

## **Memorandum**

**To:** Members of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs  
**From:** Carolyn Tuohy  
**Date:** April 9, 2002

### **Item Identification**

School of Graduate Studies: Enrolment Policies and Procedures: Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Performance

### **Sponsor**

Carolyn Tuohy, Vice-President, Policy Development and Associate Provost

### **Jurisdictional Information**

The Committee approves changes to programs and regulations and other matters affecting divisional calendars.

### **Highlights**

The proposed changes clarify and give precision to existing policy. They replace the sections on "Effect of Failure in or Failure to Complete a Graduate Course" and "Unsatisfactory Performance" in the SGS Calendar with a new section on "Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress."

### **Action Sought**

Approval of the following motion:

THAT the proposed changes to Enrolment Policies and Procedures regarding Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Performance, as described in the submission from the School of Graduate Studies dated March 21, 2002, be approved, effective September 2002.



## School of Graduate Studies

University of Toronto

March 21, 2002



Professor Carolyn Tuohy  
Vice-President, Policy Development  
and Associate Provost  
Room 206, Simcoe Hall  
27 King's College Circle  
University of Toronto

Dear Professor Tuohy,

At its meeting of March 19, 2002, the Council of the School of Graduate Studies approved the following motion:

**THAT** SGS Council approve the proposed change to the Enrolment Policies and Procedures of the General Regulations of the School of Graduate Studies with respect to Good Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress, effective September 2002.

The text, as amended by SGS Council and the motion sheet are attached. This policy statement will replace the sub-sections entitled "Effect of Failure in or Failure to Complete a Graduate Course" and "Unsatisfactory Performance" (SGS 2001-2002 Calendar, p.28) of the Enrolment Policies and Procedures of the General Regulations of the School of Graduate Studies. It will appear in the SGS Calendar in September 2002.

This is not new policy. It is a more precise wording of existing policy intended to clarify the definition of satisfactory academic progress and to identify the obligations of all parties with respect to maintenance of good academic standing.

The text approved by Council has been extensively discussed and approved at all four Divisional Executive Committees. On behalf of the Council of the School of Graduate Studies, I am presenting this item to you for Governing Council committees approval.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Alderdice  
Secretary to SGS Council  
And Coordinator of Policy, Program and Liaison

Enc.

c.c. T. Chan D. Coombs D. Cormack C. Johnston  
B. Katz V. Makarovska S. Moore L. Yee

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## School of Graduate Studies

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

### **GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING AND SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

To be in good academic standing, a student registered in a degree program in the School of Graduate Studies must: (i) comply with the General Regulations of the School as well as with the Degree Regulations and program requirements governing that degree program; and (ii) make satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree. All degree candidates are admitted under the General Regulations of the School, described in Section 1 of the *Calendar*. The Degree Regulations for the various doctoral and master's degrees offered by the School are specified in Section 2 of the *Calendar* and in Section 8 of the *Calendar*, under the entry of the graduate unit offering the graduate program leading to the relevant degree. The specific requirements for the various graduate programs offered in the School are described in Section 8, under the entry of the graduate unit offering the program.

Failure to maintain good academic standing may result in various sanctions, including ineligibility for fellowships, lowest priority for bursaries and assistantships, and even termination. The School may terminate the registration and candidacy of a student (i) who fails to comply with the General Regulations of the School, the relevant Degree Regulations, or the specific degree requirements of the graduate unit in which the student is registered or (ii) who fails to maintain satisfactory progress in the degree program in which the student is registered, as measured either by the general standards of the School or by the specific ones of the graduate unit.

### **Full-Time Studies**

Students registered as full-time students in the School of Graduate Studies must be engaged in their studies on a full-time basis, as required by government regulations for full-time graduate studies. (See "Full-time Studies", p. 24, above.) A full-time student may be absent from the University for an extended period or may participate in a program offered by another university if and only if the student has received written permission from the graduate unit in which he or she is registered. A graduate student who, in a given session, is absent from the University without receiving prior approval may lose good academic standing. In exceptional cases, a graduate unit may recommend to the School the termination of the student's registration and candidacy.

### **Timely Completion of Graduate Program Requirements**

Each graduate unit establishes specific requirements for degree programs, in addition to those of the School, as well as standards of satisfactory performance and progress. These requirements and standards are described in the appropriate entry of Section 8 of the *Calendar* and in material published separately by graduate units. Continued candidacy in a degree program requires satisfactory progress toward the completion of that program. A student's progress in a degree program will be considered satisfactory only if the student satisfies and completes the various requirements for that degree in a manner consistent with the graduate unit's time line for completion of the degree. A graduate unit may recommend to the School the termination of the registration and candidacy of a student who fails to maintain satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree for which the student is a candidate.

