

ACADEMIC RULES *And* REGULATIONS

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School of Business

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



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Introduction

The GW School of Business (GWSB) along with the George Washington University (GW) establishes the minimum requirements for the completion and awarding of graduate degrees. Students should familiarize themselves with and are responsible for adhering to all policies and procedures relevant to their pursuit of their graduate degree, including those published in the university and the School of Business Bulletins. Other university policies must also be observed.

A student seeking an exception to a university or School of Business policy due to extenuating circumstances must submit a [Policy Exception Request](#). A policy exception request must be accompanied by documentation of extenuating circumstances. Students should not assume that policy exception requests will be approved. Until a student receives written confirmation that an exception has been approved, the student should operate under the assumption that it will be denied (i.e., the student should continue to attend class, submit assignments, consider alternatives, etc.). Any student who is in doubt about how a policy or procedure applies to her or him should seek clarification from their academic advisor.

The GW School of Business reserves the right to change rules and regulations affecting students as necessary. Unawareness of policy changes will not be accepted as an excuse for failure to act in accordance with them.

Academic Integrity

The Office of Academic Integrity addresses instances of academic dishonesty which take place within the university community, promotes academic integrity through educational initiatives, and administers the university's academic disciplinary procedures detailed within the [Code of Academic Integrity](#). The office works in collaboration with the Academic Integrity Council, a representative body of students and faculty from each academic college, in its facilitation of hearings.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

According to the Code of Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.

Avoiding Plagiarism

All students are strongly encouraged to submit all written work through SafeAssign. SafeAssign is a free plagiarism prevention service that students and faculty may access via GW Blackboard.

Initiating an Academic Integrity Charge

According to the Code of Academic Integrity, it is the moral responsibility but not the sanctioned obligation of each member of the George Washington University community to respond to suspected acts of academic dishonesty by:

1. Consulting the individual(s) thought to be involved and encouraging them to report it themselves, and/or
2. Reporting it to the instructor involved, and/or
3. Reporting it to the Academic Integrity Council.
4. Reporting oneself after committing academic dishonesty is strongly encouraged and may be considered in determining sanctions.

Charges involving violations of the Code of Academic Integrity may be initiated by either faculty, students, librarians or administrators. When charging a student for an academic integrity violation, complainants must sign and submit the [Charge of Academic Dishonesty Form](#) to the Office of Academic Integrity.

The Grading System

Grades and Grading Guidelines

The following grading system is used for graduate students: *A*, Excellent; *B*, Good; *C*, Satisfactory; *F*, Fail; other grades that may be assigned are *A-*, *B+*, *B-*, *C+*, and *C-*. Symbols that may appear include *AU*, Audit; *I*, Incomplete; *IPG*, In Progress; *W*, Authorized Withdrawal; *Z*, Unauthorized Withdrawal; *CR*, Credit; *NC*, No Credit.

Unauthorized Withdrawal

The symbol of *Z* is assigned when students are registered for a course that they have not attended or have attended only briefly, and in which they have done no graded work. At the end of each academic semester, students' records are reviewed; if there is more than one *Z* per semester, a student's record will be encumbered until released by the student's advising office. The symbol of *Z* is not a grade but an administrative notation.

GWSB Grade Distribution Guidelines

The George Washington University School of Business faculty has approved the below grade distribution guidelines for graduate courses taught in the School of Business. For graduate-level coursework (courses numbered 6000 and above) the total number of *A* and *A-* grades for a course should not be over the recommended maximum percentage listed below.

Graduate Courses Maximum Percentage of A and A- Combined

- MBAD Courses: 40%
- Non-MBAD Courses: 50%

Grade Grievance Process

In the event that a student feels that a grade is the result of arbitrary and capricious academic evaluation, a student may pursue resolution through the Grade Grievance Process. Students must follow the grade grievance procedures and meet all of the posted deadlines outlined in the Grade Grievance Policy and below.

