

## **Program Progression for Graduate Nursing Programs**

- **Purpose/Explanation of Policy or Procedure**

- To define progression requirements and processes for students completing the graduate nursing programs.

- **Glossary of Terms/Definitions**

- As found in the program-specific Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation (Edson College) student handbook: <https://nursingandhealth.asu.edu/student-life/current-students>
- Based on ASU Graduate Policy and Procedures: <https://graduate.asu.edu/sites/default/files/asu-graduate-policies-and-procedures.pdf>

- **Applicability**

- All Edson College graduate nursing students.

- **Protocol**

- **Program Progression**

- The highest standards of academic integrity are expected of all students. This academic progression policy applies to all graduate programs in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation.

- **Grade Point Averages (GPA)**

- Graduate students must maintain a minimum 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = “A”) grade point average (GPA) to maintain satisfactory academic progress and to graduate. The minimum 3.00 GPA must be maintained on all GPA’s (Plan of Study (iPOS) GPA, Overall Graduate GPA, and Cumulative GPA):
      1. The iPOS GPA is calculated on all courses that appear on the student’s approved iPOS
      2. Cumulative GPA represents all courses completed at ASU during the graduate career.
      3. The Overall Graduate GPA is based on all courses numbered 500 or higher that appear on the transcript after admission to a graduate program or graduate non-degree. This includes shared coursework if in an approved accelerated bachelor’s/master’s program.
    - The minimum grade in all required courses (including required electives) in the student’s program of study is:
      1. Master’s degree: courses lower than a “C” (2.0 GPA) cannot appear on the iPOS but will be included when calculating the Graduate GPA. Students must achieve a minimum grade of “B” in the applied project course.
      2. Doctoral: courses with grades below a “B-” (2.67 GPA) cannot appear on the iPOS but will be used to compute the Graduate GPA.
    - Courses with an “I” grade cannot appear on the iPOS.
    - To be eligible for graduation, students must achieve an iPOS GPA and a Graduate GPA of 3.00 or higher.

**o The Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS)**

- The Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS) functions as an agreement between the student, the academic unit, and the Graduate College. The iPOS contains certain requirements such as coursework, a committee, and a culminating experience which must be included before it can be approved. The academic unit's graduate support staff should be the primary contact for questions regarding iPOS, degree, and certificate requirements. The iPOS must be approved by a student's committee, the head of the academic unit, and the Dean of the Graduate College.
- To facilitate program completion and shorten the time to complete the program, graduate students are encouraged to complete their iPOS in their first semester. Students who have not completed their iPOS by the time they have enrolled for 50 percent of the minimum credit hours required for their degree program will receive a registration hold.

**o Satisfactory Academic Progress**

- All graduate students are expected to make systematic progress toward the completion of their graduate program. This progress includes satisfying the conditions listed below and achieving the benchmarks and requirements set by the individual graduate programs as well as the Graduate College. If a student fails to satisfy the requirements of their program and/or the benchmarks outlined below, the student may be dismissed from their program based on the academic unit's recommendation to the Graduate College at which time the Dean of the Graduate College makes the final determination.
- Satisfactory academic progress includes:
  1. Maintain a minimum of 3.00 for all GPAs as outlined in the Grade Point Average section above.
  2. Achieve minimum individual course grades as required by the student's program of study (masters or doctoral) as outlined in the Grade Point Average section above.
  3. Satisfy all requirements of the graduate program.
  4. Satisfy the maximum time limit for graduation for the student's graduate program (six years for masters and certificates, ten years for doctoral), see "Time Limit" sections.
  5. Successfully pass comprehensive exams, qualifying exams, foreign language exams, and the oral defense of the proposal/prospectus for the thesis or dissertation.
  6. Successfully complete the culminating experience.
  7. Graduate students must remain continuously enrolled in their graduate program. Failing to do so without a Graduate College approved Leave of Absence is considered a lack of academic progress and may result in the Graduate College withdrawing the student from their program. See the Leave of Absence section in this document.
- Students should verify any additional satisfactory progress policies as required by their Edson College degree program.

**o Repeating ASU Courses**

- Graduate students (degree or non-degree) may retake any course at ASU; however, all grades are part of the student's permanent academic record, remain on the transcript, and are used in all GPA calculations.

**o Degree Maximum Time Limit**

- All work toward a master's degree must be completed within six consecutive years beginning with the semester and year of admission to the program. Graduate courses taken prior to admission that are included on the Interactive Plan of Study must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program.
- Doctoral students must complete all program requirements within a ten-year period. The ten-year period begins with the semester and year of admission to the doctoral program. Graduate courses taken prior to admission that are included on the iPOS must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program (previously awarded master's degrees used on the Interactive Plan of Study are exempt).
- Any exception to the time limit policy must be approved by the supervisory committee, the head of the academic unit, and the Dean of the Graduate College. The Graduate College may withdraw students who are unable to complete all degree requirements and graduate within the allowed maximum time limits.

