

Academic Probation, Dismissal, and Appeal

Academic Probation

A graduate student shall be placed on academic probation beginning in the following semester if one or both of the following occur.

- His or her GPA falls below 3.00.
- He or she receives a third course grade lower than a B.

A student may also be placed on academic probation if he or she falls short of any other standards for satisfactory academic performance established by their academic unit. Specific information relative to retaking of courses or completing remedial work will be established by the appropriate academic advisor, graduate committee, and graduate coordinator and shall be documented in written form. This remediation plan must specify a required date of completion. If the student intends to pursue the academic appeal process relating to the reason for being placed on probation, he or she must do so during the first probationary semester.

Graduate students are allowed only one course retake per degree. See the Course Retake Policy (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/academic-policies/program-of-study/#courseretake>) section for additional details on a course retake and its impact on Program of Study, GPA, Degree Completion requirements, Dismissal criteria, etc.

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 period, the student has not met the requirements outlined in the remediation plan, she or he shall 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

A graduate student shall be dismissed from the University if one or more of the following conditions occur.

- He or she receives a second course grade of D or lower.
- He or she receives a fourth course grade of C or lower.
- He or she is found to be responsible for violating the Student Honor Code for a second time.
- He or she was placed on academic probation and failed to meet the requirements for release from probationary status.
- He or she fall short of any standards established by his or her academic unit, and the department recommends dismissal with approval of the College and Graduate School Deans.

The dismissal process begins with a Recommendation for Academic Dismissal (<http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf/dismissal.pdf>) form (a letter may be attached) from the graduate coordinator, approved by the college Dean, to the Dean of the Graduate School recommending the student be officially dismissed from a graduate program. The reason for the dismissal must be stated. Upon a review and approval of the dismissal request, an official academic dismissal letter from the Dean of the Graduate School is sent to the student through the U.S. Postal Service and through email to the student's MSU account. The dismissal letter informs the student that any schedule of classes for the following semester(s) will be dropped, and the Graduate School places an academic dismissal hold on the student's record to prevent further enrollment. The student may refer to the Graduate Catalog for information regarding the appeals process (see Academic Dismissal Appeal Procedure below). A student who has been dismissed from a graduate program and has not been reinstated via the appeal process cannot apply for readmission into that program, except by meeting the conditions necessary to request Academic Amnesty (see Academic Amnesty under Academic Requirements).

In the situation where a student's dismissal is solely the result of earning low course grades, the department may opt first to place the student on probation and allow the student to retake a course as part of the probationary status. Graduate students are allowed only one course retake per degree; the request requires department approval. See the Course Retake Policy (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/academic-policies/program-of-study/#courseretake>) section for additional details on a course retake and its impact on Program of Study, GPA, Degree Completion requirements, etc. Also see the Academic Probation section above for additional details.

Procedure for Appealing Academic Dismissal of Regularly Admitted Students

Following the receipt of a letter of dismissal from the Office of the Graduate School (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. 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.

1. The appeal to the Department Head is submitted by letter along 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 may or may not choose to adhere to the recommendation of the appeals committee. The Department Head will render a decision in writing to the student and copy the notification to the Graduate School. 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 College Dean.
2. The appeal to the College Dean is submitted by letter along with relevant support documentation. The College Dean must inform the Graduate School when an appeal is received. In rendering a decision, the College Dean may convene an existing or *ad hoc* college committee to review the appeal and offer a recommendation to the Dean. The College Dean may or may not choose to adhere to the recommendation of the appeals committee. The College Dean will render a decision in writing to the student and copy to notification to the Graduate School. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the College Dean, he/she may choose to submit a final appeal of the dismissal to the Provost.
3. The appeal to the Office of the Provost is submitted by letter along with relevant support documentation. The Provost must inform the Graduate School when an appeal is received. In rendering a decision, the Provost may request that the Dean of the Graduate School convene a subcommittee consisting of three voting members of the Graduate Council who do not have a conflict of interest with the graduate student or the student's department to review the appeal and offer a recommendation to the Provost. 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 Provost in writing and copied to the Graduate School. The Provost may or may not choose to adhere to the recommendation of the appeals subcommittee. The Provost will render a decision in writing to the student and copy the notification to the Graduate School. Recourse to the Provost is the final stage of dismissal appeal. All correspondence will remain confidential.

Procedure for Appealing Academic Dismissal of Provisionally Admitted Students

(Students admitted with the requirement to earn a 3.00 GPA on first 9 hours of graduate work)

Following the receipt of a letter of dismissal from the Office of the Graduate School (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 two stages. If the entire appeal process is used, both levels of appeal should be normally completed within 60 work days of the submission of the first appeal. 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.

1. The appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School is submitted by letter along with relevant support documentation. The Graduate School will inform the student's department and college when an appeal is received and request a letter of evaluation from both units. In rendering a decision, the Graduate School Dean may convene an existing or *ad hoc* University committee to review the appeal and offer a recommendation. The Graduate Dean may or may not choose to adhere to the recommendation of the appeals committee. The Graduate Dean will render a decision in writing to the student and copy the notification to the student's department and college. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Graduate Dean, he/she may choose to submit a final appeal of the dismissal to the Provost.
2. The appeal to the Provost is submitted by letter along with relevant support documentation. The Provost must inform the Graduate School when an appeal is received. In rendering a decision, the Provost may request that the Dean of the Graduate School convene a subcommittee consisting of three voting members of the Graduate Council who do not have a conflict of interest with the graduate student or the student's department to review the appeal and offer a recommendation to the Provost. 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 Provost in writing and copied to the Graduate School. The Provost may or may not choose to adhere to the recommendation of the appeals subcommittee. The Provost will render a decision in writing to the student and copy the notification to the Graduate School as well as the student's department and college. Recourse to the Provost is the final stage of dismissal appeal. All correspondence will remain confidential.