Academic Standards

Academic Rights, Penalties, and Appeals

The policies described in this section are based on the West Virginia University (WVU) Board of Governors Policy 15, Student Academic Rights. This section expands the general policy to include procedures for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students at WVU (not including the Potomac State and WVU Tech campuses).

A student, by voluntarily accepting admission to West Virginia University (WVU) or enrolling in a class or course of study offered by WVU, accepts the academic requirements and criteria of the institution. Normally students may finish a program of study according to the requirements under which they were admitted to the program. However, requirements are subject to change at any time with reasonable notice provided to students. It is the student's responsibility to fulfill coursework and degree or certificate requirements and to know and meet criteria for satisfactory academic progress and completion of the program. Students are expected to adhere to academic requirements and standards in all academic settings, such as classrooms, laboratories, and clinics, and during any activities that are part of academic requirements. Further, WVU students are citizens of a broader academic community. As such, the University expects that every member of its academic community share its historic and traditional commitment to honesty, integrity, and the search for truth. To meet these standards, academic dishonesty is prohibited and is subject to academic penalties. Students who fail to meet academic requirements or standards, or who engage in academic dishonesty, may be subject to one or more of the academic penalties described in the Academic Penalties section.

Any question of interpretation regarding student rights and responsibilities, academic penalties, or appeal processes for final grades, charges of academic dishonesty, or academic penalties shall be referred to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Health Sciences, or the divisional campus President, as appropriate, for final determination.

Any behaviors not academic in nature but related to student conduct should be referred to the Campus Student Code as stipulated in Board of Governors Policy 31 (http://bog.wvu.edu/files/d/4c27ce4e-93b5-451b-a557-c9d8ab25a773/policy-31-dec-18-2015-amendment.pdf). Although academic penalties are imposed on students who engage in academic dishonesty according to procedures described below, findings of academic dishonesty may also be taken into consideration with respect to disciplinary penalties and procedures described in the Campus Student Code.

Academic Rights

Each student at West Virginia University has the following academic rights (as well as others; see BOG Policy 15 (http://bog.wvu.edu/policies)):

1. Right to have his/her performance evaluated solely upon performance as measured against academic standards. The student shall not be evaluated prejudicially, capriciously, or arbitrarily. The student shall not be graded, nor shall his/her performance be evaluated, on the basis of his or her race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, marital or family status, pregnancy, veteran status, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or gender expression (see BOG Policy 44 (http://bog.wvu.edu/files/d/0df9c7853-4569-4895-b2bc-6bd7f00a3eaf/policy-44-december-18-2015-amendment.pdf)), or other protected status.
2. Right to appeal any final grade, charge of academic dishonesty, or academic penalty.
3. Right to access a copy of the University catalog and program documents in which all current program requirements and standards are described (e.g. required courses, total credit requirements, time in residence requirements, special program requirements, minimum grade point average, probation standards, professional standards, etc.).
4. Right to receive course syllabi with descriptions of content and requirements for any course in which they are enrolled (e.g., attendance expectations, special requirements, laboratory requirements including time, field trips and costs, grading standards and procedures, professional standards, etc.).
5. Right to assigned grades issued from the instructor of each course to students enrolled in the course consistent with the academic rights set out in the preceding sections.

Definitions and Types of Academic Penalties

PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO MEET ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS OR STANDARDS

A student at West Virginia University who fails to meet academic requirements or standards will be subject to one or more of the following academic penalties:

1. A lower final grade, including failure of a course. A lower grade or failure of the course can be imposed by the course instructor/coordinator. If a student appeals a final grade, the grade shall remain in effect until the appeal is completed.
2. Exclusion of a student from further participation in class prior to any appeal proceedings requires that the course instructor/coordinator obtain approval of the dean of the college or school offering the course.
3. Required repetition or revision of a program requirement, or termination of the student's participation in specific program-related activities.
4. Failure of a program requirement or failure to meet academic standards. Program requirements and standards must be described in the catalog or other program documents provided or available to students. Program requirements may include such items as passing a qualifying exam,
PENALTIES FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The term “academic dishonesty” means plagiarism; cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and/or projects; and forgery, misrepresentation, or fraud as it relates to academic or educational matters. In addition to the definitions and examples provided below, supplementary information about types and examples of academic dishonesty is available.

1. “Plagiarism” means the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment, including, but not limited to, the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another individual.

2. “Cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and/or projects” include, but are not limited to, (i) giving or receiving of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or any other assignment for a grade; (ii) depending upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor or supervisor in quizzes, tests, examinations, writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (iii) the acquisition or use, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the University faculty or staff; and (iv) engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion.

3. “Forgery, misrepresentation, or fraud as it relates to academic or educational matters” includes, but is not limited to, (i) wrongfully altering, or causing to be altered, any records; (ii) use of University documents or instruments of identification with the intent to defraud; (iii) presenting false data or information or intentionally misrepresenting records; (iv) furnishing the results of research projects or experiments for the inclusion in another’s work without proper citation; or (vi) furnishing false statements in any University academic proceeding; and vii) providing false or misleading information to gain an academic advantage.

