

Academic Policies & Procedures

ACADEMIC STANDING

I. INTRODUCTION

A student's academic standing is subject to university standards and to the policies of the School of Health Technology and Management (SHTM). The dean of the school shall be responsible for final decisions concerning a student's status. A student needs to be in good standing (p. 1) to maintain matriculation within the school's programs. If the student fails to maintain good academic standing, they may be subject to either departmental warning (p. 2), probation (p. 3), suspension (p. 4), reinstatement (p. 6), or termination (p. 6). Students have right of appeal to challenge any change in academic standing (p. 7). In cases of academic dishonesty, see SHTM policy and procedures on academic dishonesty.

II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. GOOD STANDING

A student who meets the following academic standards of the School of Health Technology and Management will be considered to be in good standing:

1. Undergraduate students must maintain a 2.0 minimum overall cumulative grade point average, a 2.5 minimum cumulative grade point average in required professional courses, and, if relevant, a minimum clinical grade point average as determined by the program/department.
 2. Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 overall grade point average.
 3. Students must successfully complete all program courses (e.g., pass all coursework the first time around).
 4. In the course of academic evaluation, students must also demonstrate adherence to professional codes of ethics, sensitivity to patient and community needs, and appropriate professional behavior and demeanor.* This includes the ability to work with and relate to peers and other members of the health care team, attitude, attendance, appearance and punctuality.
- *Examples of inappropriate behavior may include the inability to respond to constructive criticism, failure to recognize the impact of verbal/non-verbal communication without appropriate modification, inaccuracy of self-assessment, and inability to adapt to change.*

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B. DEPARTMENTAL WARNING

Policy

A student who does not meet the standards set forth in Section II.A. 3 shall be given a departmental warning. Depending on the severity of non-compliance with II.A. 4 the student may either receive a departmental warning, or be placed on probation or both. Students who are not in good standing (e.g., failure of a course, inappropriate professional behavior) shall be informed of this difficulty in writing by the program director. This warning does not imply or necessarily preclude suspension and/or probation.

Procedure

1. At intervals within each three month period the program faculty will review each student's academic record and identify students who fail to meet expected professional standards of conduct and/or who are experiencing academic difficulty, by means of faculty consultation, or by means of these academic records.
2. The program director may inform the student in writing of the difficulty and possible consequences, and inform the student of resources available for remediation.
3. The program director will follow up on the student's progress and be available for consultation.
4. A student may receive any number of these "warning" letters from the program director without a change in academic standing.
5. A student may be placed on probation or suspended without receiving prior "warning" letters. Depending on the severity of non-compliance with 1.A. 4 the student may receive a departmental warning and/or probation.

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C. PROBATION

Policy

A student who does not meet the standards set forth in sections II.A. 1 & 2, e.g., a student who does not maintain the minimum grade point average or does not demonstrate appropriate professional behavior shall be placed on probation for an appropriate academic period (ordinarily two modules or one semester, depending on the student's schedule). Depending on the severity of non-compliance with II.A. 4 the student may either receive a departmental warning, or be placed on probation or both. A student who has been placed on probation (e.g., failure of a prerequisite) may not ordinarily be permitted to participate in full-time clinical practice, except under extraordinary circumstances, and upon recommendation by the program director to the dean.

Procedure

1. The program director, acting on information provided by the department faculty, will recommend probation to the dean, by memo, as soon as possible after probation is indicated.
2. The program director's memo to the dean may include:
 - a. the reasons for such action
 - b. the period of time for probation
 - c. the conditions for removal from probationary status
 - d. documentation substantiating the action.
3. After receipt of the program director's recommendation, the dean shall inform the student of the decision and conditions for probation in writing within ten business days. Copies of this letter go to the program director, the Office of Student Services, and the academic standing committee.
4. If the student has met the conditions for removal from probation by the end of the probation period, the program director, with advisement of department faculty, will recommend return to good academic standing to the dean. The dean will then act on this recommendation within ten business days.

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5. If the student has not met the conditions for reinstatement and there is evidence that the student should not be immediately terminated, the program director may choose to recommend to the dean an extension of the probationary period.
6. The student may request extension of probation by petition to the dean who would ordinarily refer this to the academic standing committee for review and recommendation. In this case, the program director would be asked to submit a statement concerning the student.
7. If the student has not met the conditions by the end of the probation period, the student will be subject to termination. (p. 8).

D. SUSPENSION

Policy

A student may be recommended for suspension if the student fails to successfully complete prerequisites for a course or program, as outlined by the SHTM's admission policy. A student may be immediately removed from participation in school activities by a faculty member and recommended for suspension if the student's continued participation appears to be detrimental to the best interests of patients, peers, and/or the programmatic mission and principles of the School of Health Technology and Management. In such cases, the faculty member, after consultation with the program director, will issue a verbal directive to the student, followed by a written statement. Action to determine the student's status should be taken within ten business days of the verbal directive.

Procedure

1. A student may be recommended for suspension by the program director on the recommendation of the department faculty any time there is a serious error in professional judgment on the part of the student (e.g., actions taken by the student that jeopardize patient safety).
2. Whenever possible complete documentation should be kept of any incidents leading to the recommendation for suspension.

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3. The program director's recommendation for suspension must include: a. the reasons for suspension; b. the defined period for suspension, not to exceed one year; and c. the conditions for reinstatement.
4. The dean will review for acceptance, rejection, or modification the program director's recommendation for suspension and inform the student of the decision in writing within ten business days.
5. The program director will review the student's status to ascertain if the conditions are met:
 - a. If the student has met the conditions by the end of the suspension period, the program director may recommend reinstatement to the dean, who will then inform the student of the decision in writing within ten business days
 - b. If the student has not met the conditions for reinstatement by the end of the suspension period, the student will be subject to termination. (p. 6).
 - c. Suspension may be extended by program director's recommendation to the dean, with appropriate documentation to warrant continuation of suspended status. The dean shall notify the student of the extension, the extension period, and the conditions for reinstatement by letter within ten business days.
6. Grades for interrupted courses will be determined for each student on an individual basis by the program faculty for each course. The options are withdrawal, incomplete, or delete.
7. A suspended student ordinarily will not be permitted to participate in any school activities or in the required periods of clinical practice. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the program director.
8. A student may appeal suspension by petitioning the dean, who will ordinarily refer this to the academic standing committee for review and recommendation. In such cases, the student must inform the dean in writing no later than five business days after receipt of written notice of suspended status. In the written letter petitioning the appeal, the student shall state their intention to, and reasons for, the appeal. (p. 7).
9. A suspended student will not be granted a leave of absence except under extenuating circumstances.

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E. REINSTATEMENT

Policy

A student who, by the end of the specified period, satisfies suspension, probationary, or leave of absence criteria imposed by the dean may be reinstated at the end of that period.

Procedure

1. Reinstatement requires a memo from the program director to the dean for recommendation of reinstatement.
2. The dean will advise the student in writing within ten business days of the change in status.
3. Probation - Reinstatement after a probationary period means that the student returns to good standing.
4. Suspension or Leave - Reinstatement after a suspension or leave period means that the student is allowed to register for courses, but may not necessarily be in good standing. The student's academic standing would depend on the conditions for reinstatement, and individual circumstances.

F. TERMINATION

Policy

A student who fails to satisfy the conditions imposed by the dean by the end of the probationary or suspension period will be subject to termination. A student who has been informed that he/she is subject to termination will not be permitted to participate in any school activities pending any appeal process except under extraordinary circumstances as determined by the program director and the dean.

Procedure

1. A student may be recommended for termination by the program director at the close of a probationary, suspension, or leave period if the student has failed to satisfy the conditions for reinstatement.

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2. The program director will inform the dean, in writing within ten business days, that the student has failed to satisfy the conditions for reinstatement and that the student is recommended for termination. The reasons for this decision and the conditions for reinstatement that have not been met shall be provided to the dean by the program director, along with supporting documentation.
3. The dean will inform the student, in writing by certified mail, that termination has been recommended and that the termination will be stayed if the student chooses to exercise the right to appeal. If appeal is elected, the student must do so in writing, stating the reason(s) for the appeal, within ten business days following the student's receipt of the letter from the dean.
4. If the student does not appeal the decision, he/she is terminated automatically by the dean at close of business on the tenth business day following receipt of the dean's certified letter.

G. APPEAL

Policy

If a student wishes to appeal a recommendation made by the program director to the dean, the student must direct a letter stating the reason(s) for the appeal to the dean, who may refer this to the academic standing committee for review and recommendation. If the student wishes to challenge the final decision made by the dean, a further appeal may be directed to the Vice President, Health Sciences Center within ten business days of receipt of the written notice of change in academic standing.

Procedure

1. If the student chooses to appeal a change in academic standing, he/she must inform the dean in writing of the intent, and reason(s) for the appeal, within ten business days of receipt of the dean's certified letter. Reasons for appeal may include the perception by the student that departmental or program policies and procedures were not followed. Appeals will not be granted to those students seeking to challenge course grades, or the validity of exams/exam questions.
2. If the student submits a written request, he/she may be present for the hearing. The student may also bring witnesses and an advisor to the hearing. If such is the intent, the student must inform the chair of the academic standing

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committee in writing no later than five business days before the hearing, identifying the witnesses and advisor by name and title