Students are responsible for providing adequate written documentation as outlined in the full policy. Only grade disagreements of two levels or more may be submitted to the Dean's Council. For example, a request to have a grade changed from a *B+* to an *A-* (one level) is not material and will not be reviewed, while a request to change a *B+* to an *A* (two levels) is material and will be reviewed by the committee.

A brief overview of the policies and procedures are:

1. Student should seek an acceptable resolution through a discussion with the instructor of the course. This discussion must be initiated within one month of the posting of the course grade.

2. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, student should seek an acceptable resolution through a discussion with the department chair in which the course is held.
3. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, the student should file and submit an official Notification of Grade Grievance Form to the associate dean for Graduate Programs within four months after the student's final course grade has been posted. The notification must include all relevant documentation.
4. The associate dean will be forward all materials submitted to the chair of the GW School of Business Dean's Council, who will appoint a Grade Grievance Hearing Committee within three weeks of receiving the Notification of Grade Grievance Form.
5. The Grade Grievance Hearing Committee will make a final determination regarding the allegation of arbitrary and capricious grading. The committee is the final appellate body for grade grievances in the GW School of Business.
6. If the student believes that in some identifiable manner the procedures detailed above have not been followed by this committee, the student may request in writing (detailing procedural violations) that the GW School of Business Dean's Council review the procedural aspects of the case.

Grade of *F*

A master's degree candidate who receives a grade of F in a core or required course must repeat the course and earn a passing grade on the next attempt; a failed elective must either be repeated or replaced with another. If a master's degree candidate receives a grade of F in a core course on their second attempt, they will be dismissed from their degree program. Students should refer to the requirements of their degree program for additional minimum grade requirements. Once a grade of F is earned in a core, required, or elective course, it remains a part of the student's permanent record and is calculated into the grade-point average.

Incomplete Grades

Students are expected to complete all coursework by the end of the module or semester in which a course is taken. In special circumstances, an instructor may grant a student permission to delay submission of work up to one calendar year after the course ends by recording an Incomplete (*I*). Granting a grade of Incomplete is fully at the discretion of the faculty member teaching the course.

To be considered for a grade of Incomplete, the student must provide a satisfactory explanation to their instructor for their inability to complete the required coursework for reasons beyond their control and an outline as to how they will complete the remaining coursework in a timely manner. The student may request a grade of Incomplete only if their prior performance and class attendance in the course have been satisfactory. If the student fails to request an Incomplete by the date when grades must be turned in, the student's work will be graded based on work completed up to this date.

Coursework must be completed by the date agreed on by the instructor and the student, but no later than one calendar year from the end of the course. When work for the course is completed, the instructor will submit a grade change, and the new grade will replace the symbol of *I* on the

transcript. The symbol of *I* cannot be changed by reregistering for the course at GW or by taking its equivalent elsewhere.

If the coursework is not completed by the deadline, or within one calendar year, whichever comes first, the grade converts to the grade of *F* and will be reflected as *IF* on the student's transcript. Students are then subject to the Grade of F Policy.

This policy will apply whether or not the student has continued to enroll in their graduate program.

Course Audit

Current students may register for a class as audit (no academic credit) with permission of the instructor using a [Registration Transaction Form](#) (RTF). Students may not change from audit to credit status or vice versa after the end of the eighth week of classes. It is important to note that an audit course does not count toward enrollment for financial aid purposes, but students will still be charged for the cost of the class at the prevailing tuition rate.

An auditor is not required to take active part or to pass examinations. Students will not receive a grade for the course. A student who takes a course as an auditor may not repeat it later for credit. Alumni interested in auditing can contact the Alumni Association for more information.

Class Registration

Students are expected to be continuously enrolled and actively engaged in fulfilling the requirements for their graduate degree each semester of the academic year until graduation. A student is considered to be continuously enrolled when registered for courses through the [GWeb Information System](#). The schedule of classes and registration procedures are posted on the Office of the Registrar website, which is available in advance of each semester.

Students are personally responsible for ensuring that their registration is accurate and complete. Students should review their schedules each semester via GWeb to verify their accuracy.

