Proposal to replace the Academic Standing, Progress, Probation and Disqualification Policy with an Undergraduate Academic Eligibility Policy

Submitted by Student Success & Retention Innovation (SSRI) 3/22/19; Amended & approved by the Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee, 3/26/19; Undergraduate Council, 4/9/19; College Academic Administrators Council, 4/23/19; Amended & approved by the Provost Council, 4/29/19.

I. PROPOSAL

Policies for academic eligibility, or eligibility to enroll in continued coursework, affect all undergraduate students. Probation, an important feature of academic eligibility policy, is especially critical at the University of Arizona given that 1 in 4 of all undergraduate students are on academic probation at least once during their college career. Through rigorous study of current policy and historical student trends, several key insights regarding probation have emerged:

- Probation happens early: 87% of probation happens within year 1.
- Only 21% of students ever on probation graduate within 6 years (UA average = 63%).
- Most probation students leave within one year, largely because of stop out (63%).
- Current policy disproportionately impacts students of color and first-generation college students.

Furthermore, an analysis of the impact of current disqualification policy has revealed:

- The metrics for disqualification are frequently unclear.
- Disqualification lacks consistency across colleges.
- Once a student has been disqualified the pathway back to good standing at UA is often unclear.

After benchmarking academic eligibility policy at 24 institutions across the country\(^1\), we concluded that a refined academic eligibility policy will provide better support to all undergraduates; especially those exhibiting early signs of academic distress. Expected outcomes from an enhanced policy include:

- Improved student experiences including ability to successfully navigate the first year.
- More time to provide effective student interventions.
- Increases in retention and degree completion.

\(^1\) San Diego State University
Michigan State University
University of California - Los Angeles
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Maryland - College Park
UNC – Pembroke
University of Washington
Texas A&M
Ohio State University
ASU
Ohio University
University of Louisville

Clemson University
University of California – Davis
University of Florida
University of Iowa
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities
University of Wisconsin
UT- Austin
Penn State University
UNC-Chapel Hill
Colorado State
University of Alabama
Virginia Tech
II. CURRENT POLICY STATEMENT
https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/undergraduate-academic-standing-progress-probation-and-disqualification

Undergraduate Academic Standing, Progress, Probation and Disqualification

Good Standing
Good standing status denotes that a student is eligible to continue in or to return to the University.

Academic Progress
Undergraduate students will be considered to be making normal progress toward a degree if their cumulative grade-point-average (GPA) for all work attempted at the University of Arizona is not less than 2.000.

Minimum Grade-Point-Average (GPA) Required for Continued Enrollment
One of the requirements for undergraduates to be eligible to continue at the University is that they earn a minimum cumulative grade-point-average (GPA) of 2.000.

Academic Probation
12/12/16 Update: Probation Policy amended by the Faculty Senate on 12/5/16, with a statement on the Academic Recovery Program, effective for all undergraduate students in Spring 2017.

Undergraduate students not meeting academic progress will be placed on academic probation. Academic probation status occurs following any term (i.e., fall, winter, spring, summer) when the student's cumulative grade-point-average (GPA) drops below a 2.000. The first time that students are placed on academic probation, they should meet with their academic advisor to discuss the consequences, such as enrollment in a mandatory Academic Recovery Program during the following fall or spring semester. Students on academic probation are subject to restrictions or requirements, such as certain courses, that are determined by the academic dean of the college in which the student is enrolled. Students should contact the college dean's office for college-specific probation policies. Students are removed from academic probation upon earning the minimum 2.000 cumulative GPA as required by the University.

(See the Code of Conduct Policies Sanctions section for Disciplinary Probation information and the UA Student Disciplinary Procedures Source Page.)

College Disqualification
Undergraduate disqualification is of two types: from a particular college in the University or from the University. A student may be academically disqualified only after two consecutive regular semesters of not meeting the standards of normal progress (cumulative grade-point-average of 2.000) or under conditions described below under "Probation or Disqualification by Special Action". Contact your college dean's office regarding college disqualification policies.
The student recommended for disqualification from a particular college may seek immediate admission to another college in the University. Permission for admission to another college must be obtained in writing from the dean of the college into which the student plans to transfer. The letter of permission should be presented to the Office of the Registrar. Ordinarily, permission will be granted only if the student plans to pursue a modified program in a curriculum of the new college and has demonstrated ability warranting such action. Those who have been given college disqualification are strongly urged to seek thorough academic and career counseling and guidance. Failure to secure approval to transfer to another college in the University is tantamount to University disqualification, and the rules governing this type of disqualification then will apply. A disqualified student may not attend the University as a non-degree student.

A student disqualified from a particular college who may have secured subsequent permission to register in another college is automatically on academic probation in the new college. Students may be granted college disqualification only once in their academic career. Any later disqualification will be considered a University disqualification.

University Disqualification

An undergraduate student who receives University disqualification is restricted from registering at the University of Arizona and may return to the University only on the basis of evidence that underlying conditions have materially improved and that he or she is now capable of academic success. Students seeking readmission who left the University on academic probation or under disqualification must receive approval from the dean of the college they wish to enter prior to readmission.

