

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, the student may be subject to either departmental warning (p. 2), probation (p. 2), suspension (p. 3) or termination (p. 6). Students have the 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.
4. Students must demonstrate professional performance as evidenced by adherence to professional codes of ethics, sensitivity to patient and community needs, patient/consumer safety 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. For example, students should be able to respond appropriately to constructive criticism, recognize the impact of verbal/non-verbal communication, accurately self-assess and have the ability to adapt to change.

Academic Policies & Procedures

B. DEPARTMENTAL WARNING

Policy

A student who does not meet the standards set forth in Section II.A. shall be informed of this in a written departmental warning by the Program Director. This warning does not imply or necessarily preclude the imposition of other penalties.

Procedure

1. The faculty advisors of each program will periodically 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. The faculty advisor will meet with the student to discuss failure to meet program expectations/requirements.
2. The Program Chair/Director may inform the student in writing of the failure to meet program requirements and possible consequences, and inform the student of resources available for remediation.
3. The Program Chair/Director will follow up on the student's progress and be available for consultation.
4. A student may receive any number of these departmental warnings from the Program Chair/Director without a change in academic standing.
5. A student may be placed on probation or suspended without receiving prior departmental warnings, depending on the severity of non-compliance with II.A.

C. PROBATION

Policy

A student who does not meet the standards set forth in sections II.A. 1, 2, 3 or 4, e.g., a student who does not successfully complete all courses, maintain the minimum grade point average or does not demonstrate appropriate professional behavior, may be placed on probation. A student who has been placed on probation may not be permitted to participate in full-time clinical practice, except under extraordinary circumstances, and upon recommendation by the Program Chair/Director to the Dean.

Academic Policies & Procedures

Procedure

1. The Program Chair/Director will review information provided by the department faculty and if probation is indicated, make a timely written recommendation to the Dean.
2. The Program Chair/Director's recommendation 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 Chair/Director's recommendation, the Dean shall inform the student of the decision and conditions for probation in writing via certified mail within ten (10) business days of the decision. Copies of the probation letter shall be provided to the Program Director, the Office of Student Services, and the Academic Standing Committee (ASC).

D. SUSPENSION

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 Program Chair/Director, after consultation with the faculty member, will issue a verbal directive to the student, followed by an immediate written recommendation for suspension to the Dean. Action by the Dean to determine the student's status should be taken within ten (10) business days of the verbal directive.

Academic Policies & Procedures

Procedure

1. A student may be recommended for suspension by the Program Chair/Director on the recommendation of the program faculty any time there is an error in professional judgment on the part of the student that is deemed by the faculty to be inconsistent with professional standards of care. (e.g., actions taken by the student that jeopardize patient safety).
2. Complete documentation should be kept of any incidents leading to the recommendation for suspension.
3. The Program Chair/Director's recommendation for suspension must include, but is not limited to: 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 decide to accept, reject, or modify the Program Chair/Director's recommendation for suspension and inform the student of the decision in writing via certified mail within ten (10) business days of the verbal directive.
5. Copies of the action taken by the Dean will be forwarded to the Program Chair/Director, ASC Chair, Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs and the Office of Student Services.
6. Grades for courses interrupted by suspension will be determined for each student on an individual basis. The options are withdrawal or incomplete.
7. A suspended student 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 Chair/Director.

Academic Policies & Procedures

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 Chair/Director to the Dean for recommendation of reinstatement.
2. The Dean will advise the student in writing within ten (10) business days of the change in status.
3. Probation - Reinstatement after a probationary period means that the student returns to good academic 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.
5. The Program Chair/Director will review the student's status to determine whether the conditions have been met:
 - a. If the student has met the conditions by the end of the probation/suspension/leave period, the Program Chair/Director may recommend reinstatement to the Dean, who will then inform the student of the decision in writing within ten (10) business days of the date of this recommendation.
 - b. If the student has not met the conditions for reinstatement by the end of the probation/suspension/leave period, the student may be subject to termination.
 - c. Probation and suspension/leave may be extended by Program Chair/Director's recommendation to the Dean, with appropriate documentation to warrant continuation of the probation/suspended status. The Dean shall notify the student of the extension, the extension period, and the conditions for reinstatement by letter within ten (10) business days of the Program Chair/Director's recommendation.

Academic Policies & Procedures

F. TERMINATION

Policy

A student who fails to satisfy the conditions imposed by the Dean by the end of the probation or suspension/leave period may 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 extenuating circumstances as determined by the Program Chair/Director and the Dean.

Procedure

1. A student may be recommended for termination by the Program Chair/Director at the close of a probationary, suspension, or leave period if the student has failed to satisfy the conditions for reinstatement.
2. The Program Chair/Director will inform the Dean, in writing within ten (10) 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 Chair/Director, along with supporting documentation.
3. The Dean will inform the student, in writing by certified mail, that the student is terminated, and that the termination will be stayed if the student chooses to exercise the right to appeal. If appeal is elected, the student must submit in writing the reason(s) for the appeal, within ten (10) business days following the student's receipt of the letter from the Dean.
4. If the student does not appeal the decision, the student's status is terminated automatically by the Dean at close of business on the tenth (10) business day following receipt of the Dean's certified letter.

