

Policy 916 Academic Probation & Dismissal

Policy Number: 916

Effective Date: 11/09/2020

Revised Date:

Scope

This Policy on Academic Probation & Dismissal applies to predoctoral researchers ("Covered Individuals") of The Graduate School of the Stowers Institute for Medical Research ("School").

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to define how Academic Probation is determined and addressed.

Policy

Predoctoral researchers must continually demonstrate graduate-level proficiency throughout their coursework and research. Predoctoral researchers are expected to demonstrate this overall proficiency as assessed during the first semester module courses, the second semester laboratory rotations, and the time in thesis research. In addition, predoctoral researchers are expected to continually work to achieve the core competencies throughout their thesis work commensurate with their progression in the program as evaluated on the Academic Progression Matrix.

If predoctoral researchers fail to meet a standard of overall performance during any of these three stages of the program, the predoctoral researcher is placed on Academic Probation.

Predoctoral researchers are advised via a notice (electronically or hard-copy) of Academic Probation from the Dean for Academic Affairs that they are on Academic Probation for one of the reasons listed below. Academic Probation is determined by the information reported on the module course reports, the laboratory rotation reports, and the term reports. The notice of Academic Probation is issued within seven business days of the due date of course reports for module courses or laboratory rotations and within fourteen business days of due dates of term reports for thesis labs.

Reasons for Academic Probation

A predoctoral researcher is placed on Academic Probation for the following reasons:

- 1) Module Courses:
 - a. A failing grade in any of the module courses or
 - b. An average score of 2 or below in three or more of the eight module courses. Scores are calculated from the assessment of course learning objectives on the module course reports.
- 2) Laboratory Rotations:
 - a. A failing grade in any of the rotations or
 - b. An average score of 2 or below in two or more laboratory rotations. Scores are calculated from the assessment of rotation learning objectives on the rotation lab reports.

3) Thesis research:

- a. A failing grade on a term report or
- b. Scoring below expectations on the Academic Progression Matrix in two or more categories, as evaluated by the thesis advisor.

Academic Probation Period

The Academic Probation period varies depending on the reason for probation.

Academic probation incurred during the module courses or laboratory rotation semester remains in effect until all module courses and all laboratory rotations are complete. If no other probation-qualifying incidents are incurred during the module courses and laboratory rotations, the probation period ends. Two probation-qualifying incidents incurred during the module courses and laboratory rotations are grounds for dismissal from the program.

Academic probation incurred over the thesis research period must be resolved within six months to one year of issuance as deemed appropriate by the instructor, thesis advisor, Dean for Academic Affairs, and/or Dean and communicated in writing to the predoctoral researcher.

Academic Probation Resolution Form

The predoctoral researcher completes the Academic Probation Resolution Form which includes a detailed explanation of the issue(s) leading to Academic Probation, an outline of steps to return to good standing, a timeline for return to good standing, and approval by the module course or laboratory rotation instructor or thesis advisor, as appropriate. The resolution form is submitted to the Dean for Academic Affairs for review and verification within seven business days of receiving the notice of Academic Probation. The resolution form is then approved by the Dean and may require additional approval from the predoctoral researcher's Supervisory Committee. Additional approval by the Supervisory Committee is needed when the resolution to Academic Probation includes a change to the predoctoral researcher's research plan.

Dismissal and Academic Appeal

Failure to resolve the academic probation during the established time period leads to dismissal from the program. A predoctoral researcher can appeal the dismissal by submitting a typed statement to the Chair of the Academic Progression Committee, no later than seven (7) business days after being notified of the dismissal. The typed statement must include the following:

1. A description of the issue.
2. Specific steps that have already been taken to resolve the issue with the faculty and/or School administration.
3. Evidence supporting why the predoctoral researcher believes the decision made was inconsistent with existing School, SIMR or course policy, was arbitrary, or lacked sufficient evidence.

In preparing the appeal, it is the predoctoral researcher's responsibility and burden to prove that the dismissal was inconsistent with existing policy, arbitrary, or lacked sufficient evidence. The predoctoral researcher may seek assistance from a School faculty member as an advisor in preparing the statement for an appeal. The role of the advisor is to assist the predoctoral researcher in understanding the policy and procedure. The advisor's role does not include gathering information or presenting evidence.

