

# Academic Standards, Policies and Procedures

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# ACADEMIC STANDARDS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Notification of Rights Under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

1. *The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.* Students should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
2. *The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.* Students may ask the University to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. A student who wishes to ask the University to amend a record should write the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested, the University will notify the student in writing of the decision and advise the student of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. *The right to provide written consent before the University discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.* One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is the disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using University employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/ her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities for the University.
4. *The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.* FERPA is administered by the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.

## Student Responsibility

Students are expected to be familiar with the University's academic policies and procedures. They are responsible for meeting deadlines as outlined in the academic calendar or in other sections of this publication. Students are expected to be familiar with graduation requirements. Questions about academic progress should be addressed to the academic department. Students may receive official communications by U.S. Mail or Sacred Heart University e-mail. It is the student's responsibility to check e-mail regularly.

## Matriculation

Matriculation is an agreement with the University to a particular set of degree requirements. Graduate students who have met all the requirements and have been accepted by Graduate Admissions are considered fully admitted. Nonmatriculated students may take 6–9 credits with permission from Graduate Admissions. Students who want to take courses beyond these initial credits must be admitted to the University. The option to take courses as a nonmatriculated student does not apply to programs for teacher or administrative certification. Contact Graduate Admissions for further information.

## Changes of Curriculum and Continuous Enrollment

A matriculated student has the right to graduate under the requirements that existed at the time of his/her matriculation as long as continuous enrollment has been maintained. Continuous enrollment means the student is in attendance for one of any three terms in an academic year. Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment must apply for readmission. Readmitted students must follow the guidelines in effect at the time of readmission.

## Measles and Rubella Immunization/Meningitis Vaccination

Connecticut law requires students born after December 31, 1956, to provide proof of two doses of measles vaccine administered at least one month apart. The first dose of vaccine must have been given after the student's first birthday and after January 1, 1969; the second dose must have been given after January 1, 1980. The student is also required to provide proof of one dose of rubella vaccine administered after the student's first birthday. Laboratory evidence (blood tests) of immunity is acceptable in lieu of administration of vaccine. For further information regarding immunization requirements, contact the University's Health Services Office at 203-371-7838.

## Academic Calendar

The academic calendar varies depending on the program. The calendar and important dates are posted on the University website and organized by graduate programs.

## The Meaning of Academic Integrity

As an institution of higher learning, Sacred Heart University places special emphasis on academic integrity, which is a commitment to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Only when these values are widely respected and practiced by all members of the University—students, faculty, administrators and staff—can the University maintain a culture that promotes free exploration of knowledge, constructive debate, genuine learning, effective research, fair assessment of student progress and development of members' characters.

These aims of the University require that its members exercise mutual responsibilities. At its

core, academic integrity is secured by a principled commitment to carry out these responsibilities, not by rules and penalties. Students and faculty should strive to create an academic environment that is honest, fair and respectful of all. They do this by evaluating others' work fairly, by responding to others' ideas critically yet courteously, by respecting others' intellectual and physical property, and by nurturing the values of academic integrity in all contexts of University life.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken for violations of academic integrity, including plagiarism, cheating, any use of materials for an assignment or exam that is not permitted by the instructor, and theft or mutilation of intellectual materials or other University equipment. Faculty will assign failing grades for violations of the University's policy on academic integrity and students may immediately receive an F for a course in which they commit a violation. Violations of academic integrity are kept on file; second violations will bring additional sanctions, up to dismissal from the University. For any disciplinary action, the University affords the student the right of due process in an appeals procedure. All matriculated students will be provided with a full description of the University's standards for academic integrity, consequences for violations, and the appeals procedure.

## **Mutual Responsibilities of Faculty and Students**

Sacred Heart University faculty have an ethical and professional obligation to take the following steps to promote academic integrity among students:

1. Refer in course syllabi to the University's policy on academic integrity.
2. Clearly explicate in course syllabi behaviors and actions that constitute academic dishonesty, especially those that may be specific to the assignments of the course.
3. Clearly explicate in course syllabi consequences for violations of academic integrity.
4. Reinforce these expectations and consequences periodically during the semester, such as when giving information for assignments.
5. Model and, where appropriate, teach students those scholarly practices that embody academic integrity.
6. Abide by this policy on academic integrity, including its reporting requirements.

Sacred Heart University students have the ethical obligation to take these steps to promote academic integrity among their peers:

1. Act with integrity in all their coursework.
2. Abide by this policy on academic integrity and any policies established by their professors and the department in which they are majoring.
3. Refuse to share materials with peers for the purpose of cheating, or that they believe will be used for cheating.
4. Take care with their own papers, tests, computer files, etc., lest these be stolen or appropriated by others.
5. Notify the professor of a course if they become aware that any form of cheating or plagiarism has occurred. Such notification is not dishonorable but maintains an academic environment in which all students are evaluated fairly for their work; it may also protect a student from a charge of dishonesty (if, for instance, the student's work was appropriated by another).

## Violations of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity can flourish only when members of the University voluntarily govern their personal behavior by high ethical standards. However, it is also crucial for the University to define the boundaries of ethical behavior and to prohibit attacks on the principles of academic integrity. Policies that govern faculty members' ethical responsibilities are treated in the Faculty Handbook. Students' ethical responsibilities are governed by the policy stated here. Departments and programs at the University may supplement this policy with additional guidelines and faculty members may specify additional guidelines in the syllabi for their classes. Students must adhere to such guidelines as well as to the University-wide policy.

All Sacred Heart University students, in all degree programs, are prohibited from engaging in any of the following types of behavior.

### Cheating

Forms of cheating include, but are not limited to:

1. Having unpermitted notes during any exam or quiz. Only materials that a professor explicitly instructs students they may use during an examination are permitted.
2. Copying from other students during any exam or quiz.
3. Having unpermitted prior knowledge of any exam or quiz.
4. Copying or rewriting any homework or lab assignment from another student, or borrowing information for such assignments with the intention of presenting that work as one's own.
5. Using unpermitted materials or taking

information from other students for a take-home exam. A take-home exam is an exam; therefore, it requires independent work. Students should follow the procedures given by the professor.

*Note:* These standards require independent work by a student, except for those contexts where professors have specified forms of permitted collaboration with other students. If no form of collaboration has been specified, students must assume that none is permitted. Because assignments that involve group-based work can cause students to question what forms of collaboration are proper, they should seek guidance from their professors in all cases of doubt. Professors should make clear to students what forms of collaboration are permissible and impermissible. The standards on cheating do not prohibit students from studying together or from tutoring each other.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is any act of misrepresenting the sources of one's information and ideas. When writing essays, it is the act of presenting another person's written words or ideas as one's own. When reporting experimental work, it includes the acts of falsifying data and presenting another's data as one's own. In speeches, it involves quoting passages of others' speeches or written words without mention of the author. Plagiarism is also possible in art and music, if one makes use of a work of art or music in a way that violates the standards of attribution in those fields.

Plagiarism may be willful, as when a student knowingly copies a source without attribution, or negligent, as when a student fails to cite sources properly. Both willful and negligent instances of plagiarism are subject to penalty—in part because professors must judge the result of a student's work, not his or her intentions, and in

part because students are expected to know and follow the standards for proper citation of sources.

Forms of plagiarism therefore include, but are not limited to:

1. Copying whole papers or passages from another student or from any source.
2. Allowing another student to copy or submit one's work.
3. Buying or obtaining a paper from any source, including term-paper sellers and Internet sources, and submitting that paper or passages of it as one's own work.
4. Pasting a passage from the Internet or any computer source into one's paper without quoting and attributing the passage.
5. Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography.
6. Falsifying one's results in scientific experiments, whether through fabrication or copying them from another source.
7. Appropriating another person's computer programming work for submission as an assignment.
8. When creating a web page, film or musical composition as a course assignment, failing to attribute material that comes from other media or failing to obtain proper permission for the use of such material.
9. Any other appropriation of another's intellectual property without proper attribution.
10. Submitting an assignment that one wrote during a previous semester or submitting the same assignment for more than one class simultaneously. This action includes reusing substantial portions of previously written work

for a current assignment. (Students who are unsure of what work of their own they may use in preparing an assignment should consult their professors.) Assignments must be written the semester in which they are assigned unless a professor approves of the use of previously written material with specific guidelines. Assignments may be submitted for credit in a single course only unless professors in multiple courses are informed of and approve of the multiple submissions.

*Note:* Improper citation of sources occurs when a student presents all the sources he or she used in preparing a paper but fails to attribute quotations and information from those sources in the body of the paper. Specific examples include:

1. Failure to use quotation marks for direct quotes or for an author's distinctive phrases. (A rule of thumb to follow is that five or more words in succession from a source must be enclosed in quotation marks.)
2. Following an author's structure of writing and ideas, but rephrasing the sentences partially to give the impression that the whole passage reflects the student's structure and ideas.
3. Failure to give page numbers for quotations or for other information that did not originate with the student.

Such acts fall under the rubric of plagiarism. Because they sometimes do not involve willful misrepresentation, professors may have more lenient policies in dealing with them. Yet students should strive to cite all information properly and should note that professors have the discretion to treat these cases as seriously as the forms of plagiarism listed above.

## Other Violations

Other forms of unethical behavior that disrupt the processes of learning, teaching and research include:

1. Providing to other students exams or papers of one's own or from any source with the reasonable expectation that these will be used for the purpose of cheating or plagiarism.
2. Maintaining a file of exams or papers with the reasonable expectation that these will be used for the purpose of cheating or plagiarism.
3. Theft and defacement of library materials.
4. Theft of other students' notes, papers, homework and textbooks.
5. Posting another person's work on the Internet without that person's permission.

## Course-Based Sanctions for Violations of Academic Integrity

When a faculty member encounters a suspected case of academic dishonesty, he or she should address the matter with the student, after collecting whatever evidence may be available and relevant. The faculty member has the right to ask the student to provide evidence about sources used or other reasonable requests to establish the work the student did.

If the faculty member discovers that the student did act dishonestly, he or she will assign a penalty of a failing grade for the assignment; and may immediately assign the student a grade of F for the course. Cases of improper citation are a matter of faculty discretion.

Faculty will report in writing the incident of academic dishonesty and the sanction imposed to the

faculty's chair or program director, dean of the college in which the course was taken, and dean of the student's college within five working days of the sanction. The faculty member will provide all parties with appropriate documentation of the incident. The dean of the student's college will inform the student and his/her academic advisor in writing of the accusation, instructor's course-based sanction, and appeals process available to the student within five working days of the notification from the faculty member. In the instance of a second confirmed violation, the letter sent to the student will stipulate that this is a second violation. These timelines apply under normal circumstances, barring institutional exigencies.

## Appeals of Course-Based Penalties

The student will initially have presented his/her explanation to the faculty member when the faculty member first consulted the student about the work in question. The student who claims he/she did not act dishonestly should ordinarily attempt a resolution with the faculty member. If the resolution was not satisfactory following when a student failed a course or received a reduced course grade based on a formerly reported accusation of dishonesty, the student may appeal the grade by presenting a written statement demonstrating that he or she did not violate the present policy. The student should present supporting documentation. A documented appeal associated with a grade must be presented in writing within 15 working days of the notification from the dean of the student's college.

The procedure for a documented appeal is:

1. If the faculty member imposes a sanction because he or she finds the student acted in violation of the policy, the student may pres-

ent the case in writing with supporting evidence to the department chair or program director of the faculty member involved. The chair/program director will consult with the faculty member in an attempt to resolve the matter. If the chairperson/program director is unable to resolve the matter, he or she will inform the student in writing. If the student wishes to pursue the matter further, the student may appeal in writing to the dean of the college in which the course was taken.

2. If the dean of the college in which the course was taken or the dean's designee finds that the appeal has merit, he or she will convene an appeal committee. This committee will consist of three faculty members: one selected by the student, one selected by the faculty member who taught the course, and one selected by the dean. After reviewing all documented evidence, the appeal committee will then propose a solution that the grade either stands or should be reviewed by the faculty member. This concludes the process.

## **Consequences for Second and Subsequent Violation of Academic Integrity**

The deans will maintain central files on all reported cases of student academic dishonesty in their colleges. Should a student transfer his or her major to another college, the dean will transfer files pertaining to that student to the dean of the other college.

When the dean of any college receives confirmed notice of a second violation by a student in that college, the dean will refer the matter to a standing faculty committee on academic integrity. This committee will consist of one faculty member each from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business,

and Education and Health Professions. The committee will also include the Dean of Students as a non-voting member. Faculty members of the committee will be appointed for two-year terms by a vote of the Faculty Senate. The purpose of this committee is to recommend additional sanctions to be taken against the student, including exclusion from the University for one or two semesters or dismissal from the University.

The committee will have available to it the full documentation of the student's previous violation of academic integrity and authority to request additional information and documentation as warranted; however, the committee is not to reconsider the student's guilt or innocence in those incidents. The committee will hear from the student's academic advisor and the chair or program director of the student's major department(s). The student will have an opportunity to address the committee if he or she wishes. The student may be accompanied by an advocate who is a current employee of the University who may not act as the student's legal counsel.

The committee will make a recommendation of sanction to the dean of the student's college, who will in turn make a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will be final.

## **Violations and Appeals of Violations Outside of a Course**

When a student is suspected of having violated academic integrity by an action that did not occur in the context of a course (see section above, Other Violations), the student, faculty, staff or administrator who suspects the violation and has plausible evidence should present this information to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will decide how to pursue the mat-

ter, and the student will have the right to appeal any consequences according to the Student Handbook.

## Grading System

The academic standing of a graduate student is determined on the basis of the grade point average (GPA) earned each term. Each letter grade has an assigned value as indicated below.

The GPA is obtained by multiplying the value of each grade received by the number of credit hours assigned to each course, then dividing the total earned by the total credit hours attempted.

A minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA is required for graduation.

Graduate Studies uses this grading system:

Grade	Points
A	4.0
A-	3.75
B+	3.5
B	3.0
B-	2.75
C+	2.5
C	2.0
F	0
I	0
W	0
WF	0

I (Incomplete) grades may be changed by completing the deficient coursework no later than six weeks after the beginning of the following semester. All incomplete grades not changed within the six-week period will revert to Fs. In unusual circumstances, the six-week period can be extended up to one year maximum with the approval of the course instructor and the department chairperson. Extension of Incomplete Grade forms can be obtained from the Registrar's Office and must be

submitted directly to the Registrar's Office by the instructor

W (Withdrawal) grades are recorded when a student officially withdraws from a course within the approved timeframe or if the instructor assigns the grade at the point of official withdrawal.

WF (Withdrawal Failing) grades are assigned to students who never attended but who have not officially withdrawn or if the instructor assigns the grade at the point of official withdrawal.

NG (No Grade) is recorded by the Registrar when a grade is not reported by the instructor. Students will not receive credit for courses assigned a NG grade. Students are financially responsible for the tuition and fees.

*Note:* I, W and NG grades are not factored in when calculating the GPA.

## Change of Grades

An instructor may submit a Change of Grade only due to miscalculation of the original grade. Grade changes must be submitted by the instructor of record using the appropriate form. Grade changes must be submitted by the end of the following semester in which the grade was posted. Any exceptions will require additional approval.

When a grade below C is given in a required course, that course must be repeated. For a grade below C in an elective course, the student will be advised by the program director to repeat the course or take another elective in its place.