### **Satisfactory Completion of Graduate Courses**

Satisfactory performance in a degree program requires the completion of every course taken for graduate credit with a grade of at least a B-; some graduate units may require a minimum grade above a B- for some or all courses. If a student fails to complete a graduate course in a satisfactory manner (i.e., receives a grade report of 'FZ' or 'NCR' in a course, receives a grade report below the minimum acceptable by the graduate unit, or receives a non-grade report of 'INC'), then the graduate unit in which the student is registered may recommend

to the School the termination of registration and candidacy of that student. If the student is permitted to continue, he or she must repeat the relevant course, or an alternative course recommended by the graduate unit and approved by the School, and obtain a satisfactory grade. (The report for the course that was not completed in a satisfactory manner as well as the report for the repeated or alternative course will appear on the student's academic record.)

### **Supervision and Satisfactory Progress in a PhD Program**

A candidate for the PhD degree is expected, with the assistance of the graduate unit, to select a supervisor and, with the assistance of the supervisor and graduate unit, to constitute a supervisory committee, consisting of the supervisor and at least two other members of the graduate faculty, as early as practicable in the student's program but, in any case, no later than the time specified by the time frame established by the graduate unit. The student's choice of supervisor and supervisory committee is subject to the approval of the graduate unit in which the student is registered. A student who encounters difficulties setting up a supervisory committee should consult the chair/director or the graduate coordinator of the graduate unit in advance of the relevant deadline. A student who fails to constitute a supervisory committee by the required time may lose good academic standing.

A candidate is expected to meet with this committee at least once a year, and more often if the committee so requires. At each meeting, the supervisory committee will assess the student's progress in the program and provide advice on future work. If in each of two consecutive meetings, a student's supervisory committee reports that the student's progress is unsatisfactory, the graduate unit may recommend to the School the termination of registration and candidacy of that student. A student who encounters difficulties arranging a meeting of this committee should consult the chair/director or the graduate coordinator of the graduate unit in advance of the relevant deadline for doing so. A student who, through the student's own neglect, fails to meet with the supervisory committee in a given year will be considered to have received an unsatisfactory progress report from the committee.

### **Time Limit for Completion of Program Requirements in a PhD Program**

A candidate for the PhD degree enrolled in a full-time program (as opposed to a flexible-time program) will be denied further registration in the program and will have his or her candidacy terminated at the end of the third year of registration in the case of someone admitted on the basis of a master's degree, or at the end of the fourth year of registration otherwise, if, by that time, either

- a** the candidate has not completed all requirements for the degree exclusive of thesis research— including course requirements, language requirements, qualifying departmental examinations—or
- b** the candidate does not have an approved thesis topic, supervisor, or supervisory committee.

(Please note: Some graduate units require candidates to register in courses that run continuously throughout the program, e.g. ongoing research seminar courses. The foregoing time limit does not apply to such courses.) In exceptional circumstances, such a candidate may be permitted to register in the program for two further sessions at the discretion of the graduate unit concerned. Continuation beyond two sessions will require the approval of both the graduate unit and the SGS Admissions and Program Committee.

## Motion

### School of Graduate Studies Council Tuesday, March 19, 2002

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Item 10.

**MOTION** ( / ) **THAT** SGS Council approve the proposed change to the Enrolment Policies and Procedures of the General Regulations of the School of Graduate Studies with respect to Good Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress, effective September 2002.

*See the proposed text attached.*

**NOTE:**

SGS Council, at its meeting of January 29, 2002, tabled the proposed text on Good Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress, to allow for more consultation and revisions addressing concerns raised by members of Council. The current text, dated March 7, 2002, has been revised accordingly and discussed at all four Divisional Executive Committees.

The proposal is a new addition, to appear in the General Regulations, Enrolment Policies and Procedures section of the Calendar (p.28 of the 2001-2002 Calendar) replacing the text as indicated on the attached photocopy extract.

With SGS Council approval, this item will be submitted to Governing Council committees for approval.

Only faculty holding a graduate appointment may direct a reading and/or research course, and they must hold a faculty appointment in the graduate unit where the course is being offered, normally in the student's home graduate unit. In general, both the student and instructor should be on campus and the frequency of their meeting should be consistent with other courses. Approval to take a reading and/or research course is given by the graduate unit.

**Seminar/Workshop Courses**  
Some graduate units offer seminar/workshop courses. These courses vary in format and delivery from unit to unit, and they may or may not count towards the number of courses required for the completion of a degree program. Consult the home graduate unit for details and program requirements.

**Auditing of Graduate Courses**  
Graduate units determine if they wish to allow auditing of their courses and which groups of students and non-students specified in the University's Policy on Auditing of Courses they wish to allow. When auditing is allowed, the final decision to permit an individual to audit rests with the instructor of the course. In all cases, students registered in the University who wish to audit courses have priority over others. An auditor may attend lectures and other class meetings, take part in class discussions, and, when the appropriate fee is paid, receive written confirmation of attendance. An auditor will not receive evaluations of participation and will not be allowed to submit assignments or write examinations and tests except by special and express permission. Audited courses are not recorded on the student's official transcript. The University's Code of Student Conduct applies to auditors. Further information about access, Certificates of Attendance, and fees for auditing may be obtained from the graduate coordinator, Office of the Coordinator of Student Affairs.