The predoctoral researcher will submit the letter of appeal with supporting documents to the Chair of the Academic Progression Committee. The Chair will forward appeal documents to faculty involved in the dismissal. Faculty will submit to the Chair of the Academic Progression Committee within five (5) business days their response to the appeal document, including their supporting documentation. The Chair of the Academic Progression Committee will forward the faculty's response to the predoctoral researcher.

The Academic Progression Committee will meet within seven (7) business days of receiving all the written appeal documents to hear the appeal. The predoctoral researcher may request one continuance, not to exceed one week, for good cause. The predoctoral researcher and faculty will be notified 72 hours before the hearing of the time, date and location of the hearing. It is preferable that predoctoral researchers and faculty attend the committee hearing in person. However, GSSIMR will accommodate the use of speakerphone or approved virtual method for a predoctoral researcher, advisor, faculty member or committee members who are unable to participate in a face-to-face hearing. Members of the Academic Progression Committee, the involved predoctoral researcher and faculty, and the predoctoral researcher's advisor will hear the appeal. The meeting is confidential and restricted to those persons listed.

An Academic Progression Committee member who has been directly involved in the dismissal will be replaced on the committee by a faculty member appointed by the Dean. If an Academic Progression Committee member is the involved predoctoral researcher's thesis advisor, a replacement committee member will be assigned by the Dean for the purpose of the appeal.

The predoctoral researcher may be accompanied to the Academic Progression Committee hearing by their advisor. When the Academic Progression committee has heard all the evidence, the committee members will meet, in private, to discuss the appeal. The committee will make a decision within seven (7) business days after the hearing.

Readmission Following Dismissal

Dismissal from the School is a serious action when academic probation is not resolved. Therefore, a predoctoral researcher who has been dismissed from the School should not expect to be readmitted. A predoctoral researcher who is dismissed from the School may choose to apply for readmission through the Admissions Committee. The Admissions Committee may consider an application for readmission if there is clear evidence of probable future academic success. It is the predoctoral researcher's responsibility to support the application for readmission by submitting the following materials to the chairperson of the Admissions Committee:

1. A letter indicating the predoctoral researcher's interest to be considered for readmission and including a written plan for achieving future academic success in the program.
2. Letters of recommendation for readmission from both the academic advisor and another faculty member from the most recent course taken.

The Admissions Committee reviews these materials and the predoctoral researcher's overall academic record in making a decision and reserves the right to stipulate additional requirements for readmission.

This Policy was approved by the GSSIMR Board of Directors on November 09, 2020.

Academic Probation Resolution Form

Please complete the Academic Probation Resolution Form and submit it to the Dean for Academic Affairs within seven business days of receiving the notice of Academic Probation. If you are unable to submit the form within seven business days, you must contact the Dean for Academic Affairs. Failure to submit the form can result in additional consequences as detailed in Policy 900, Academic Conduct.

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|-------------------------|--|
| Predoctoral researcher: | |
| Date: | |

Reason for Academic Probation (mark one):

| Stage of the Program | Mark One | Reason for Academic Probation |
|----------------------|----------|--|
| Module Courses | | |
| | | Module course failing grade |
| | | An average overall score of 2 or below on the assessment of achievement of course learning objectives on the module course reports for three or more of the eight module courses |
| Laboratory Rotations | | |
| | | Rotation failing grade |
| | | An average score of 2 or below on the assessment of achievement of rotation learning objectives on the rotation lab reports for two or more laboratory rotations |
| Thesis Research | | |
| | | A failing grade on a term report |
| | | Scoring below expectations on the Academic Progression Matrix in two or more categories, as evaluated by the thesis advisor |

Detail the issues you experienced which led to Academic Probation:

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Outline the steps you will take to resolve the issue that led to Academic Probation:

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Establish the timeline for resolution:

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Module Course or Laboratory Rotations Instructor or Thesis Advisor Approval
(approval can be via an attached/accompanying email from the instructor/thesis advisor):

Date Approved:

Dean for Academic Affairs Verified:

Date Received:

Dean Approved:

Date Approved: