

**Austin Peay State  
University**

## **Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Retention Standards**

### **POLICIES**

**Issued:** February 26, 2021

**Responsible Official:** Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Responsible Office:** Center for Teaching and Learning

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#### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of Austin Peay State University to establish minimum criteria for undergraduate and graduate academic retention standards.

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#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the criteria for undergraduate and graduate academic retention at Austin Peay State University.

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##### **Procedures**

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- Establishment of Criteria**
- A. The institution will develop specific criteria, in compliance with this policy, to be implemented and enforced as the undergraduate and graduate academic retention standards of the institution.

**Quality Point System**

- B. Initial institutional standards and all subsequent revisions will be submitted to the President for review and approval.
  - C. The approved undergraduate and graduate academic retention standards of the institution are to be clearly expressed in the catalog, uniformly applied to all students, and promptly enforced at the close of each semester.
- A. The following quality point system is to be used in determining averages:
- 1. For each credit hour of A: 4 quality points.
  - 2. For each credit hour of B: 3 quality points.
  - 3. For each credit hour of C: 2 quality points.
  - 4. For each credit hour of D: 1 quality point (0 quality points for graduate studies).
  - 5. For each credit hour of F: 0 quality points.
- B. The quality point average is determined by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the total number of credit hours which the student attempted except for credit hours in courses from which the student withdraws in good standing (see Drop and Withdrawal Standards) or for courses in which the student receives grades such as pass/fail and which are not considered when determining the QPA.
- C. If an institution elects to award grades which are not considered in computing the QPA, it must describe these in the catalog or bulletin and explain the application of such grades.
- D. In addition, it must provide a statement within the catalog or bulletin which limits the number of hours of such grades per semester and the maximum number of such hours a student may receive in total.
- E. Finally, a single student transcript will include term and cumulative QPA calculations which ensure that the institution treats remedial/developmental hours alike in calculating QPA. The transcript will include the following:
- 1. A QPA comprised only of hours taken in courses numbered 100 and above ("college only" QPA) and
  - 2. A QPA comprised of hours taken in courses numbered 100 and above and hours taken in Remedial/Developmental courses ("combined" QPA).

- F. The following uses are based on each calculation:
1. The "college only" QPA will be used in calculating the required QPA for graduation.
  2. The "college only" QPA will be used in determining graduation honors.
  3. The "college only" QPA will be used in determining term honors.
  4. The "combined" QPA will be used in determining suspension and probation.
  5. The "combined" QPA will be used in determining financial aid eligibility.
  6. The "combined" QPA will be used in determining athletic eligibility.
- G. For the purpose of increasing mastery in a course when such is necessary for successful performance in a subsequent course or for the purpose of increasing the quality point average (and only for these purposes) institutions may permit undergraduate students to repeat courses in which their final grades are C or lower. Graduate students may be allowed to repeat a course in which their final grades are C or lower pending approval of the Department Chair and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The graduate student must have approval before repeating the course.
- H. Thus, in computing the quality point average, the question of how to count repeat courses must be specifically addressed in the catalog or bulletin, and undergraduate courses may not be repeated more than twice (three attempts) unless the grades in the third and subsequent attempts are used in calculating the quality point average. Graduate courses are only to be repeated pending the approval of the Department Chair and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

Students may be permitted to repeat a course in which a grade of B or higher was earned only with the approval of the chief academic officer or designee as an exception to this policy.

## **Retention Standards**

### **For Undergraduate Students**

- A. The minimum quality point average required to achieve the baccalaureate degree is 2.0.
- B. In addition, a student who fails during any term to attain a cumulative QPA at or above the level indicated below for the credit hours attempted will be placed on academic probation for the subsequent term.
- C. Required Semester System Cumulative Hours Attempted QPA
  - 1. 10 and under No minimum
  - 2. 12-29 hours attempted 1.5
  - 3. 30-45 hours attempted 1.8
  - 4. 46-59 hours attempted 1.9
  - 5. above 67 2.0
- D. At the end of the next term of enrollment, a student on academic probation who has failed to attain either the above cumulative standard or an undergraduate 2.0 QPA for that term will be suspended for a minimum of one term. The summer term may not be counted as the term of suspension.

The institution may develop specific readmission policies and practices to enable the suspended student to appeal for readmission based on factors of extenuating circumstances and hardship.