Probation or Disqualification by Special Action

Upon recommendation of the dean of the college, an undergraduate may be placed on academic probation or may be disqualified at any time for neglect of academic work.

Credit Restrictions for Undergraduates With a University Disqualification

Students who are under disqualification from the University may not take University of Arizona courses for credit or establish credit by examination during their periods of disqualification, although they may remove incomplete grades.

Proposed Replacement Statement: **Undergraduate Academic Eligibility Policy**

Academic eligibility is the ability to enroll in courses; it is automatically calculated at the end of each enrolled term and/or when grade activity occurs. The policy is designed to help undergraduate students stay on track for degree completion at the University of Arizona.

There are 5 academic statuses determining an undergraduate student’s eligibility to enroll in courses.

1. Eligible
   a. All new undergraduate students begin with a status of Eligible;
   b. Students must earn a 2.00 or higher cumulative GPA to continue in Eligible status;
   c. Students with a status of Eligible may enroll in courses.
2. Academic Warning
   • Warning status occurs when an undergraduate student who was previously Eligible does not earn a 2.00 or higher cumulative GPA;
   • Students with a status of Academic Warning may enroll in courses; however, they will be contacted by their college or school and required to complete an intervention;
   • Students who begin a semester with a status of Academic Warning and earn a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or above will return to Eligible status.

3. Academic Probation
   • Probation status occurs when a student who was previously on Academic Warning does not earn a 2.00 or higher cumulative GPA;
   • Students with a status of Academic Probation may enroll in courses; however, they will be required to participate in an intervention developed in partnership with each college or school and the University’s student success program;
   • Students who begin a semester with a status of Academic Probation and earn a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or above will return to Eligible status.

4. Ineligible
   a. Ineligibility status occurs when an undergraduate student who was previously on Academic Probation does not earn a 2.00 or higher cumulative GPA;
   • Students with a status of Ineligible may not enroll in courses; however, they may submit an appeal requesting an additional semester of Academic Probation;
   • When an appeal is granted, a student may enroll in courses but must complete requirements stipulated in the appeal decision, such as dropping certain courses, using specific campus resources, or creating an action plan. If a student does not complete the requirements specified in the approved appeal, future appeals are unlikely to be approved.

5. Academic Review
   • Academic Review status occurs when a student earns a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or above, but has a semester GPA of less than a 2.00.
   • Students with a status of Academic Review will be contacted by their college or school to determine if they need some kind of assistance.

The statuses above determine eligibility to enroll in courses at the University; however, they do not determine eligibility to enroll in specific programs, colleges, or schools.

Standards for specific programs, colleges, and schools are determined by each program, college, or school. After the second enrolled term, programs, colleges, and schools may require a Major Change or a College/School Change, if sufficient academic progress has not been made in the current major. Students with a Major Change will work with their college or school to determine a new academic program within their college/school. Students with a College/School Change will be directed to the
Academic Advising Center in the College of Letters Arts and Sciences (CLAS) where they may work with an advisor to enroll in courses, discuss alternative degree programs (majors), or discuss appealing.

An undergraduate student’s eligibility to enroll in courses does not ensure “Satisfactory Academic Progress” (external link) for financial aid purposes. Students who receive financial aid should consult directly with the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid.

III. RATIONALE

- A revised policy for academic eligibility will improve the student experience by providing more detailed information to students about academic performance expectations.
- Taking this action acknowledges that many students face challenges in their first semester and provides an opportunity to provide intensive, college-based support before a student is placed on academic probation.

IV. EFFECTIVE TERM:  Fall 2019, if the Registrar’s Office and UITS can complete system changes by then

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF NEW POLICY

a) The communication and intervention responsibilities for Academic Probation will stay exactly as they are now.

b) Colleges/schools will be responsible for communicating with students on Academic Warning and will provide the communication and intervention they deem appropriate.

c) Colleges/schools will be responsible for communicating with students on Academic Review and will provide the communication and intervention they deem appropriate.

d) The appeal process will be developed over the next 6 months through a task force in which every college/school will assign a representative to help define the process. The task force will determine the best way to implement the appeal process. It could be a college-specific process or a shared process depending on the recommendation of the task force.

e) Communication about academic statuses will be posted in UAccess but formal notices will come from the colleges/schools not from a centralized group.

f) The $100 academic recovery fee will be removed starting in 2019-2020. This means that there will be one more year of funds available, those collected in 2018-2019. There will be no funds derived from this fee from fall 2020 onward.

h) The Registrar’s Office is engaged in implementation discussion and feel prepared to make necessary system and process changes according to the proposed timeline.

i) B-Deficit: University policy has never contained b-deficit language. Nonetheless, it is a common practice that has proven helpful to many. We recommend using a GPA calculator and will ensure the University has an excellent tool that is accessible for all to use; however, if advisors or programs choose to continue using the b-deficit language instead of using the GPA calculator, that is their prerogative.