

Academic Probation, Dismissal, and Appeal

Academic Probation

After review by the graduate coordinator and in conjunction with the college dean, a student who has received a grade of C or lower or U (see Academic Performance) may be placed on probationary status in the next regular (fall or spring) semester following the unsatisfactory academic performance semester. Specific information relative to retaking of courses or completing remedial work will be established by the appropriate academic advisor, student's graduate committee, and graduate coordinator and documented in written form. If the student intends to pursue the academic appeals process, he or she must do so during this probationary semester (per Graduate Council, September 2005).

A student cannot take a preliminary/comprehensive examination or defend/submit a thesis or dissertation during the probationary period. If, at the end of the probationary semester, the student has not met the requirements outlined by the appropriate academic advisor, she or he may be dismissed.

Grade Appeal

A graduate student who wishes to appeal a grade should refer to the MSU Grade Appeals Policy, Academic Operating Procedure (AOP) 13.14 www.msstate.edu/dept/audit/1314.html and appeal to the Academic Review Board.

Academic Dismissal

If a student fails to maintain satisfactory performance, the graduate coordinator may recommend that the student be academically dismissed from the University. (See Academic Performance and Unsatisfactory Performance in this section.) The dismissal process begins with a letter from the graduate coordinator, approved by the college dean, to the dean of the Graduate School to request that a student be officially dismissed from a graduate program. The reason for the dismissal must be stated. Upon a review of the dismissal request, an official academic dismissal letter from the dean of the Graduate School is sent to the student via certified mail through the U.S. Postal Service. The dismissal letter informs the student that the schedule of classes for the following semester will be dropped. The student may refer to the Graduate Catalog for information regarding the appeals process (see Appeal of Academic Dismissal that follows). The Office of the Graduate School (OGS) will place an academic dismissal hold on the student's record to prevent further enrollment. A student who has been dismissed from a graduate program and has not been reinstated via the appeal process cannot reapply and be admitted into that program, except by meeting the conditions necessary to request Academic Amnesty (see Academic Amnesty under Academic Requirements).

Academic Dismissal Appeal Procedure

Following the receipt of a letter of dismissal from the OGS, a graduate student may appeal the decision of dismissal and must begin the process within 15 work days. The entire appeal process consists of up to three stages. If the entire appeal process is used, all levels of appeal should be normally completed within 60 work days of the submission of the first appeal of dismissal. At each level, decisions will be promptly rendered by the appropriate administrator. If the appeal of a student is upheld at any level, then the student will be reinstated into the graduate program. Application for readmission is not required.

The appeal is first submitted to the department head in the form of a letter with relevant support documentation. The department head must inform the OGS when an appeal is received. In rendering a decision, the department head may convene an existing or *ad hoc* departmental committee to review the appeal and offer a recommendation to the department head. The department head then will render a decision in writing to the student and copy the notification to the OGS. If the dismissal is upheld at the departmental level, the student may appeal the departmental decision by submitting a written request with all relevant supporting documentation to the academic dean.

The academic dean must inform the OGS when an appeal is received and may choose to either

1. render a decision directly and notify the student of his/her decision in writing and copy the correspondence to the Graduate School, or
2. submit a request to the OGS to convene a subcommittee of the Graduate Council to review the student's appeal.

If the latter option is selected, the dean of the Graduate School will convene a subcommittee consisting of three voting members of the Graduate Council who do not have a conflict of interest with the graduate student requesting the appeal or the student's department. A subcommittee chair will be named by the dean of the Graduate School. Relevant supporting documents submitted by the student, department, and/or the Graduate School will be assembled by OGS staff and delivered electronically to the subcommittee for review. The subcommittee may choose to deliberate via email or in a face-to-face meeting. The recommendation of the subcommittee will be conveyed to the academic dean in writing and copied to the Graduate School. All correspondence will remain confidential. The academic dean may or may not choose to adhere to the recommendation of the appeals subcommittee. The academic dean will promptly inform the graduate student of his/her decision in writing. The Graduate School will be notified of the academic dean's decision.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the academic dean, he/she may choose to submit a final appeal of the dismissal to the Provost. The Office of the Provost must inform the Office of the Graduate School when an appeal is received. The Provost may seek a recommendation from an *ad*

ad hoc committee appointed to review the appeal of dismissal. The Provost will promptly inform the graduate student of his/her decision in writing and notify the Graduate School of the decision (Graduate Council, October 2012).