Independent Study

A graduate student of demonstrated capacity, with a special interest in the subject matter of a course, may be permitted to undertake study under the personal direction of an instructor, in accordance with the rules of the appropriate department or degree program. A petition outlining the student's specific study plan must be submitted to the student's degree program director prior to beginning any independent study. The student may petition to complete a maximum of two independent studies in two separate semesters.

Consortium

GW participates in the [Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area](#), which provides students the opportunity to take courses not offered at GW. Consortium registration is not guaranteed — courses may be closed, or subject to approval from the dean/department at the visited institution. Participation in the consortium program is restricted to main campus (Foggy Bottom/Mount Vernon) degree candidates in good academic standing. Non-degree students and students in off-campus programs are ineligible to take courses through the consortium program.

Courses

Enrollment in off-campus (not including distance education/online courses), independent study, study abroad, Canon Law, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Physical Education, and Vocational Theology courses is prohibited. Registration in courses that are the equivalent of a GW course that is being offered in the same semester will not be approved. Except for candidates for the degree of Master of Laws at the George Washington University and Georgetown University, law courses are also excluded from participation. Further restrictions to enrollment may apply. Please contact the consortium coordinator for additional information.

Grades

Courses may only be taken for a grade; they may not be taken on an Audit, Pass/No Pass, or Credit/No Credit basis. Courses will factor into your GW GPA and be considered "resident credit." The course will appear on your transcript and will contain a designation as to where you took the course and the

course title. Graduating students should alert their consortium instructors that they are graduating and that their grades are necessary for degree clearance.

Registration

Students who wish to register for consortium courses should submit a [Consortium Registration Form](#). In addition, a Consortium Equivalent Approval Form is required to determine how the course will apply on DegreeMap. Both forms should be submitted at the same time by the deadline to avoid delays in processing.

The visited school will typically wait until just prior to the start of classes to process Consortium Registration Forms. If special permission is needed, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain written permission from the instructor and submit it with their consortium request.

Students requesting to drop or withdraw from consortium courses must obtain approval from their academic advisor on the [Consortium Drop Form](#). All completed and approved forms must be submitted by the end of the first week of the semester during fall and spring, and prior to the start of the summer. Please see the Fall/Spring Registration Schedule and Summer Sessions Registration websites for specific dates.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition for courses taken under the consortium arrangement is assessed at the current GW tuition rate and paid to GW. Additional course fees may be charged by, and must be paid to, the visited institution. Dropped courses are subject to GW's main campus refund schedule.

Transfer of Credit and Prior Graduate School Enrollment

GW Coursework Completed Prior to Matriculation

A maximum of six credits of graduate coursework may be approved for application to the School of Business from enrollment at GW in non-degree status (or from another degree-granting school of this university) or as transfer credit (see transfer credit policy) from a regionally accredited college or university, and must meet the following criteria:

- Business-related
- Not have been applied to the completion of requirements for another degree
- Graduate-level and credit-bearing
- Completed within three years prior to matriculation
- Received a grade of *B* or better

Please Note:

- Courses completed at GWSB for a graduate certificate or another degree-granting program (assuming the degree was not awarded) are eligible for application and are not part of the six-credit maximum noted above.
- Students should complete and return the [Petition for Credit Form](#) to their academic advisor for program consideration.

Equivalent Courses

A student who has completed the undergraduate equivalent of a required core course with a minimum grade of *B* at GW may request a waiver of that required core course. If waived, the required core course must be substituted with a graduate-level course with the same course prefix.

Transfer of Credit

A maximum of six credits of graduate coursework may be approved for application to the School of Business from enrollment at GW in non-degree status (or from another degree-granting school of this university; see “GW Coursework Completed Prior to Matriculation”) or as a transfer credit from a regionally accredited college or university.

If approved, the credits will apply toward their degree requirements and the total number of credits needed to complete the graduate degree will be reduced commensurate with the number of transfer credits approved.

