

Academic Policies and Procedures

Policies

Consistent with its mission as a public institution of higher education SUNY New Paltz sponsors a broad spectrum of opportunities and services for graduate students in its service region. Although there is a stringent set of criteria for matriculation in a degree program, most students will have access to post-baccalaureate study at New Paltz. Enrollment in some courses is restricted to matriculated students, many courses have prerequisites, but many others are open and available to students with graduate standing regardless of their field of preparation.

Graduate studies at New Paltz presupposes a rigorous course of study at a higher level and in greater depth than at the undergraduate level. Matriculated students follow a prescribed program, the “plan of study”, and must remain in academic good standing. Other students may register for courses for which they are qualified without regard to a “plan”.

Non-matriculated students who subsequently apply for matriculation are considered in a manner similar to undergraduate transfer students. That is, graduate credits earned prior to matriculation will be evaluated by the department to determine which, if any, may be applied to the degree. Factors to be considered in evaluating these credits include the grade received, the accreditation status of the school, and, for rapidly changing fields, the currency of skills and information covered in the courses.

The non-matriculated classification includes visiting students, students in the last term of their baccalaureate study, and others who do not plan to work toward a degree. On request, the College will provide an official transcript of all graduate courses completed and the grades earned. No official status or obligation pertains to non-matriculated students.

PLAN OF STUDY

Once a student receives his/her letter of matriculation from the Dean of the Graduate School, he/she should meet with the assigned advisor to complete a Plan of Study. The Plan of Study is signed by the student, the student’s academic advisor(s), the department chair, and finally approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. ***Please note that undergraduate courses cannot be listed on a graduate Plan of Study.***

Any changes in the approved Plan of Study may be made by using the “Request for Change in Plan of Study” form which is available through their academic advisor(s), the Graduate School or on the Graduate School web site at: www.newpaltz/graduate/reqchangeinplanofstudy.pdf. The Plan must be filed early in the student’s academic career.

ACADEMIC “GOOD STANDING”

“Good Academic Standing” is defined as earning a GPA of at least 3.0. “Not making good progress toward the degree” is a GPA below 3.0.

Matriculated graduate students who have completed four or more graduate courses at New Paltz and who have earned a cumulative average below 2.50 terminate their “good standing” and forfeit their matriculated status.

Any student who has attempted either two semesters of study or 12 credits as a matriculated graduate student and has failed to achieve the minimum GPA (3.0) will be sent a warning letter.

Only two courses with a grade below B- (2.67 on the 4.00 scale) will be counted toward a graduate degree.

Matriculated students with four or more courses with grades below B- will forfeit their matriculated status.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are serious offenses, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action.

Cheating is defined as giving or obtaining information by improper means in meeting any academic requirements. The use for academic credit of the same work in more than one course without knowledge or consent of the instructor(s) is a form of cheating and is a serious violation of academic integrity. Forgery is defined as the alteration of college forms, documents, or records or the signing of such forms or documents by someone other than the proper designee.

Plagiarism is the representation, intentional or unintentional, of someone else's words or ideas as one's own. Since words in print are the property of an author or publisher, plagiarizing is a form of larceny punishable by fine. When using another person's words in a paper, students must place them within quotation marks or clearly set them off in the text and give them appropriate footnoting. When students use only the ideas and change the words, they must clearly identify the source of the ideas. Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, therefore, is a violation of the property of the author plagiarized and of the implied assurance by the students when they hand in work that the work is their own. If students have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, it is their responsibility to clarify the matter by conferring with the instructor.

Faculty members must report in writing cases of cheating, plagiarism or forgery to their department chair, academic Dean and Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Faculty members are also responsible for making the initial determination of the academic penalty to be imposed in cases of cheating, plagiarism, or forgery and for informing in writing the department chair, the academic Dean, and the student of the alleged violation and the proposed penalty. The academic penalty may range, for instance, from failure of a specific piece of work in a college course to failure of the course itself.

Cases requiring disciplinary and/or grade appeal action will be adjudicated in accordance with Procedures for Resolving Academic Integrity Cases, a copy of which is available in the office of the Dean of the Graduate School, the office of the Provost for Academic Affairs, and in the academic Dean's office.