For purposes of this policy, correspondence shall be deemed "received" 5 days after mailing by regular USPS mail service or, if sent by certified mail on the date of actual receipt or the date that the correspondence is returned to the sender as undeliverable.

Academic Policies & Procedures

G. APPEAL

Policy

If the student wishes to appeal a probation, suspension or termination, the student must direct a letter stating the reason(s) for the appeal to the Dean. The student's written statement will explain the grounds of appeal and include any documentation supporting the reason for the appeal. The Dean may refer this to the ASC for a hearing and recommendation. A further appeal may be directed to the Senior Vice President, Health Sciences, or his/her designee.

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 (10) business days of receipt of the Dean's certified letter. Appeals will not be granted to those students seeking to challenge course grades, the validity of exams/exam questions or course requirements.
2. If the Dean refers the appeal to the ASC for a hearing, the student may be present, and bring witnesses and/or an advisor. If such is the intent, the student must inform the Chair of the ASC in writing no later than five (5) business days before the hearing, identifying the witnesses and advisor by name and title.
3. The Chair of the ASC will create a hearing board. Hearing boards are made up of individuals on the ASC. A hearing board shall consist of a minimum of five (5) voting members of the ASC and a hearing officer. Normally the chair of the ASC serves as the hearing officer, except under unusual circumstances (e.g., illness, conflict of interest). In such case, the Chair of the ASC will notify the alternate hearing officer. In all hearings, there will be at least one student. Neither the course instructor nor any faculty member of the department/program from which the student 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 ASC Chair will ask the Program Chair/Director to prepare a statement concerning the student's request for appeal and to produce to the hearing board all pertinent documentation and list witnesses, if any. The student has the right to request all documentation related to the case.

Academic Policies & Procedures

5. The SHTM Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs or his or her designee, shall be available to explain policy and procedures to the student.
6. The Associate Dean for the SHTM or his/ her designee shall be available to explain policy and procedures to any faculty involved in a hearing.
7. 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 (5) business days, and no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the student's written notice of intent to appeal.
8. The hearing officer will open the hearing by presenting the Program Chair/Director's written recommendation. The role of the hearing officer shall be to: (1) oversee the hearing process, (2) ensure that the policies and procedures of the SHTM governing the process are followed and (3) ensure that the hearing moves in an orderly manner. As a member of the ASC, the hearing officer may ask questions of principals and witnesses. The hearing officer will participate in the proceedings but cast no vote, except in the case of a tie.
9. The Program Chair/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 the student during the hearing but does not have the 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 vote of the eligible 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 ASC 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 ASC Chair. 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.

Academic Policies & Procedures

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 (10) business days of the hearing date.
2. Appeal Denied:
 - a. If an appeal from termination is denied, the student's status shall be terminated. However the termination shall be stayed if the student wishes to pursue further appeal to the Senior Vice President, Health Sciences or his/her designee.
 - i. The appeal to the Senior Vice President, Health Sciences should take place within ten (10) business days of receipt of the Dean's decision, and this appeal must be based on new evidence and/or errors in procedure. The decision of the Senior Vice President, Health Sciences will be final.
 - b. If an appeal from other than termination (e.g., probation, suspension) is denied, there shall be no further appeal and the student shall continue at the current status until the conditions of probation or suspension are met.

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.

Academic Policies & Procedures

Procedure

1. A student requesting a leave of absence, either medical or personal, must do so in writing to the Program Chair/Director.
2. The Program Chair/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 Chair/Director's recommendation shall include the following:
 - a. Reason for leave.
 - b. Length of time of the leave, not to exceed one year.
 - c. The date by which the student must inform the Program Chair/Director 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 (10) business days, of the final decision. Copies of this letter are sent to the Office of Student Services and the Program Chair/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 Chair/Director, who will review the request and make a recommendation to the Dean, as in #3 above.
7. If the conditions for reinstatement are not met by the date indicated, the student may be subject to termination. (p. 6).
8. Should there be disagreement between the student and the Program Chair/Director concerning the arrangements for leave, the matter shall be referred to the ASC for review and recommendation.

Academic Policies & Procedures

I. WITHDRAWAL

1. Authorized Withdrawal

Withdrawal from the Health Sciences, for any reason, will be recorded only when the student requests to withdraw in writing and the Program Chair/Director supports the request. The Program Chair/Director shall forward 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 instructors does not constitute formal withdrawal. The student must submit the request in writing no later than two (2) modules or ten (10) weeks after the date of the last class attended.

2. Unauthorized Withdrawal

A student who leaves the school without obtaining an official withdrawal shall be considered to have an unauthorized withdrawal and may forfeit; 1) the privilege of honorable dismissal, 2) the prospect of readmission and will be reported on the official student transcript as having failed all courses which have not been completed.