## Student Grade Grievance— Policy and Procedure

A student's dissatisfaction with a course grade is, in general, not sufficient grounds for warranting a grievance, convening a committee, or meriting a hearing.

Grounds for a grievance exist upon presentation of written documented evidence indicating:

- discriminatory treatment;
- the process determining the grade differs from that outlined in the course syllabus; or
- the process determining the grade was not presented in writing to the students.

A documented grievance associated with a grade must be presented within six (6) months after the original grade was issued.

The procedure for a documented grievance is as follows:

- The student is ordinarily expected to resolve the issue at hand with the faculty member.
- If the solution as provided by the faculty member is unacceptable to the student, the student may present the case in writing with supporting evidence to the department chairperson of the faculty member involved. The department chairperson will then make a judgment, after consultation with the faculty member and the student, in an attempt to bring the matter to resolution.
- If the department chairperson is unable to bring the matter to resolution or the judgment is unacceptable to the student, the student may present a formal appeal in writing to the dean of the college in which the course was taken or to his/her designee.
- If the dean of the college or his/her designee finds that the appeal has merit, he/she will convene a grievance committee. This committee will consist of only faculty members: one faculty member selected by

the student, one faculty member selected by the faculty member concerned, and one faculty member selected by the dean of the college or selected by his/her designee. The chairperson of the faculty member against whom the grievance is filed is not eligible to serve on the Grade Grievance Committee. After reviewing all documented evidence, the grievance committee will then propose a solution, supported by a rationale in writing, that the grade either stands or should be changed by the faculty member. If the faculty member is unavailable to change the grade, the department chairperson shall serve in lieu of the unavailable faculty member.

- In the extraordinary circumstances in which the faculty member does not accept the recommendation of the Grade Grievance Committee to change the grade after the Grade Grievance Committee ascertains that one or more grounds for a grievance outlined above has been substantiated, then the issue shall return to the Grade Grievance Committee, which will make the final grade decision to be implemented by the department chairperson. This step concludes the process.

## **Academic Forgiveness**

When a failed course is repeated successfully, only the more recent of the two grades will be counted in the computation of the grade point average (GPA). A student who has repeated a failed course and wants to make an adjustment to his/her transcript must submit the appropriate repeated course form to the Registrar's Office. The original grade, however, will be kept on the transcript. This policy is limited to the first F successfully repeated during graduate study. Criteria for the successful

repetition of a failed course will be established and promulgated by the respective program faculty. The limitation to forgiveness of a single F grade may be waived by student petition to the program or department director, with final approval of the petition being made by the college dean.

If an F course grade was the result of a violation of the University's policy on academic integrity, the grade is not subject to forgiveness. That is, the grade will remain in the computation of the GPA.

### **Honors Designation for Graduating Graduate Students**

The following represents the criteria for awarding the honor's designation for graduate students at the time of their graduation:

1. Students must be in top 20% of the graduating group within the degree program.
2. Students must have obtained at least a 3.7 QPR.
3. Students must have engaged in significant work (e.g., thesis, major project, course paper, etc.) that makes a recognized and documented contribution to the field of discipline.
4. A recommendation that an honor's designation be granted must be sent to the program director by a faculty member concerning the student's work.
5. Endorsement by the program director of the faculty member's recommendation and a recommendation for the award to the dean of the college.

### **Academic Probation**

Any student whose GPA is below 3.0 will be considered to be on academic probation and may be required to obtain written permission from the

program director before registering for additional coursework.

### **Program Dismissal**

A student whose cumulative GPA is below 2.7 after completion of 18 credit hours will be dismissed from the University. Department/program standards take precedence over University standards. Any student placed on academic probation or dismissed can submit a request for change of status. For more information, contact the dean of the appropriate college.

## **Academic Policies**

### **Full-Time Student Status**

To be considered a full-time student at the University, candidates must maintain registered status for nine credit hours per term, or a total of 18 credit hours per academic year, with a minimum of nine credit hours each semester.