### **For Graduate Students**

- A. The minimum grade point average required to achieve the graduate degree or graduate certificate is 3.0 GPA.
- B. Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher to remain in good academic standing.
- C. Students who fail during any term to attain a cumulative GPA at or above a 3.0 GPA will be placed on academic probation for the subsequent term.
- D. When a graduate student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, he or she will be placed on academic probation. Every semester thereafter, the student must earn a minimum 3.5 GPA each term/semester to remain on academic probation until the cumulative GPA reaches 3.0 or better. When the student's cumulative GPA has returned to a 3.0 or greater, the student's academic status will return to "Good Standing." If the student fails to earn a minimum

term/semester grade of 3.5 while on probation, he or she will be suspended. No grades of “D” or “F” are allowed in a student’s program of study. Graduate students who apply to a new graduate program (not a new concentration within an existing graduate program) and gain admission to the new graduate program will start with a new GPA for academic honors purposes, based on credits earned within the new graduate program. The old graduate program and credits earned will be excluded from the GPA calculations for the purposes of determining academic honors and academic standing with the University if one of the Academic Forgiveness policies have been applied. However, all graduate credits earned are applied to financial aid calculations according to the rules, guidelines, and laws of the current date. This policy does not supersede State or Federal financial aid rules, guidelines, and laws.

**Minimum Criteria for  
Institutional Academic  
Fresh Start Policies**

For Undergraduate Students

- A. "Academic Fresh Start" is a plan of academic forgiveness which allows undergraduate students who have experienced academic difficulty to make a clean start upon returning to college after an extended absence.
- B. The Academic Fresh Start allows eligible students to resume study without being penalized for his/her past unsatisfactory scholarship and signals the initiation of a new QPA/GPA to be used for determining academic standing.
- C. Readmitted students who were formally enrolled in the institution as well as transfer students who meet institutional requirements for admission and who have been separated from all institutions of higher education for a minimum of four (4) years are eligible for the Fresh Start.
- D. Institutional policies governing the readmission of former students and admission of transfer students must be in compliance with the institutions admission policies.
- E. Applicants who do not meet the institution's standards may be admitted on scholastic probation or other appropriate condition.

- F. The institution may establish an Academic Fresh Start provision which must meet the following minimum criteria:
1. Student Requirements
    - a. Separation from all collegiate institutions for at least four (4) years.
    - b. Any time after the readmission or admission as a degree-seeking student, file a formal application to the office as defined by the institution's catalog or bulletin requesting the Academic Fresh Start and describing an academic plan.
  2. Terms of the Academic Fresh Start
    - a. Once the student has satisfied the above requirements, the institution may grant the Academic Fresh Start. The student may be granted a Fresh Start only once.
    - b. Fresh Start will also be honored for students who were previously granted a Fresh Start at one of the Tennessee Board of Regents Community Colleges or East Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee State University, Tennessee Tech University and University of Memphis.
    - c. The student's permanent record will remain a record of all work; however, courses taken and previously failed will be excluded from the calculation of the QPA/GPA. Courses with a D grade will also be excluded from the calculation when a grade of C or better is required in the student's current major. QPA, GPA and credit hours will reflect courses for which passing grades were earned and retained.
      - i. Retained grades will be calculated in the Fresh Start QPA/GPA.
      - ii. Courses with D or F grades must be repeated at the institution when they are required in the student's current major. All remaining courses for the current degree objectives must be completed at the institution. No transient credit will be accepted after invoking Academic Fresh Start.

- iii. The application of retained credit toward degree requirements will be determined by the requirements currently in effect at the time the academic renewal status is conferred on the student. Specific program regulations must also be met.
- iv. Previously satisfied remedial/developmental or learning support placement from ACT, Assessment and Placement Program, COMPASS, Accuplacer, or other placement testing instrument utilized by the institution will not be forfeited.
- d. Upon degree admission, Fresh Start applicants who did not satisfy remedial/developmental or learning support requirements at the time of previous enrollment must meet current remedial/developmental or learning support requirements regarding enrollment in college English and mathematics courses.
- e. The student's transcript will note that the Fresh Start was made and the date of the Fresh Start.
- f. The student will apply for the Fresh Start with the understanding that it may only be applicable to APSU and other institutions may not accept the QPA as it is calculated with the Fresh Start.

This policy is independent of financial aid regulations. Financial aid requirements at the time of application will apply. Therefore, a Fresh Start applicant should check with his/her financial aid counselor for guidance.

### **For Graduate Students**

Persons seeking re-admission to the College of Graduate Studies who have not taken graduate courses for at least three years and who have received grades of “C”, “D” or “F” in previous graduate courses may appeal to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies for consideration within the **CARE (Credentials Analysis and Re-Evaluation)** guidelines. Appeals will be granted only in cases where special circumstances exist. Requested courses and grades will remain on the student’s transcript; however, the courses considered under this guideline will neither be calculated into the GPA nor counted as credit

toward a graduate degree. Up to fifteen (15) hours of graduate course work may be removed from the GPA calculation; these may be earned in in multiple semesters.