Course Criteria

The requested course must meet the following criteria:

- Business related
- Graduate-level and credit-bearing
- Not applied to the completion of requirements for another degree
- Completed within three years from the date of matriculation
- Earned a grade of *B* or better
- Completed at a regionally accredited college or university

Additional Information

- Grades earned at another institution will not be factored into the GW GPA.
- Assignment of transfer credit is subject to evaluation by their individual program and the Office of Graduate Programs. If the grade earned is below the minimum required for transferring credit, *B* or its equivalent, or the course is repetitious, no credit will be assigned.
- The number of credit hours transferred will be equal to the number of credits actually taken.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of no less than 3.0 must be maintained to remain in good academic standing and is required for award of the graduate degree. All graduate courses taken for graduate credit after matriculation as a degree candidate (except those audited, taken for the grade of *CR*, or transferred from an outside institution) will be used in the calculation of the GPA. Students can take an additional six credit hours of coursework beyond the credits required for their graduate degree to raise their GPA to the 3.0 GPA minimum requirement to graduate. Students who after the additional six credits still do not meet the 3.0 GPA minimum will be dismissed from their graduate program. There is no appeal possible for dismissal.

The Office of Financial Assistance has different standards that must be met to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards for Continued Financial Assistance Eligibility.

Standards of Graduate Programs Satisfactory Academic Progress

All students must maintain satisfactory academic progress to be eligible to continue enrollment in their graduate program. To maintain eligibility, students must:

1. Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0
2. Complete at least 67 percent of attempted courses each semester
3. Receive no more than one notation of *Z* in any given semester
4. Complete all degree requirements within five calendar years of matriculation

The initial responsibility for recognizing academic difficulty and for taking steps to resolve it rests with the student. Those encountering academic difficulty in courses or other degree requirements are expected to consult with the appropriate faculty member and their academic advisor immediately and, if necessary, to seek additional assistance.

Students who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress may be required to meet with their academic advisor to develop an academic plan, which will include an anticipated timeline to complete remaining degree requirements. Students who are required to submit an academic plan will then be required to meet with their academic advisor prior to registration for the next semester to ensure progress is being made.

Please note:

- Attempted coursework is defined as any course that receives a letter grade, credit/no credit, withdrawal (*W*), notation of *Z*, missing grade, or an incomplete (*I*).
- Students who receive more than one notation of *Z* per semester will have a registration hold placed on their account until their academic plan has been submitted and received all approvals required.

- Graduate program directors and/or the assistant dean of Graduate Programs reserve(s) the right to restrict the number of credit hours a student may register for depending on the severity of the situation.
- The Office of Financial Assistance has different standards that must be met to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards for Continued Financial Assistance Eligibility.

Academic Probation

Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 at any point after completing nine credits are placed on academic probation.

While on academic probation, a student:

1. Must achieve at least a 3.0 (term) GPA in each subsequent semester.
2. Must be continuously enrolled or on an approved Leave of Absence or Continuous Enrollment.
3. Must not receive a grade of *F* (Failure) in any course.
4. Must not receive the symbol Incomplete (*I*) in any course.

A student who fails to meet the above four conditions will be suspended from their program.

In order to achieve the 3.0 minimum cumulative GPA, the student will be allowed to take up to six credits of graduate-level coursework beyond the program requirement.

A student who is below a 3.0 cumulative GPA and does not have enough credits remaining in their program to achieve the minimum GPA — including the additional six credits referenced above — will be dismissed. There is no appeal possible following a dismissal.

Academic Suspension

A student who does not meet the conditions of probation will be suspended. Students may request reinstatement from a suspension by completing and submitting the [Request for Reinstatement Form](#). The request should offer a clear explanation of changed circumstances and how the student plans to raise his/her cumulative GPA to 3.0. The request must be submitted within one semester of being suspended.

Students suspended in:

- The fall semester must request reinstatement no later than the last day of the spring semester following their suspension.
- The spring or summer semester must request reinstatement no later than the last day of the fall semester immediately following their suspension.

