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EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
U N I V E R S I T Y

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## **Graduate School Retention Standards Policy**

# **Policy Name: Graduate School Retention Standards**

## **Policy Purpose**

This policy specifies the retention standards for Graduate Students.

## **Applicability**

This policy is applicable to graduate students admitted to the Graduate School. This policy does not apply to students who are exclusively admitted to the Quillen College of Medicine in pursuit of their M.D. or the Gatton College of Pharmacy in pursuit of their Pharm.D.

## **Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation**

The Dean of the Graduate School and Graduate Council are responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact the Dean of the Graduate School. The Provost, in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

## **Defined Terms**

*A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.*

### Cumulative GPA

Cumulative GPA is the average of grades from all graduate coursework at ETSU as described in the [Graduate School Determination of Graduate Grade Point Average Policy](#).

### Program GPA

Program GPA is the average of grades earned in courses included in the program of study for a specific graduate degree or certificate as described in the [Graduate School Determination of Graduate Grade Point Average Policy](#).

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## Policy

### 1. Academic Good Standing.

To remain in academic good standing, a graduate student (degree or non-degree seeking) must maintain a Cumulative Grade Point Average and Program Grade Point Average of 3.0 (B) or higher. In order to graduate, students must have a Cumulative Grade Point Average and Program Grade Point Average of 3.0 or higher. Some programs may have additional requirements to remain in good academic standing for progression or graduation.

### 2. Academic Probation and Dismissal.

When a student's Cumulative Grade Point Average and/or Program Grade Point Average falls below 3.0, the Dean of the Graduate School or designee will place the student on academic probation. If the student does not achieve a 3.0 cumulative grade point average at the conclusion of one probationary semester, the Dean of the Graduate School or designee will determine whether the student should be dismissed from graduate study at ETSU or continue on probation. Students whose performance results in a GPA so far below 3.0 as to make it mathematically impossible to attain an overall GPA of 3.0 after one semester of probation may be subject to immediate dismissal without a probationary term. (Refer to the [Graduate School Determination of Graduate Grade Point Average Policy.](#))

Students may remain on probation for two semesters before dismissal. The Dean of the Graduate School or their designee may in their discretion grant additional probationary semesters for students who demonstrate significant academic improvement. A student will be removed from probationary status upon attaining a cumulative 3.0 grade point average.

If a student has an "I" at the end of a term, the decision related to dismissal will not occur until the "I" is converted to a grade, unless it is mathematically impossible for the student to be in good standing when the "I" is converted. When an "I" converts to an "F" after one calendar year, the GPA is adjusted retroactively; consequently, a student may be subject to dismissal without a probationary term in the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate School or their designee. (Refer to the Graduate School Incomplete Grades Policy.

A student dismissed due for failing to meet academic and program requirements or for exceeding the number of probationary semesters may be eligible for academic fresh start pursuant to the [Graduate School Academic Fresh Start Policy.](#)

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## **3. Dismissal for Other Reasons.**

In addition meeting the requirements for Academic Good Standing, students may be dismissed from the Graduate School for: (1) failing to meet provisions of admission; (2) academic or research misconduct; (3) serious professional misconduct or ethical violations; (4) providing false statements or documents during the admission process; (5) failing to meet a requirement of the program; (6) providing false statements or information while enrolled; or (7) egregious acts as determined by the Dean of the Graduate School or designee in consultation University Counsel, Dean of Students, and the Provost. A program may recommend dismissal to the Dean of the Graduate School for student breaches of professional conduct and/or ethics as stated in program handbooks or other documents or failing to meet program requirements stated in program handbooks and/or the Graduate Catalog.

Charges of academic and/or research misconduct will be addressed through the relevant policies and procedures. Upon resolution of the appropriate process, if it is determined that a student did engage in academic and/or research misconduct, the Dean of the Graduate School (or designee) can dismiss the student.

## **4. Reinstatement.**

A student dismissed for failing to meet academic and program requirements, provisions of admission, or for exceeding the number of probationary semesters may be eligible for reinstatement. Dismissal for any other reason is not eligible for reinstatement. To request reinstatement, the student must submit the [Request for Reinstatement Following Dismissal Form](#). A student who is reinstated and dismissed a second time from the same program is not eligible for reinstatement. The Dean of the Graduate School or designee will make the final decision in accordance with policies established by the Graduate Council. The Dean's or designee's decision is final.

## **5. Repeating a Course.**

If a student chooses to repeat a course, all grades earned are computed in the grade point average pursuant to the [Graduate School Determination of Graduate Grade Point Average Policy](#). The grade earned on the repeated course does not replace the original grade.

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## Procedures

### 1. Academic Probation.

After final grades have been posted each term, the Graduate School will run grade reports and identify students whose grade point averages fall below a 3.0. Graduate specialists will notify graduate coordinators.

Pursuant to this policy, the Dean issues the final determination to place a student on academic probation and the Graduate School notates the transcript. The Graduate School notifies the student in writing of their academic probation.

### 2. Dismissal.

#### 2.1. Dismissal due to Grade Point Average.

After final grades have been posted each term, the Graduate School will run grade reports and identify students whose grade point averages fall below a 3.0 and have previously been placed on probation. Graduate specialists will consult graduate coordinators if needed. Graduate specialists will advise the Dean of the Graduate School of the program's recommendation for each student.

Pursuant to this policy, the Dean or designee issues the final determination to dismiss a student and the Graduate School notates the transcript. The Graduate School notifies the student in writing of their dismissal.

#### 2.2. Dismissal due to not meeting admission provisions.

After final grades have been posted each term, the Graduate School will run reports and identify students who have not meet their admissions provisions. Graduate specialists will consult graduate coordinators as needed. Graduate specialists will advise the Dean of the Graduate School or designee of the program's recommendation for each student.

Pursuant to this policy, the Dean issues the final determination to dismiss a student and the Graduate School notates the transcript. The Graduate School notifies the student in writing of their dismissal.

#### 2.3. Dismissal due to violations of professional, ethical, or program standards.

The program makes a recommendation for dismissal to the Dean of the Graduate School or designee pursuant to this policy for student breaches of professional

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conduct or ethics as stated in program handbooks or other documents or failure to meet program requirements stated in program handbooks. The Dean will review the recommendation and make a determination on dismissal. The Graduate School notifies the student in writing of their dismissal. The Graduate School notates the transcript.

## **2.4. Dismissal for other reasons**

Dismissal for other reasons outlined in this policy will be adjudicated under other relevant policies (e.g., Academic Integrity and Misconduct, Research Integrity, Student Code of Conduct, etc.). Once adjudicated, the Dean of the Graduate School or designee, in consultation with University Counsel and the Provost, will dismiss the student.

## **3. Reinstatement.**

To request reinstatement, the student will complete a [Request for Reinstatement Form](#). The program coordinator will review the request and make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School or designee will review and will determine whether reinstatement is warranted or not. The decision of the Dean of the Graduate School or designee is final.

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## **Applicable Forms and Websites**

[Request for Reinstatement Form](#)

## **Authority and Revisions**

**Authority:** N/A

**Previous Policy:** TCA § 49-8-203, et seq.

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.