DEFERRAL POLICY

The following deferral policy is applicable to some programs. Please check with your departmental advisor to see if this policy applies to you. Graduate program acceptance and matriculation is for the semester indicated in the student's acceptance letter. Students who do not enroll in the semester for which they are accepted forfeit their place in the program. Students who have forfeited acceptance into a program have up to one year to request that their acceptance be reinstated. However, granting this request remains at the discretion of the program. After that point, it will be necessary to reapply.

GRADUATE APPEALS PROCEDURES

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING GRADUATE ACADEMIC APPEALS

The appeal system, which deals with inequitable application of academic policy, affords recourse to a student who has evidence, or believes that evidence exists, to show that an inappropriate grade has been assigned or other inappropriate formal academic action has been taken. For example, this may be a result of a mechanical error, discrimination, a violation of published academic policy, allegation of academic dishonesty, or error in judging the quality of the student's work.

The following steps should be taken to initiate and process an academic appeal. It is imperative that the individual student recognizes the responsibility for taking the initiative in the appeal and for processing the appeal through each step of the procedure. It is the student's choice whether or not to proceed to each step of the procedure.

Step 1: The student must consult with the instructor concerning the problem. If a satisfactory resolution of the problem is not achieved and the student wishes to go to step 2, the student must request a signed and dated acknowledgement of the consultation from the instructor. A handwritten note is sufficient.

Step 2: The student must consult with the *chair of the department offering the course*. If a satisfactory resolution of the problem does not result from this consultation and the student wishes to go to step 3, the student must request a signed and dated acknowledgement of the consultation from the chair. A handwritten note is sufficient.

Step 3: The student must go to the *Dean of the School offering the course* in question, complete the “Student Form for Academic Appeals,” and arrange a meeting with the Dean. If no satisfactory resolution is achieved after consultation with the Dean, the student may initiate step 4.

Step 4: The student should forward to the Graduate Dean an explanatory cover letter, a copy of the “Student Form for Academic Appeals,” and any pertinent documents in the student’s possession.

Step 5: The Graduate Dean and the Graduate Council will review the material submitted. After due consideration of the issues, the Graduate Dean and Council will decide whether further action is justified and the nature of such action. The Council may request a consultation with the student at this step; however, consultation should not be considered routine. If the committee decides that no further action is justified, it will so inform the student in writing.

If the Graduate Dean and the Graduate Council deems that action other than denial of the appeal is justified, it may request consultations with any of the individuals involved in the appeal or may request any other information needed for clarification of the issues.

Step 6: The Graduate Dean will recommend to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs such action as he/she deems appropriate to resolve the appeal. A copy of this recommendation will be forwarded to the student.

Step 7: The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will have the ultimate authority in rendering a judgment in cases presented to him or her through the above process. The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will inform the student in writing of the decision.

STUDENT FORM FOR ACADEMIC APPEALS

This form is to be filled out with the aid of the appropriate representative of the Dean’s office and only after the instructor and the chair of the department have been consulted, and if the problem has not been resolved.

NOTE: Three (3) copies of this form will be needed (appropriate Dean, Graduate Council, student) if the appeal has not been resolved by the Dean.

Name	
Address	
Daytime Phone	
E-mail Address	
Graduate Degree Program	
Instructor’s Name	Date Consulted
Chair’s Name	Date Consulted
Course Title	Course Number
Semester/Year course was taken (e.g. Fall 2005)	

Please state here, as briefly and accurately as possible, the main reasons for the academic appeal.

List the supporting evidence that you consider to be relevant. This list should include items that you can produce, as well as, items that can be requested of the instructor by the Dean or the Graduate Council (e.g., course outline, term papers, test and examination grades, etc.). The Graduate Council can only react to factual evidence. Relevant materials in your possession should be available in the event of later consultation with the committee.

In narrative style, please write a complete statement of the situation that has resulted in your appeal and your reasons for making the appeal.

Date of request to make an appointment with the appropriate Faculty Dean, with signature of Dean's secretary:

Secretary's Signature:

Date:

Date set for appointment:

The student must allow a period of up to four (4) weeks for the appointment with the Dean.

Actual date of consultation:

Dean's signature:

COURSE-NUMBERING SYSTEM

The first two digits of the computer prefix identify the department of origin of the course; the third digit denotes the level; the last two digits identify the course in the department's course taxonomy.

500-Level Courses.

These are graduate courses designed to build upon the knowledge and skills achieved in an undergraduate field of specialization.

700-Level Courses.

These are advanced courses designed specifically to extend in depth and specialization the knowledge and skills of the student who has an extensive background in the subject area. Appropriate prerequisites are indicated for these courses.

Graduate students do not receive credit for any course below XX5XX.

GRADING SYSTEM

Student performance in most courses is evaluated by letter grades according to the following scale: grades of A or A- are for outstanding work of a consistently high order; B+, B, or B- for good work which is distinctly above average; C+, C, or C- for fair work; D+, D, or D- for marginal work; F is failing.

The computation of grade point average is based upon the following point values:

A.....4.00	C.....2.00
A-.....3.67	C-.....1.67
B+.....3.33	D+.....1.33
B.....3.00	D.....1.00
B-.....2.67	D-.....0.67
C+.....2.33	F.....0.00

The mark of I (Incomplete) is awarded at the discretion of the instructor and on the request of the student only when the student has completed at least three-quarters of the required work for a course and where a personal emergency prevents the student from finishing the work on schedule. Students must complete the course work by the midterm point of the next semester they are registered or the I will be converted to an F.

A student who does not register for one calendar year after the semester or summer session in which the incomplete was awarded will have the incomplete converted to a "permanent incomplete" (I*) if the course is not completed, or an extension not granted, and the instructor does not change the grade within a calendar year of granting the incomplete. The "permanent incomplete" can never be changed, but a student may graduate with the mark on his/her record.

The mark of H (Hold) is used only in those few courses for which it has been approved, such as where the work begun is continued into the following semester. The grade given at the end of the second semester automatically replaces the H given for the first semester. The mark of H is also frequently assigned, instead of an I, when a course in "Thesis" is incomplete.

Students may not graduate with an H or an I mark on their record. There is one exception to this rule. A student with an incomplete in a course which was taken in his/her last semester at New Paltz and which is not needed to fulfill any college, curriculum, major, or minor requirement may request a permanent incomplete (I*). This request must be made in writing to the Registrar, HAB 13, and, if the permanent incomplete is granted, the mark can never be changed. This exception does not apply to the mark of H.

Calculation of Grade Point Average

All SUNY New Paltz graduate courses on the student's graduate transcript are used to calculate the GPA.

S/U Option

Graduate students may not elect the S/U Option for graduate classes. Students seeking exceptions to this rule must

see the Dean of the Graduate School.

Graduate students who take an undergraduate class outside of their disciplinary area, may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for the S/U option for this class. This option will be granted once for any graduate student.

Repeat Course Grading Option

Graduate students may elect to repeat a course under the “Repeat Course Grading Option.” The “Repeat Course Grading Option” which is available to matriculated graduate students as a *onetime*, single course option, subject to the approval of their advisor, department chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Under this option, only the second grade will be counted in a student’s cumulative average.

Matriculated graduate students (“G”) may petition the Dean of the Graduate School for the repeat course grading option (counting only the repeat grade) and permission is granted under special circumstances. The repeat course grading option may only be granted for only one course.

WITHDRAWAL FROM A COURSE

A student may withdraw from a course until the date specified in the academic calendar with the payment of a fee. The signature of the instructor and last date of attendance must be on the withdrawal form. The relevant dates are specified in the academic calendar which appears in the Schedule of Classes. A course withdrawal after that date will be permitted only for compelling non-academic reasons; students should consult with the office of the appropriate Dean of the faculty for detailed information. No record of course enrollment will appear on the transcript if a course is dropped during the course-change period. A grade of W will be recorded for withdrawals from courses after the course-change period and until the course withdrawal deadline date. A grade of F will be recorded for any student who informally drops a course without following the procedure outlined above.

