up to a maximum of 2 courses. This policy does not replace the requirement to maintain a minimum 3.0 overall GPA.

If the student's GPA is still below a 3.0 after eighteen (18) attempted graduate credit hours, the student will be subject to dismissal. Each Dean of a college in which a graduate program is located will review the satisfactory academic progress of his or her graduate students to ensure compliance with this policy.

Students who are below a GPA of 3.0 after nine (9) graduate credit hours of attempted graduate coursework will be notified of their academic status. Students who are below a GPA of 3.0 after eighteen (18) graduate credit hours of attempted graduate coursework will be dismissed, subject to appeal. A notice of dismissal will be provided within 10 university days (counted as Monday through Friday) after the Monday after conferral of degrees that semester. This decision may be appealed in accordance with the Appeal Process listed below. If no appeal, the dean's office will notify the Registrar of the Dismissal of the student.

**ii. Failure to successfully complete all coursework**

A maximum of two (2) final grades below a B- will be permitted. Students who have earned more than two (2) grades below B- must, retake the number of courses required to bring them into compliance with this requirement up to a maximum number allowed under the Graduate Course Retake Policy. Students who do not meet this requirement will not be eligible to continue in the program and will be dismissed from the University. When a student receives a second grade below a B- he or she will be placed on academic warning.

A student who is placed on academic warning must, shall, within the next nine (9) graduate credit hours or at the soonest opportunity, resolve the issue of grades below a B- pursuant to applicable University policies. This policy does not replace the requirement to maintain a minimum 3.0 overall GPA.

If the student has not resolved the issue within the next nine (9) graduate credit hours or at the soonest opportunity, the student will be subject to dismissal. Each Dean of a college in which a graduate program is located will review the program progression of his or her graduate students to ensure compliance with this policy. Students who have not resolved this issue will be dismissed from the University. A notice of dismissal will be provided by the Dean within 10 university days after the Monday after conferral of degrees that semester. This decision may be appealed in accordance with the Appeal Process listed below.

**iii. Maintain all Program Requirements**

Each program shall set its own requirements and standards. As such there may be additional requirements beyond those specifically stated above that must be successfully attained. It is the responsibility of the student to verify program requirements with the Program Director, Chair or Dean. Any violation of the professional and ethical standards of the profession, the College, and the accrediting agencies as applicable to the specific program of study shall be adjudicated by the Dean or the Program Director.

## II. APPEAL PROCESS

### Grounds for Appeal of Dismissal

Grounds for appeal for academic reasons are covered under the Academic Grade Appeal and Academic Integrity Policies. As such, appeals concerning dismissal are restricted to the following two conditions:

- Due process was not followed
- New or mitigating information which may relate to the initial decision to dismiss

### Process for Appeal of Dismissal

The name of a committee tasked with oversight of graduate student satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion will be the Graduate Academic Progress Committee (GAP). This committee will be comprised of five members as follows: One member designated by the Registrar, and the Associate Dean from each college, or Dean's designee, where a conflict may exist. A panel of three members shall constitute a quorum. This hearing committee will elect a chair to communicate the decision of the committee to the student and the Dean of the College which housed the program from which the student was dismissed.

1. Any appeal of a notice of dismissal will be submitted by the student to the Graduate Academic Progress Committee (GAP) for review within 10 university days of the official notice. The appeal shall include an explanatory cover letter and any other relevant materials the student believes will support the claim to have the decision of dismissal reversed;
2. The GAP will notify the Dean of the college from which the student was dismissed, that an appeal and has been filed.
3. The GAP will convene to hear the case within 10 university days of notice;
4. The student and the person given official oversight of the program from which the student was dismissed shall cooperate as needed. The committee may request additional information from any party when making their decision.
5. A decision will be made within 10 university days from the time when the record on appeal is complete. This decision will be forwarded through official University email by the committee chair to the student and the Dean of the College which housed the program from which the student was dismissed;
6. Any appeal of the GAP decision to uphold the dismissal may be submitted by either the student or the Dean of the department from which the student was dismissed, to the Provost for review within 5 university days of the official notice. The appeal shall be submitted to the Dean's office, which will then submit it to the Provost. The appeal shall include an explanatory cover letter and any other relevant materials the student believes will support the claim to have the decision of dismissal reversed. If no appeal of the hearing committee is received by the Dean's office after 5 university days, the Dean's office shall notify the Registrar of the Dismissal of the student, and it shall be noted on the student's transcript.
7. A complete record of materials shall be forwarded by the GAP chair to the Provost.

8. The Provost will review the case and within 10 university days return a decision to the student, the chair of the GAPC and the Dean of the College offering the program from which the student was dismissed.
9. The decision of the Provost is final and will not subject to further appeal.
10. Once a final decision of the appeals process is made, the Dean's office shall notify the Registrar's office of the Dismissal of the student.
- 11.** This Dismissal shall be noted on the student's transcript.