**o Continuous Enrollment**

- Once admitted to a graduate degree program or graduate certificate program, students must be registered for a minimum of one credit hour during all phases of their graduate education, including the terms in which they are admitted and graduate. This includes periods when students are engaged in research, conducting a doctoral prospectus, working on or defending theses or dissertations, taking comprehensive examinations, taking Graduate Foreign Language Examinations, or in any other way utilizing university resources, facilities, or faculty time.
- Registration for every fall semester and spring semester is required. Summer registration is required for students taking examinations, completing culminating experiences, conducting a doctoral prospectus, defending theses or dissertations, or graduating from the degree program.
- To maintain continuous enrollment, the credit hour(s) must:
  - i. Appear on the student's Interactive Plan of Study, **OR**
  - ii. Be research (592, 792), thesis (599), dissertation (799), or continuing registration (595, 695, 795), **OR**
  - iii. Be a graduate-level course.
- Grades of "W" and/or "X" are not considered valid registration for continuous enrollment purposes. "W" grades are received when students officially withdraw from a course after the drop/add period. "X" grades are received for audit courses. Additionally, students completing work for a course in which they received a grade of "I" must maintain continuous enrollment as defined previously. Graduate students have one year to complete work for an incomplete grade; if the work is not complete and the grade changed within one year, the "I" grade becomes permanent and will remain on the students' transcripts. Additional information regarding incomplete grades can be found at <https://asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm203-09.html>.

**o Leave of Absence**

- Graduate students planning to discontinue registration for a semester or more must submit a Leave of Absence request via their iPOS. This request must be submitted and approved before the anticipated semester of non-registration. Students may request a maximum of two semesters of leave during their entire program. Having an approved Leave of Absence by the Graduate College will enable students to re-enter their program without re-applying to the university.
- Students who do not register for a fall or spring semester without an approved Leave of Absence are considered withdrawn from the university under the assumption that they have decided to discontinue their program. Students removed for this reason may reapply for admission to resume their degree program; the application will be considered along with all other new applications to the degree program.
- Students with a Graduate College approved Leave of Absence are not required to pay tuition and/or fees, but in turn, are not permitted to place any demands on university faculty or use any university resources. These resources include university libraries, laboratories, recreation facilities, or faculty and staff time.
- o **Edson College Program Progression Requirements**
  - A student who has been admitted to any of the stated programs in the Edson College with either regular or provisional admission status:
    1. Must maintain a 3.0 or higher grade point average (GPA) in all work taken for graduate credit (courses numbered 400 or higher).
    2. Must earn the minimum grade required by their program in all required courses (including required electives) in the student's program of study.
      - B- (80 or above) (2.67 GPA) for Doctoral programs.
      - C (70 or above) (2.00 GPA) for master's programs.
  - A student will be placed on academic probation if one or more of the following apply:
    1. Any one of the student's GPAs as described above falls below 3.0.
    2. The student receives less than the minimum grade required in the specific program of study in any course on the approved program of study.
      - B- (80 or above) (2.67 GPA) for Doctoral programs
      - C (70 or above) (2.00 GPA) for master's programs
    3. A student who is asked to leave a clinical site for unprofessional conduct (per the codes of conduct of ASU, the American Nurses Association, and the Arizona Board of Nursing) will leave their clinical site immediately and will not return or be allowed to move to another clinical site that semester and will receive a grade of EU in that course.
    4. In addition, if a student receives less than the minimum grade required by their program (as described above), the clinical instructor and specialty coordinator will determine whether the student should:
      - Return to the same practicum.
      - Be placed in a comparable site.
      - Repeat course content before repeating the practicum.
      - Be considered for program recommendation for removal from the clinical degree.