The purpose of **Graduate Fresh Start** is to allow a graduate student to progress toward degree completion while meeting all the educational requirements of a particular graduate program. Graduate Fresh Start allows the student to petition his or her Graduate Coordinator and/or Department Chair to exclude prior graduate credits from other graduate programs; these other programs may not be concentrations within the same degree. Excluded courses will neither be calculated into the GPA nor counted as credit toward a graduate degree.

Please review the following regulations for using Graduate Fresh Start:

- Once these changes are processed, the outcomes are final and immutable.
- Graduate Fresh Start cannot be used to remove credits from conferred degrees.
- Graduate academic transcripts will reflect all graduate coursework, credit received, and grades earned.
- Federal guidelines that govern satisfactory progress toward a degree, as it relates to financial aid, will be enforced for all graduate credit earned. It is the student's responsibility to understand the regulations regarding financial aid and to seek appropriate input from the Office of Financial Aid.

Applications for **Graduate Care** and **Graduate Fresh Start** can be found on the Graduate office website at <http://www.apsu.edu/grad-studies/current-students/graduate-student-forms.php>.

## **Drop and Withdrawal Standards**

### **For Undergraduate Students**

- A. After the official registration period is over, students may make adjustments in their schedule through the process of adding and/or dropping courses.
- B. A student may drop or add a course by obtaining the approval of the appropriate administrators.



- C. The last date for students to add or drop a course without a penalty is to be clearly indicated and expressed in the catalog or bulletin of the institution.
- D. At the discretion of the institution, courses that are dropped within the add-drop period may be or may not be indicated on the student's transcript.
- E. After the last day to add or drop a class without a penalty, and in unison with the 60% date for Title IV purposes, a student may officially drop a course(s) or withdraw from the institution and receive an automatic "W" or other appropriate grade.
- F. In general, such grade counts as no hours attempted.
  - 1. After the automatic "W" period is complete, a student may drop a course(s) or withdraw from the institution without a mandatory grade of "F" only after having established the existence of unavoidable circumstances.
  - 2. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the appropriate university administrators or faculty to determine the grade the student is to receive, which could be an "F".
  - 3. Statements describing this process will be clearly shown in the catalog or bulletin of the university.
- G. Students who desire to drop a course (s) or withdraw from the institution before the end of a semester must make a formal request through the student self-service option to drop after the automatic "W" period.
- H. If for any reason a student does not officially drop a course(s) or withdraw from the institution; the student will receive an "F" for each course(s) involved.

### **For Graduate Students**

#### **Dropping Courses**

After a student has officially registered for a class, the student is considered to be a member of the class unless the student officially drops the class, withdraws from the University, or the course is cancelled. A course may also be dropped from a student's schedule by administrative authority for reasons such as academic suspension, student violations, or decisions made by the Student Academic Grievance Committee. Discontinuing class attendance without officially dropping or withdrawing from the University will be an unofficial withdrawal, and the

student will retain financial obligation. Failure to drop a class via AP One Stop will result in the grade of “F” “FA” or “FN.”

### Reporting Grades for Courses Dropped

The grade awarded for a dropped course or for courses from which the student withdrew depends on the date the student withdrew from the course or from the University. The dates for awarding grades appear in the Official University Calendar.

1. A grade of “W” is awarded when the student drops or withdraws within the time period the University has established for awarding an automatic “W.” The grade has no impact on the student’s cumulative GPA.
2. A grade of “F”, “FA”, “FN” or “W” will be awarded if the student drops after the automatic “W” period and before the end of the semester/term. A grade of “W” will only be awarded if the instructor determines the student is passing at the time of withdrawal.

### Course Withdrawal Limitations

A graduate student who earns four (4) Withdrawals (“W”s) will be placed on academic probation. If the student receives another “W” ( $\geq$  five (5) “W”s) he or she will be suspended for **one** academic semester. A student on academic suspension from the College of Graduate Studies may not be admitted to, or continue in, any graduate program at APSU for credit or grade point average calculation. Students must adhere to the Academic Suspension appeal process for re-admittance.

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### Revision Dates

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APSU Policy 2:010 – Rev.: February 26, 2021

APSU Policy 2:010 – Rev.: June 5, 2020

APSU Policy 2:010 – Rev.: November 30, 2018

APSU Policy 2:010 – Issued: March 25, 2017

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### Subject Areas:

Academic	Finance	General	Human Resources	Information Technology	Student Affairs
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**Approved**

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President: signature on file

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