A student at West Virginia University who engages in academic dishonesty will be subject to one or more of the following academic penalties (see the previous section (p. ) for full descriptions of those penalties that can also be imposed for failure to meet academic requirements or standards):

1. Course-level academic penalties. When academic dishonesty occurs within the context of a course (including individually supervised courses), the course instructor/coordinator has the option of imposing the following academic penalties, including but not limited to:
   a. Change in assignment or test grade.
   b. A lower final grade (p. ), including failure of a course.
   c. A final grade of unforgivable failure (UF). The UF penalty can be recommended by the course instructor/coordinator but must be reported to the Registrar’s Office by the dean of the college or school offering the course after the time limit for a student appeal has expired or the appeal process has been completed, upholding the UF penalty. The student may repeat the course, but the undergraduate D/F repeat process will not be applied to the UF.
   d. Required repetition or revision of the assignment or test.
   e. Exclusion from further participation in class (p. ), including laboratories or clinical experiences.
   f. Other course resolutions within the discretion of the course instructor/coordinator.

2. Other academic penalties. If academic dishonesty occurs either in a course or within the context of program requirements, the academic penalties below may be imposed.
   a. Required repetition or revision of a program requirement, or termination of the student’s participation in specific program-related activities. When academic dishonesty occurs within the context of program requirements and expectations not associated with a specific course (including, but not limited to, completing qualifying exams, conducting research, performing duties associated with a graduate assistantship, performing
required service or professional activities, etc.), the student’s program director, supervisor, or chair of an appropriate committee may impose these or similar academic penalties.

b. Failure of a program requirement or failure to meet academic standards. (p. )

c. Academic probation or suspension at the program, college, or school level (p. ) for failure to meet program requirements and academic standards.

d. Dismissal from a program, college, school, or the university. (p. )

In this section:

• Undergraduate Academic Probation and Suspension Policy (p. 3)
• Probation Procedures (p. 3)
• Suspension Procedures (p. 3)
• Duration of Suspension (p. 3)
• Appeal of Suspension (p. 4)
• Summer Enrollment for Students Suspended for Fall (p. 4)
• Immediate Reinstatement after Suspension (p. 4)
• Readmission after Serving Suspension (p. 4)

Undergraduate Academic Probation and Suspension Policy

This policy concerns academic probation and suspension (referred to below as probation and suspension) from the University. Individual schools, colleges, and programs may place students on probation or dismiss them from their programs as well, using criteria that are the same as or different from those below. Students who are dismissed from a program may transfer to another program if they meet the program's admission requirements or they may be advised in the Center for Learning, Advising, and Student Success until they are able to be accepted to a program.

Any student with an overall grade point average (GPA) below 2.0 will be on probation for summer and fall. Should a student's overall grade point average (GPA) fall below 2.0 immediately following the spring term, the student will be placed on suspension regardless of previous academic standing(s).

Probation Procedures

At the conclusion of summer and/or fall, students on probation (i.e., with an overall GPA below 2.0) are sent a probation letter (via email to their MIX account from the Office of the University Registrar (OUR). This letter informs students about their academic status, explains what is meant by probation, provides information on resources available to help them improve their academic performance, and describes the consequences of continued poor performance, including the standards and procedures concerning suspension.

Suspension Procedures

At the conclusion of each spring term only, students placed on suspension are sent a suspension letter rather than a probation letter from the OUR (via e-mail to their MIX account and by post to their permanent address) and are suspended from the University effective at the end of the summer term. This letter informs students that they have been suspended from the University, explains what that means, and provides information about appealing the suspension. The letter also describes procedures for reinstatement to the University after their suspension period and the impact of taking classes at other institutions during the suspension period.

Students may also be suspended at the end of fall or summer term, as recommended to the OUR by the designated academic officer in each school or college, based on a failure to meet the provisions of a prior contract put in place for a reinstated student.

Duration of Suspension

Students who are suspended for the first time may not enroll in classes at WVU (including sections offered through Extended Learning) for the following major term (fall semester). Students suspended for a second time will not be allowed to enroll in classes at WVU (including sections offered through Extended Learning) for one calendar year. Students suspended for a third and final time will not be allowed to return to WVU for a minimum of five years.

Appeal

Suspended students have until early June (exact date specified in written notice of suspension) to appeal the suspension by sending a request to their school or college by e-mail or post. A designated academic officer in each school or college will then have until July 1 to review the requests and to reinstate students whose appeals are approved. Students who appeal and are denied or who do not appeal their suspension will be removed from their fall classes.
**Summer Enrollment**

Students who are suspended for fall may enroll in summer courses at WVU (main campus, Extended Learning, Potomac State College of WVU and WVU Institute of Technology). Students who are enrolled in summer courses as of July 1 will not be removed from their fall classes until summer grades are available. Students who rehabilitate their overall GPA above 2.0 will be automatically reinstated from suspension. Colleges and schools may elect to defer a reinstatement decision as well until summer grades are available. Each college or school will communicate to the OUR the final decision on reinstatement immediately after summer grades are released. Only summer courses taken at WVU’s main campus, Extended Learning, Potomac State College of WVU and WVU Institute of Technology will be considered in determining eligibility for reinstatement for the fall following suspension.

**Immediate Reinstatement after Suspension**

Students who are suspended and subsequently reinstated following a successful appeal or a successful summer term may be retained in their major for advising.

**Readmission after Serving Suspension**

Suspended students who wish to be readmitted into the University after their required suspension period must contact Undergraduate Admission. Students, at the discretion of their College/School, may remain in their major at the time they leave WVU or change majors upon return. All reinstated students whose GPAs are below the suspension cutoff are given a contract that describes the conditions that must be met to avoid suspension in future terms.