SECOND DEGREE AT THE SAME LEVEL

Under certain conditions, students may earn a second degree at the same level. Students may pursue a second master’s degree once the first degree has been awarded. Petitions for a second degree are referred to the Dean of the Graduate School by the Department Chair of the discipline in which the second degree is proposed. The following regulations apply:

1. The plan of study of the second degree must be substantially different from the plan of study of the first degree so as to constitute, in the judgment of the faculties concerned, a new discipline.
2. Normally, at least two-thirds of the credits of the second degree, or a minimum of 24 credits, whichever is greater, must be credits that were not included in the first degree.
3. All relevant degree requirements, including residency requirements, must be satisfied for both degrees.

In addition, we have three approved concurrent programs:

- The MAT in Biology and the MA in Biology
- The MAT in English and the MA in English
- The MAT in Mathematics and the MA in Mathematics

FIELDWORK/SELECTED TOPICS COURSES

Selected topics courses are regularly scheduled courses that focus on a particular subject. They may be offered by any department. Descriptions of selected topics courses are printed in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Fieldwork courses are approved experiences offered by individual academic departments to enable students to enrich their academic program with applied work in their field of study. Fieldwork courses may be offered by any department. Permission of the instructor, the chairperson, and the Dean of the Faculty are required to enroll in a fieldwork course.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The primary purpose of independent study is to enable the student to pursue knowledge and understanding in an area

not covered by a regularly offered course or to a greater depth than is possible through an existing course. Independent study places the major responsibility for learning directly upon the student, who must have sufficient maturity to identify and resolve a problem through extensive and rigorous research, to search for and to integrate information from a variety of sources, to interpret the data, and to express clearly the meaning of the whole. It is essentially a tutorial course involving close and frequent contact between student and instructor.

Because an independent study presupposes a serious interest on the part of the student to study and to research a particular problem or area, it is expected that the instructor and student will devote sufficient time to consider the project in advance to ensure that it is both worthwhile and feasible.

Any single independent study may be offered for 1, 2, 3 or 4 semester credit hours. Up to 6 semester credit hours in independent study may be applied to graduate degrees if approved by the department. All independent study requests must be approved in advance by the instructor, the advisor, the department chairperson and the Dean of the Faculty.

NON-MATRICULATED TO MATRICULATED STUDENT CREDIT LIMIT

Registration is blocked for any non-matriculated student after six to nine graduate credits. The student will have to sign a waiver in the Graduate School in order to remove the block, as well as to obtain the permission (through signature) of the department chair or the appropriate academic dean before registering for courses beyond the limit. Should they be accepted for matriculation, students who take courses beyond the limit will not have more than 6-9 graduate credits transfer to their graduate degree program.

RESIDENCE AND TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY

Residence credit is defined as credit earned in courses offered by New Paltz professors or adjunct instructors in a regular or summer session. Twenty-four semester hours of graduate study normally constitute the minimum residence credit requirement for graduate degrees.

On the recommendation of the department, up to nine transfer credits (some departments may accept less) may be applied to the degree, subject to the following conditions:

- The course was taken at the graduate level at an accredited institution.
- A grade of B- or better was earned in the course.
- The course was taken **before** matriculation at New Paltz.
- Courses may be no older than seven years.

For transfer credits to be posted to the New Paltz transcript, the Graduate School requires an **official** copy of the transcript and the course must be listed on an approved Plan of Study (or amended Plan of Study).

- *Transfer credits may be given after matriculation under special circumstances with permission of the Dean of the Graduate School.*

Graduate Credits taken while an Undergraduate at New Paltz, but not required for the Undergraduate Degree

On the recommendation of the department and with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, SUNY New Paltz graduate students may transfer up to nine (9) graduate credits taken as an undergraduate at SUNY New Paltz and not needed for their undergraduate degree to their graduate transcript. These courses must be listed on the Plan of Study as approved transfer credits. Students must pay the tuition differential at the current graduate rate in order for the course credits to be transferred to their graduate transcript. Some departments limit transfer credits to fewer than nine (9) graduate credits. Courses may be no older than seven years.

TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETION OF DEGREE

All requirements for a graduate degree, including transfer credits, must be met within seven years of the completion date of the first course listed on the plan of study. After that date, students' matriculation status may be cancelled. Some departments may specify a shorter period. If the time limit expires, students must write to the department with a request, and a projected completion date. If the department recommends approval, the coordinator sends this request to the Dean of the Graduate School for consideration.

NOTE: Students are expected to consult college publications to determine deadlines for various procedures related to their academic programs. These include course withdrawals, graduation notification, registration, and payments.

ADVISING

Candidates for graduate degrees are assigned an advisor by the Graduate School. The advisor will assist in developing a plan of study to reflect the student's interests and career plans and to fulfill degree requirements. Secondary Education graduate students must have their plans approved by the Education and Liberal Arts departments.

For matriculated students, an official plan of study, approved by the advisor, and forwarded to the Graduate Dean for final approval must be on file in the Graduate School during the first semester after the student's matriculation. Subsequent revisions of the plan must be approved by the advisor and the Graduate Dean.

Non-matriculated students may contact the Graduate School for advisement.

AUDIT PRIVILEGES

Some academic courses may be audited. Registered students at the State University of New York at New Paltz, faculty and staff of New Paltz, and persons over 60 years of age may audit courses without paying a registration fee. For all others, a non-refundable registration of \$50.00 will be charged and payment is made to Student Accounts. Persons who would like to audit a course must obtain an Audit Form from the Office of Records and Registration. The completed form must have the signatures of (a) the chair of the department offering the course and (b) the instructor of the course.

The Audit Form must be returned to the department offering the course by the end of the "course add" period. Persons required to pay the registration fee must submit proof of payment with their completed Audit Forms.

The audit privilege permits the auditor to attend a course, providing there is room in the course and the necessary approvals have been granted, and to do assignments, but it does not permit the auditor to take examinations in the course or to have his or her work evaluated in any other way. The auditor receives no grade for the course, nor is any record of course attendance kept in the Office of Records and Registration. Students may not change their enrollment status from audit to credit, or from credit to audit.

Audit privileges are not ordinarily available in studio, laboratory, fieldwork, or performance courses, or courses where class participation of students is of major importance, nor are they available in credit-free courses offered by the institution or in any foreign study program or course.

CULMINATING ASSESSMENTS

The requirements for a master's degree include at least one of the following: passing a comprehensive exam, writing a thesis based on independent research, giving an oral defense of their thesis, or completing an appropriate special project.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

Students who fail the examination may petition the department for permission to take it a second time. The petition must outline what additional study is planned to prepare for the second attempt. In some cases, students may not repeat the examination earlier than one calendar year after the first attempt. Failure of the examination on the second attempt results in forfeiture of matriculation.

Comprehensive examinations are required for the following curricula:

Master of Science in Education Secondary Education (7-12)

Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, English, Mathematics, Social Studies:

Liberal arts subject matter only. Morning test of 150 minutes. Earth Science also requires an oral examination. The Biology program requires an oral examination based on course work.

French, Spanish: Liberal arts subject matter only. Consult with the advisor or the department chairperson.

Master of Arts in Teaching

Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, English, French, Mathematics, Social Studies, Spanish: Liberal Arts subject matter only. Consult with the advisor or the chairperson of the Department of Secondary Education.

Master of Arts

Biology, Chemistry, English, Geology, Mathematics, Psychology (oral defense of the thesis), Sociology: Consult with the advisor or the department chairperson.

Master of Science Communication Disorders

Written examination based on the student's course work.

Computer Science

A comprehensive examination based on graduate course work is required.

THESIS

Theses are required for some masters' programs. After approval by the thesis committee and the department chairperson, all theses are submitted to the Library for binding and/or for cataloging. Only after the Library accepts the thesis and provides the student with the necessary acceptance letter for the Registrar's Office may the degree be granted. There is a \$25 binding fee for M.A. and M.S. theses and a \$10 fee for M.F.A. theses, which become part of the permanent collection and do not circulate. The procedure must be completed before awarding of the degree. Guidelines for the submission of a master's thesis to the Sojourner Truth Library are available on the Library's web site: <http://lib.newpaltz.edu/policies/masters.html>.

CONTINUED REGISTRATION

Graduate students who have finished their required course work and who are using campus facilities to complete theses and other culminating projects will be required to register for a one (1) credit "Continued Registration" course. See your advisor for further information.