3. The chair of the academic standing committee will create a hearing board. Hearing boards are made up of individuals on the academic standing committee. A hearing board shall consist of a minimum of five voting members and a hearing officer. Normally the chair of the academic standing committee serves as the hearing officer, except under unusual circumstances (e.g., illness, conflict of interest). In such case, the chair of the academic standing committee will notify the elected alternate hearing officer. In all hearings there will be at least one student and four faculty present as voting members plus the hearing officer. Neither the course instructor nor any faculty member of the department/program from which the termination originated shall be impaneled on the hearing board. When a quorum is not available, hearing boards may be staffed by past members of the committee. In instances where it is impossible to reach a quorum with current or past committee members, *ad hoc* appointees will be determined by the dean.
4. The committee chair will ask the program director to prepare a statement concerning the student's request for appeal and to produce all pertinent documentation and list witnesses, if any.
5. The associate dean for SHTM shall be available to explain process, policy and procedures to any faculty involved in a hearing. The assistant dean for student affairs shall be available to explain process, policy and procedures to the student.
6. The hearing officer will set a time for the hearing at the earliest possible date to allow all concerned parties adequate time for preparation. Unless there are unusual circumstances, the hearing will be scheduled no sooner than five business days, and no later than ten business days after receipt of the student's written notice of intent to appeal.
7. The hearing officer will open the hearing by presenting the program director's written recommendation. The role of the hearing officer shall be to oversee the hearing process, ensure that the policies and procedures of the SHTM governing the process are followed, and ensure that the hearing moves in an orderly manner. As a member of the academic standing committee, the hearing officer may ask questions of principles and witnesses. The hearing officer will participate in the proceedings but cast no vote, except as noted in 10 below.

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8. The student's written statement will explain the grounds of appeal and include any documentation supporting the reason for the appeal.
9. The program director and the student may call witnesses to the appeal hearing if the testimony would prove relevant to the final decision.
10. The advisor may counsel their advisee during the hearing but does not have privilege of the floor.
11. After reviewing all of the evidence and interviewing any witnesses, the hearing board will meet in executive session to review all information presented during the hearing and come to a decision. All decisions of the board shall be by majority of the voting members present; voting shall be by secret ballot. In case of a tie, the hearing officer will cast the deciding vote. The cast vote tally will not be divulged.
12. The chair will inform the dean of the hearing board's recommendation to uphold or deny the student's appeal.
13. Complete records of the hearing shall be kept in the strictest confidence by the chair of the academic standing committee. Indeed, all case-specific activities, correspondence and communication related to the case shall be held in strict confidence by all members of the hearing board at all times both during and after the appeal.

APPEAL DECISION

1. The dean of the School of Health Technology and Management may or may not accept the recommendation of the hearing board and shall inform the student of the final decision in writing within ten business days.
2. Appeal Upheld:

If an appeal results in reversal/reinstatement the student shall be notified by the dean, in writing, within ten business days.

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3. Appeal Denied:

- a. If an appeal from termination is denied, the student shall again be subject to termination. If the student wishes to pursue further appeal, no action will be taken on the student's status until the Vice President, Health Sciences Center has had the opportunity to review the case.
- b. If an appeal from other than termination (e.g., probation, suspension) is denied, the student shall continue their present status until the conditions of probation or suspension are met. A student who fails to satisfy the conditions imposed by the dean by the end of the probationary or suspension period will be subject to termination (p. 6).

H. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Policy

A student may request a leave of absence for medical or personal reasons, but not for longer than one year. A suspended student will not be granted a leave of absence. A student may not be granted more than one leave of absence for other than medical reasons.

Procedure

1. A student requesting a leave of absence, either medical or personal, must do so in writing to the program director.
2. The program director reviews the leave request and makes a recommendation either approving or denying the request to the dean, supplying a copy of the student's letter.
3. The program director's recommendation shall include the following:
 - a. Reason for leave.
 - b. Length of time of the leave, not to exceed one year.

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- c. The date by which the student must inform the program and the dean, in writing of the intent to return (usually one to two months prior to the date of resuming studies).
 - d. Academic standing of the student at the time of leaving and the time of resuming studies.
 - e. Any conditions for reinstatement.
4. The dean shall inform the student, in writing, within ten business days, of the final decision. Copies of this letter are sent to the Office of Student Services and the program director.
 5. Students requesting a leave for medical reasons must also submit a physician's note recommending leave. A physician's note indicating that the student is able to resume studies when the leave is over shall be a condition for reinstatement.
 6. Leave may be extended by the student's petition to the program director, who will review the request and make a recommendation to the dean, as in #3 above, but in no case, will the leave be extended to total more than one year. (Under exceptional circumstances, a medical leave may be extended beyond one year.)
 7. If the conditions for reinstatement are not met by the date indicated, the student will be subject to termination. (p. 6).
 8. Should there be disagreement between the student and the program director concerning the arrangements for leave, the matter shall be referred to the academic standing committee for review and recommendation.

I. WITHDRAWAL

1. Authorized Withdrawal

Withdrawal from the Health Sciences Center, for any reason, will be recorded only when the student requests to withdraw in writing and the program director supports the request. The program director forwards the request to the dean. The date upon which the student requests to withdraw, and not the date of the last documented class attendance, is considered the official day of withdrawal. Non-attendance or notification to the

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instructors does not constitute formal withdrawal. The student must submit the form no later than two modules after the date of the last class attended.

2. Unauthorized Withdrawal

A student who leaves the school without obtaining an official withdrawal may forfeit the privilege of honorable dismissal and the prospect of readmission, and will be reported on the official student transcript as having failed all courses which have not been completed.