Time Limitations for Completing Degrees

Students admitted to a GWSB graduate program are allowed no more than five years from the point of matriculation to complete all degree requirements and graduate. If it becomes apparent that a student will not complete all degree requirements and graduate within the time allowed, the student may petition Graduate Programs for an extension of time to complete their degree.

To request an extension of time, students must complete a [Policy Exception Request](#) and submit the form to their academic advisor for review. If approved, the student must maintain appropriate registration during the authorized period of extension. Please be aware that personal leaves of absence are not allowed during the approved extension period.

Waivers and Exceptions

Policy Exceptions

A student seeking an exception to an individual program, Graduate Programs, School of Business or university policy due to extenuating circumstances must submit a [Policy Exception Request](#). A policy exception request must be accompanied by documentation of extenuating circumstances. Students should not assume that policy exception requests will be approved. Until a student receives written confirmation that an exception has been approved, the student should operate under the assumption that it will be denied (i.e., the student should continue to attend class, submit assignments, consider alternatives, etc.).

Requests involving medical or mental health issues:

- Requests involving physical health must be accompanied by documentation from a medical professional. Such documentation will be considered, but it does not solely determine the outcome of the request.
- Requests involving mental health must be accompanied by documentation from a medical professional. In addition, we strongly recommend students reach out to the [University Counseling Center](#) (UCC). Support of the UCC will be considered, but it does not solely determine the outcome of the request.

The following requests will not be considered:

- Requests for exceptions to individual program, Graduate Programs, School of Business or university policy on the basis of not knowing the policy.
- Requests after the module/semester has ended, the final project and/or exam has been attempted, or a grade has been issued will not be considered.

Core Course Waiver

How to Apply for a Waiver

Students who would like to request a core course waiver or credit waiver (MTA only) must review the criteria and complete a [Course Waiver Request Form](#). It is strongly suggested that students first discuss their plans and options with their academic advisor prior to completing and submitting their request.

Non-GWSB Equivalent Coursework Criteria

Students who are eligible to request a core course based on non-GWSB equivalent coursework must meet the following criteria:

- Completed at an AACSB accredited institution
- Graduate-level and credit-bearing
- Completed within five years from the date of matriculation
- Earned a grade of *B* or better

Please note: Undergraduate coursework completed outside of GWSB and/or undergraduate degrees do not count toward core course waiver requirements.

Course Repetition for Credit

Except for courses that specifically state that repetition for credit is permitted, such as experimental courses numbered 6900 and/or 6290, a candidate for a graduate degree at this university may not repeat a course in which a grade of *C–* or better was received unless required to do so by their program.

Enrollment Status

Once entered in a degree program, a student is expected to be continuously enrolled and actively engaged in fulfilling the requirements for the degree each semester of the academic year until such time as the degree is conferred. A student is considered to be continuously enrolled when registered for courses through GW or when registered for an approved leave of absence.

Leaves of Absences

Personal Leave of Absence

Students who find it necessary to interrupt their studies may request a personal leave of absence by completing the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#). If a personal leave of absence is requested after the start of the semester, students will be subject to the refund schedule set by the Office of the Registrar.

Students should be aware of the following when requesting a personal leave of absence:

- One semester of leave — with the exception of military deployment — will be granted at any one time and is not automatically renewed for the subsequent semester. Students who need to extend their leave of absence must make a second request via the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#).
- No more than four semesters of leave are allowed during a student's tenure in their graduate program.
- Students who do not return after taking personal leave must apply for reinstatement. If reinstatement is denied, students must reapply to the program and, if approved, will be subject to the requirements and regulations at the time of readmission.
- The five-year time to degree will be extended by one semester for each semester of approved leave of absence.
- A personal leave of absence will not confer registration nor residency status needed to qualify for financial aid or visa requirements.
- The right to use of university facilities is suspended while the leave is in effect.

Medical Leave of Absence

Students who need to interrupt their studies due to a medical or mental health issue may request a medical leave of absence by completing the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#). Medical leave does not count towards the four-semester limit of personal leave outlined above.