- Faculty will notify the Graduate Program Office of any student needing to be placed on academic probation per the conditions above. The student will be notified in writing of the academic probation and the conditions required to discontinue the academic probation by the Director.
- Students placed on academic probation must satisfy the following conditions:
  1. The student must bring all of the GPAs (described above) to 3.0 or better by the time the next semester's hours are completed in the student's approved program of study. If the student is on probation due to a GPA less than 3.0, only courses that earn a letter grade (no pass-fail or Z graded courses) can be used to raise the overall GPA.
  2. Courses with grades not meeting the minimum program requirement in doctoral programs must be repeated in the next regular academic semester during which the course is offered. Graduate courses may be repeated only once. A petition must be filed with the Graduate Program Office requesting permission to retake the course during the next academic semester during which the course is offered. Permission will be granted based on the space available in the next cohort, and for clinical courses, the ability to place the student in an appropriate clinical site.
  3. The student must revise and re-file their iPOS to reflect changes related to unsatisfactory progression and the retake of the courses.
  4. Students who receive less than the minimum grade required by their program (as described above) in a clinical course due to unprofessional conduct will be sent a letter outlining the process for getting off probation and progressing with their program of study that includes any recommendations from the Standards Committee if the student petitions for a grade change.
- A student may be recommended for withdrawal from their program of study if one or more of the following apply:
  1. The student fails to increase all of the GPAs (described above) to 3.0 or better by the time they complete the next semester in the student's program of study.
  2. The student fails to receive the minimum grade required by their program (as described above) after repeating a graduate course.
  3. A student who is asked to leave a clinical site for documented unsafe clinical practice (including drug and alcohol use) or unprofessional behavior will leave their clinical site immediately and will not return. A grade of "E" will be assigned, and the student may be recommended for withdrawal from the program. This course may be retaken and the student may need to apply for a Leave of Absence as described above to maintain program progression.
  4. If a student has their State-issued nursing license to practice expired, encumbered, or suspended while a student is in the program, they must immediately notify the Director of Graduate Programs. All graduate nursing students must have an active unencumbered RN license at all times

during their program of study. Loss of this license is grounds for immediate recommendation to the Graduate College for withdrawal from the program.

5. Students who do not comply with Graduate College policies may be withdrawn from their graduate program after review by the Dean of the Graduate College. In addition, academic units may recommend withdrawal of students from graduate programs for lack of compliance with published departmental policies or lack of satisfactory academic progress. All such recommendations must be submitted to the Graduate College with appropriate documentation (e.g., nature of issue, communications with student). Only the Dean of the Graduate College may withdraw students from a graduate program due to lack of compliance with satisfactory academic progress policies. Students who have been withdrawn from a graduate program due to lack of compliance with published departmental or Graduate College policies, or lack of satisfactory academic progress are eligible to apply for admission to the same program only after one year has passed from the term of the withdrawal. Students who have been withdrawn from a graduate program due to an Academic Integrity violation are not eligible for readmission to Arizona State University. The academic program may recommend withdrawal of a student for professional reasons under the following conditions (a student may be recommended for withdrawal upon the occurrence of a single violation under this section):
  - Conduct prohibited by the Arizona Board of Regents Student Code of Conduct <https://students.asu.edu/srr> .
  - Periods of absence during a semester without the endorsement of the student's graduate committee or advisor. If an iPOS must be interrupted for one semester, the student must apply for a leave of absence. This leave status, endorsed by the members of the student's graduate committee and the program director, must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate College following the proper procedure for making this request. This request must be filed and approved no later than the last day of registration in the semester of anticipated leave.
  - Seriously compromising the relations of the Program with the public.
  - Breaches of ethical judgment or professional responsibility.
  - Serious instances of personality or character traits inappropriate for the professional roles for which the student is attempting to prepare.
6. Any student who violates the academic integrity policy of the university (<https://provost.asu.edu/academic-integrity/policy>) may be recommended for withdrawal from their program of study. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to cheating, fabrication, tampering, plagiarism, or facilitating such activities.

#### **o Appeals**

- Students receiving less than the minimum grade required by their program (as described above) can appeal the grade through the Edson College Grievance Procedure outlined in the Grievance policy. Students who have been recommended



to the Graduate College for withdrawal from their program can appeal this decision to the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, Graduate Program Office. If the recommendation to withdraw is upheld by the appeals body of this office, the student can appeal the decision to the dean's office in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation.

**o Incomplete Grades**

- Upon request for an Incomplete grade, the student must complete and submit the Incomplete Grade Request Form [<https://students.asu.edu/forms/incomplete-grade-request>]. A student who does not fulfill the requirements outlined in the Incomplete Grade Request form by the agreed-upon date, and who is still within the 1-year limit required to complete the course, must submit a new request to the Program Director. If the one calendar year limit set by the Graduate College has been passed, the "I" will become a permanent part of the transcript and the student is not allowed to complete the course work as specified on the Incomplete Grade Request Form.

**o Funding**

- Students making unsatisfactory progress and are thus placed on probation are not eligible for traineeship funding or assistantship positions.

**● Procedure**

- o To facilitate degree completion, graduate students with regular status must submit their iPOS by the time they have enrolled for 50 percent of the minimum credit hours required for their degree.
- o Students must meet Graduate College and Edson College requirements for satisfactory progression in their program.
- o Students can be placed on academic probation by Edson College for failing to meet the required minimum GPAs, or for other circumstances as described above including academic integrity, licensure requirements, and student or professional codes of conduct.
- o Student appeals process is available in the program-specific Edson student handbook located at <https://nursingandhealth.asu.edu/student-life/current-students>.