Full-time student status is not calculated for Summer sessions.

International students (on an F-1 visa) must enroll for nine credit hours each term, Summer sessions excluded.

### **Time Limit for Degree Completion**

A student must complete all the requirements for the degree within six years of the date of completion of the first course in the program. An extension of the time limit for completion of the degree can be granted only by the dean of the college after consultation with the program director.

### **Research Projects and Independent Study**

Many programs allow or require students to par-

ticipate in research projects and/or courses of independent study. In both instances, these require prior approval by the academic program director and dean of the college, and close supervision by a faculty member. Students should consult with the academic program director about their interest in a research project or independent study, and must obtain the necessary approval before registering for a research project or independent study course.

In research designs proposing to use human subjects, students are required to seek approval from the University's Human Subject Review Committee before engaging in their research project. For further information, contact the dean of the appropriate college.

## **Thesis**

A thesis may be required, encouraged or an option of a student's graduate program. Since a thesis is a special form of original research, it requires careful supervision by either an individual faculty member or a program thesis committee. Students considering a thesis should discuss their interest with the appropriate program director and should be familiar with and follow the procedures outlined in the Thesis Manual, which is available through the office of the dean of the appropriate college. For specific thesis requirements, see the Academic Programs section and accompanying Course Descriptions sections in this catalog.

## **Academic Procedures**

### **Web Advisor**

Web Advisor is a secure site with access for current students and faculty. Through Web Advisor students can search for open classes and register online, add/drop courses, view their sched-

ules with up-to-date room and instructor information, or check restrictions on their registration. Students may view their profile information and send corrections or view their grades and monitor their progress toward their degree goals.

### **Online Registration Using Web Advisor**

Students are expected to register for classes through Web Advisor provided that they do not have any holds on their account (balance due, measles or meningitis noncompliance, parking tickets, etc.). This ensures that all students comply with Sacred Heart University policies on registration by meeting with their academic advisors and/or administrative departments to address any outstanding issues.

Students will be assigned time periods to register online. Messages will display on the screens whenever a student attempts to register for a class for which he or she is not qualified.

Online registration will only be available during specified date ranges but access to inquiry screens will always be available. Up-to-date information regarding class schedules, room and instructor information, and course offerings are available through Web Advisor.

Students who require special permission to register for a course may do so by completing the registration form and faxing the form with written permission to the Registrar's Office. Students may also complete this process in person during regular business hours. Information may be faxed to 203-365-7509.

### **Registration Conditions**

The University reserves the right to change class schedules or instructors at any time. In the event a

course is cancelled, full refund of tuition and fees for the course will be provided to all registered students.

### **In-Process Student Registration**

Qualified students who have not yet completed the application process, or who have not received an admissions decision on their application, may register as an in-process student with written permission from the Graduate Admissions Office.

Students may complete up to six or nine credit hours under this designation depending on the academic program requirements.

In-process registration does not guarantee admission into a graduate program.

### **Course Prerequisites**

Students are expected to be familiar with course prerequisites and to meet those requirements before a course is taken. Information regarding course prerequisites can be found in this catalog and/or supplied by the appropriate academic program director. Exceptions to a prerequisite must be approved in advance by the academic program director. Credit may be denied to a student who takes a course without the proper prerequisites.

### **Course Changes—Add/Drop**

A student may change his/her course selection only within the first week of the semester (or the equivalent for accelerated/intensive courses). The procedure for schedule changes is available on the Registrar's webpage (<http://www.sacred-heart.edu/registrar>). This process must be followed to ensure course registration and the proper calculation of tuition and issuance of refunds as listed in the Expenses and Student Financial Assistance chapter of this catalog. Students may not add a course after the first week of the course (or the equivalent for accelerated/intensive ses-

sion) without written permission of the course instructor and the department chair.

