Academic Guidelines

Academic Standing Requirements

Students are considered to be in good academic standing when a B average (GPA 3.0) or better is maintained, and a grade of Satisfactory (S) has been received for Field Instruction and Field Integrative Seminars. Doctoral students are allowed no more than one grade lower than B.

Grading Policy

To receive credit for a course, you must be in regular attendance throughout a semester and satisfactorily complete all course requirements. The minimum passing grade is the letter grade C.

Students will receive grades according to the policy adopted by the faculty. Grades for GSS, with their numerical equivalents and descriptions, are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Equivalent</th>
<th>Grade Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100% (4.00/4.00)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-89% (3.75/4.00)</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89% (3.50/4.00)</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86% (3.00/4.00)</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82% (2.75/4.00)</td>
<td>Marginally adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76-79% (2.50/4.00)</td>
<td>Not adequate, but passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-75% (2.00/4.00)</td>
<td>Minimally passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-69% (0.00/4.00)</td>
<td>Failing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a student receives a grade of F for a course, it will remain on the student's record, even after the course is retaken and a passing grade is subsequently earned. The grade of a repeated course is also recorded on the academic record and does not remove or replace a grade previously earned.

Policy on the Use of "Incomplete" (M.S.W. Students)

A grade of "Incomplete" is generally discouraged and only employed when faculty conclude that a student is unable to complete assigned course work due to serious extenuating circumstances. An "Incomplete" (INC) is a grade given at the request of the student in writing to the course instructor. A timeframe acceptable to both the student and faculty member must be agreed upon (usually only up to four weeks). The recommendation is that this timeframe extend beyond four weeks after the final class of the semester. An "INC" will convert to an "F" if it is not changed within a four-week period.

If all work is not completed and submitted during the semester and no arrangements for an "Incomplete" have been made, an NGR (No Grade-Reported) can be given. "NGR's will also convert to an "F" if not converted to an earned grade within a four-week period.

An instructor is under no obligation to accept work from a student after the mutually agreed upon timeframe. It is the instructor's decision whether to re-negotiate the contract. As in all matters related to grading, an instructor's decision about a grade-related matter is always final.

No student may progress into the advanced/specialist phase of study in the M.S.W. program with either an "Incomplete" or "NGR" or "F" grade(s) in any foundation/generalist course.

To ensure the timely removal of an "INC" or "NGR," it is the instructor's responsibility to complete and submit a change of grade through the faculty portal workflow. The designated administrator in the Dean's Office will review and approve the change, and in some cases, it may also require approval from the Associate Provost.

Policy on the Use of "Incomplete" (Ph.D. Students)

Incomplete grades in a course are granted only in case of an emergency. Excessive time demands will not be considered justification for an "Incomplete" grade. Students should anticipate their workload demands, including coursework, outside employment, and family and personal obligations when signing up for courses at the beginning of the semester. A signed contract with the instructor, specifying the nature of the emergency and the revised completion date, is required. The revised completion date must be within one month of the end of the course, except in extreme circumstances. If the "Incomplete" continues after the month, the student must notify the director of the doctoral program in writing, noting the reason for the delay and proposing a date for completing the work. The "Incomplete" will convert to a grade of F if the student fails to complete the coursework by the revised date.

A student with an "Incomplete" who does not have any grades of B- or lower on their record may register for new courses that do not have the course with the "Incomplete" as a prerequisite. A student with an "Incomplete" and one grade of B- on their record may not register for any new courses until the "Incomplete" has been converted to a grade. If the "Incomplete" becomes a grade of B or higher, the student may then register for new courses. If the "Incomplete" becomes a grade of B- or lower, the student will be dematriculated from the doctoral program. A student with an F in a required course may not register for any additional courses until that course is retaken. The student may continue in the program and register for new courses upon achieving a grade of B or higher after retaking the required course. If the student achieves a grade of B- or lower upon retaking the required course, they will be dematriculated from the program.

Students are expected to maintain at least a B average to remain in good standing in their studies. Students who receive a grade of B- or lower in more than one course will not be considered to be in good academic standing. Students who receive a second grade of B- or lower in any course will be removed from doctoral studies, pending the outcome of any appeal they make to the director of the program, the Doctoral Curriculum and Policy Committee, and/or the dean of the Graduate School of Social Service.

The program director will review the progress of students at the end of academic year. Faculty advisors will be notified if any students are having difficulty in meeting the standards of the program, and will be asked to communicate this to the students so identified.

Attendance Policies

All students are required to be in regular, consistent attendance in courses and in field work. However, sometimes emergencies or illnesses can interfere with attendance. If illness or hospitalization occurs and a student is in a field placement, the field advisor must be notified immediately and will consult with the assistant dean of student services. Excessive absences can jeopardize students’ academic standing. Each
faculty member must clearly state their attendance expectations on their individual syllabi.