**Effect of Failure in or Failure to Complete a Graduate Course**  
Satisfactory performance in a program of graduate work requires completion of all courses taken for graduate credit with a grade of at least B-; some graduate units may require a minimum grade above B-. Thus, failure in a graduate course or failure to satisfactorily complete a graduate course may result in a recommendation from the graduate unit to the School that the student's registration and candidacy be terminated. A student who is permitted to continue must repeat the failed or incompletable course, or a course recommended by the graduate unit

and approved by the School as an alternative to it. The student must obtain at least a B- grade. Both the failed or incompletable course, and the grade in the repeated or replaced course will appear on the student's academic record.

**Unsatisfactory Performance**  
A student's performance will be considered satisfactory only if the student completes the various requirements for the degree for which he/she is registered in a satisfactory and timely manner, as determined by the graduate unit's time line for completion of the degree.

A candidate for the Ph.D. degree will be denied further registration in the program and will have his or her candidacy terminated if, by the end of the fourth year of registration in the program, a the candidate has not completed all requirements for the degree exclusive of the thesis - including course requirements, language requirements, departmental examinations - or b the candidate does not have an approved thesis topic, supervisor, or advisory committee. In exceptional circumstances such a candidate may be permitted to register in the program for two further sessions provided that the graduate unit concerned approves. Continuation in the program beyond two sessions will require the approval of both the graduate unit and the SGS Admissions and Programs Committee.

**UNIVERSITY GRADING PRACTICES POLICY**  
The policy is printed in ordinary type; additional comments appear in italics.

**Purpose**  
The purpose of the University Grading Practices Policy is to ensure that the evaluation of student performance is made in a fair and objective manner against these academic standards:

- (a) progress throughout the University and evaluated according to different grade scales;
- (c) that the academic standing of every student can be accurately assessed even when courses have been taken in different divisions of the University and evaluated according to different grade scales.

**Application of Policy**  
The Policy applies to all individuals and committees taking part in the evaluation of student performance in degree, diploma, and certificate credit courses (hereafter referred to as courses).

replaces the C, D, and F grades in (i) above and/or the scales Honours/Pass/Fail and Credit/No Credit.

**Grades vs. Scores**  
1.4 Grades should always be based on the approved grade scales. However, students may find that on any one evaluation they may receive a numerical or letter mark that reflects the score achieved on the test or essay. The cumulative scores may not be directly identified with the final grade. Grades are final only after review by the divisional review committee described below.

**Grade Reporting**  
1.5 Grades will be assigned according to the numerical scale of marks referred to in 1.3 (b) above, and converted to the relevant letter grade scale of 1.3 (a) above. In graduate divisions, grades may be assigned according to the truncated relevant letter grade scale of 1.3 (c) above. The P/FZ and CR/NCR scales of 1.3 (d) above may also be used. However, the grades assigned in a course must all be from the same scale.

1.6 All non-grade designators used in reporting course results must correspond to the University-wide standard. A list of the currently approved designators and their meanings is given in the Appendix A.2. See "Note below."

1.7 The information in grade reports and transcripts must be communicated to the user, whether within or outside the University, in a clear and meaningful way. That end, transcripts must include:  
(a) an enrolment history, which traces chronologically the student's entire participation at the University;  
(b) a "grade point average" based on a 4-point scale for all undergraduate divisions. Note: grade point average values will be assigned as follows:

A+/A	=	4.0
A-	=	3.7
B+	=	3.3
B	=	3.0
B-	=	2.7
C+	=	2.3
C	=	2.0
C-	=	1.7
D+	=	1.3
D	=	1.0
D-	=	0.7
F	=	0.0

**Amendment to Policy**  
Amendments to the Policy shall be recommended to the Academic Board. Changes to the divisional regulations on grading practices shall be forwarded to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs.

**Distribution of Policy**  
A copy of the Grading Practices Policy as well as the description of the grade scales and the substance of divisional regulations indicated in Part II of this Policy shall be published in the Calendar of the division. Similarly a copy shall be given to all students upon initial registration and to all instructors and others, including teaching assistants, involved in the evaluation of student performance.

The Policy is in three parts: Part I deals with grades; Part II outlines grading procedures to be adhered to in divisional regulations adopted as part of this Policy, and Part III is an administrative appendix available upon request from the Office of the Vice-President and Provost.

**PART I: GRADES**  
**Meaning of Grades**

Grades are a measure of the performance of a student in individual courses. Each student shall be judged on the basis of how well he or she has command of the course materials.  
1.1 A grade assigned in a course is not an assessment of standing within a program of studies. To determine the requirements for credit and standing in a program of studies, the academic regulations of the division in which the program is offered should be consulted.

1.2 Grades for each course shall be assigned with reference to the following meanings (which may be expanded in the divisional regulations under Part II):

- Excellent
- Good
- Adequate
- Marginal
- Inadequate

**Grade Scales**

1.3 Once a judgement on the performance of the student has been made, the following grade scales are to be used:  
(a) the relevant letter grade scale A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F; of all integers from 0 to 100;  
(c) for graduate divisions only, a truncated refined letter grade scale in which FZ