Military Leave of Absence

Students who are serving in the military, military reserves or the National Guard who receive orders to deploy may request a military leave of absence by completing the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#). Military leave allows active duty military who have received orders to deploy to interrupt their studies for the length of time that they are deployed. Military leave does not count towards the four-semester limit of personal leave outlined above.

Students who receive orders to deploy prior to or early in a semester are automatically entitled to a full refund of all tuition and fees that he or she has paid toward the expenses of that academic term. If called to active duty after the mid-term examinations or after other substantial graded work has been completed, the student will have the option of either taking a full refund of tuition of fees or taking an incomplete in his or her courses. Students who opt to take an incomplete must follow the policies and procedures in place for students requesting a grade of incomplete.

Returning from a Leave of Absence

Students returning on schedule from an approved personal or military leave of absence will be eligible to registration for the semester in which they are scheduled to return. If a student needs to request an additional leave of absence, or have received orders that their deployment is being extended, the student must submit a new [Leave of Absence Request Form](#). Students returning from leave must be registered no later than the [add/drop deadline](#) set by the Office of the Registrar for the semester in which they are scheduled to return.

Reinstatement

Students who fail to register, fail to return from a leave of absence (or fail to return from a suspension as scheduled), voluntarily withdraw, or are otherwise absent without authorization from the university for one or more semesters must make a formal [Application for Reinstatement](#). Students will only be approved for reinstatement if they are able to meet the university's policy of continuous enrollment by retroactively registering for up to four leaves of absence.

Readmission

If reinstatement is denied, the student must apply for readmission. If readmitted, the student is subject to the rules and regulations in force at the time of return.

Students who are readmitted can only apply coursework completed at GW within five years from the semester of re-matriculation into their program towards their degree requirements. Core courses completed prior to the five-year date must be retaken. Elective courses completed prior to the five-year date will not be applied towards the graduate degree requirements. This policy is not eligible for appeal.

Voluntary Withdrawal

How to Withdraw from the Program

A student who wishes to withdraw from their program must make the request in writing to their academic advisor. In addition, if the student is enrolled in courses during the semester in which they are requesting withdrawal, the student must complete a [Registration Transaction Form](#). All charges for courses from which the student withdraws are subject to the refund policy found at the Office of the Registrar's website. Failure to submit the request for withdrawal in writing to

their academic advisor along with the required Registration Transaction Form can result in an extended financial obligation and the permanent recording of grades of *F* (Fail) on the student's transcript.

Fall/Spring Module Courses

Students can request to drop a module course with no academic penalty through the end of the fourth week of module classes. The dropped course will not appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from their program after the end of the fourth week but before the end of the sixth week of module classes will have a notation of *W* (Authorized Withdrawal) assigned to any module course in which they are enrolled.

Students wishing to withdraw from their program after the end of the sixth week of module classes will receive a letter grade for any module course in which they are enrolled.

Fall/Spring Full Semester Courses

Students can request to drop a semester course with no academic penalty through the end of the fourth week of semester classes. The dropped course will not appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from their program after the end of the fourth week but before the end of the thirteenth week of semester classes will have a notation of *W* (Authorized Withdrawal) assigned to any semester course in which they are enrolled.

Students wishing to withdraw from their program after the end of the thirteenth week of semester classes will receive a letter grade for any semester course in which they are enrolled.

Summer Session/Module Courses

Students can request to drop a module course with no academic penalty through the end of the first week of summer session/module classes. The dropped course will not appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from their program after the end of the first week but before the end of the fifth week of summer session/module classes will have a notation of *W* (Authorized Withdrawal) assigned to any module course in which they are enrolled.

Students wishing to withdraw from their program after the end of the fifth week of module classes will receive a letter grade for any summer session/module course in which they are enrolled.

Termination of Degree Candidacy

A student's candidacy for a graduate degree may be terminated (suspension without the option of readmission) by the assistant dean for Graduate Programs for failure to make satisfactory academic progress toward the completion of their degree requirements. A student whose degree candidacy has been terminated for any reason will be notified in writing.