For on-ground courses, if a student is absent from three classes, they will receive a final grade of "F." However, students can avoid this by withdrawing from the course. Withdrawing from a course does not relieve students of their financial responsibility for the course.

Online program students should be aware of the attendance policy for online courses. As the courses run for eight weeks, missing two weeks of a synchronous class will result in an "F" grade. To avoid this, students can withdraw from the course, but they will remain financially responsible for the course. For asynchronous portions of online courses, non-submission of work or inadequate class participation can lead to failing the course. Students anticipating a conflict must communicate with their course instructor and withdraw from the course before the Academic Calendar deadline. Students should review the deadline for course withdrawals before making any requests. Veteran students should also consider consulting with the VA Certifying Officials in Office of Academic Records before withdrawing from a course, as it may impact their benefits.

**Religious Holidays**
There are a number of religious faiths represented within the Fordham University student body. The policy of the University is to respect all students’ religious beliefs. There will be no penalty for a class absence due to religious holidays. Students are responsible to notify course instructors at the beginning of the semester if they plan to be absent for a religious holiday in order to discuss arrangements to meet the course requirements for assignments for that class.

**Course Withdrawal**
There are times when you may find it necessary to withdraw from a course. If you wish to withdraw from a course after the add/drop period has ended, you need to contact your academic advisor at your campus and the assistant dean of student services. Withdrawal from courses after the add/drop period will result in a "W" on your transcript. Veteran students should also consider consulting with the VA Certifying Officials in the Office of Academic Records before withdrawing from a course as it may impact their benefits.

**University Withdrawal**
If you plan to withdraw from the University, contact Associate Dean for Student Services Jeffrey Coyle at jcoyle@fordham.edu. Students who withdraw from the University must complete paperwork and speak with the assistant dean of student services. Veteran students should also consider consulting with the VA Certifying Officials in the Office of Academic Records before withdrawing from the University as it may impact their benefits. If a student withdraws from the University and wishes to return, a full reapplication is required, and the student is not guaranteed reentry into the program.

**Leave of Absence**
If, as a matriculated student, you plan to take a one- or two-semester leave of absence, you should notify your academic advisor and the assistant dean of student services of your intent. The request should be made two weeks prior to the start of the term. Late requests for a leave of absence cannot be accepted.

It is the student’s responsibility to complete a leave of absence request form. If the student is a matriculated student who has not attended for more than two semesters and wishes to return to the program, they must reapply through the Office of Admissions. If a formal leave of absence has been granted, it is likely that the reapplication process will consist only of the application, an updated autobiographical statement, current resume, and one current letter of reference. If the student has completely withdrawn from the University and wishes to return, a full reapplication is required, and the student is not guaranteed reentry into the program.

**Educational Disruption Due to Medical Leave of Absence**
Following Fordham University protocol, students who have taken a leave of absence or have withdrawn from classes for medical or mental health reasons will be required to participate in the reentry process. Initially, the student must speak with the assistant dean of student services at Fordham GSS and complete a medical leave of absence form.

**Reentry Process**
The process by which students on a medical leave of absence return to studies is managed by Fordham University’s dean of students in cooperation with the Graduate School of Social Service and other relevant offices such as Counseling and Psychological Services and/or Student Health Services. The student will be required to present medical documentation verifying readiness to return to the MSW program. Contact the dean of students at Lincoln Center, Jenifer Campbell, Ed.D., at 212-636-6250 or DeanofSaLC@fordham.edu.

For additional information on the process for reentry, please refer to this page.

Ph.D. students should consult their program’s enrollment policies for additional details on course withdrawals and leaves of absence.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Requirements**
Each school of Fordham University has established minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) that students must maintain as they pursue their degree. The University measures SAP annually at the end of the spring semester (May).

To be eligible for federal aid, such as Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans or Graduate PLUS Loans, each student must be making SAP according to the School’s standards. The requirements to be eligible for federal financial aid for the Fordham Graduate School of Social Service:

- Minimum 3.0 GPA required
- Must be registered for a minimum of six hours
- Must successfully complete six hours each term
- Complete the course of study for a M.S.W. degree within five years
- Incompletes, withdrawals, and noncredit remedial courses will count against attempted but not earned hours
- Transfer credits that count toward the student’s current program will count as both attempted and completed hours

Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service does permit appeals when a student loses FSA eligibility because they failed to make satisfactory progress. Contact Associate Dean for Student Services, Jeffrey Coyle at jcoyle@fordham.edu for information on how to complete the SAP form and she will then submit the appeal form.