### **Course Withdrawal**

If withdrawal from a class becomes necessary, the student should obtain an official withdrawal form from the Registrar's Office. Official withdrawal is necessary to assure proper grade entry on the transcript and the issuance of any refunds.

A W grade will be issued for course withdrawals within the first five weeks of a semester (or the equivalent for accelerated/intensive courses). After that, a grade of W or WF will be issued at the discretion of the instructor. The last date to withdraw from a course is prior to the last scheduled class. A student's failure to withdraw properly will result in a withdrawal failure (WF) grade.

Phone withdrawals are not accepted. Students who do not officially withdraw are still responsible for all tuition and fees. Nonattendance does not constitute official withdrawal. Course withdrawals may affect satisfactory academic progress (as defined in an earlier section) and may result in the loss of benefits or permission to participate in University activities or athletics. It is the student's responsibility to understand these consequences.

### **Verifying Student's Schedule**

Each student is responsible for checking their schedule on Web Advisor to make sure the information is correct. Any problems should immediately be directed to the Registrar's Office. Students will be held academically and financially responsible for their registration as indicated on their schedule in Web Advisor.

## **Military Leave of Absence**

Graduate Students called to active duty while enrolled in the University should contact their program director. Students must present documentation. Students wishing to obtain a Military Leave of Absence may be offered the following options after the program director confers with financial aid, instructors, and other University officials:

- Withdrawing from the courses with a full tuition refund or tuition credit, in accordance with University and government guidelines.
- If a student completed at least 70% of the coursework and upon recommendation of his/her dean, the student may elect to take incompletes and make special arrangements for course completion with individual instructors.
- Students are eligible to return within one year following active duty. However, the degree requirements may have changed, and the student may be required to comply with degree program requirements in effect at the time of their return to the University.

## **Complete Withdrawal from the University**

Graduate students wishing to drop or withdraw from all their courses and thereby discontinue their enrollment should confer with their advisor or program director. University withdrawals are not official until all signatures are obtained.

Any refunds will be determined by the official date of the withdrawal. All fees are nonrefundable.

Drops will be recorded on the student's record during the first week of the semester (the

add/drop period).

A "W" grade will be recorded for withdrawals completed after the add/drop period and through the fifth week of the semester (or the equivalent for accelerated/intensive courses).

Instructors will have the discretion to enter a W or WF grade after the fifth week of the semester.

## **Readmission**

Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment as defined in an early section, must apply for readmission through Graduate Admissions. Readmitted students must follow the guidelines in effect at the time of readmission.

## **Substitutions and Waivers**

In order to maintain academic quality and integrity, no student will be granted a substitution for a course or credits, unless it is in accordance with the University's policy. A substitution may be granted at the discretion of the department chair/program director for any course in the respective discipline.

Based on the appropriate documentation, a student is granted permission to fulfill a specific course requirement with a course having many of the components as the original.

Requests for a substitution not stemming from a disability may be forwarded directly to the appropriate department chair/program director. Only upon approval from the department chair/program director may the request be forwarded to the Registrar's Office.

If the basis for the requested substitution is a learning or physical disability, the student must submit verification of the disability to the Director of Special Services prior to the request for the substitution. If the Director of Special Services concludes that the documentation is

deficient or inconclusive, the director may require further documentation to establish the disability. The cost of the documentation shall be borne by the student. Once the student's documentation has been accepted by the director of Special Services, the student may forward his or her request to the appropriate department chair/program director for determination of the substitution, if appropriate.

All waivers and substitutions must meet the requirements of any academic program accredited and/or licensed by an outside accrediting body or governmental agency.

### **Application for Graduation**

To receive a degree, a student must complete all requirements for that degree as listed in the catalog in effect at the time of admission into the program. All students eligible for a degree must apply for graduation candidacy at least one semester before completing the degree. Education and MBA candidates should submit their application to their respective departments. All other degree candidates should submit their application to the Assistant Registrar. Failure to comply may result in a delay in receiving the degree by the anticipated graduation date. Degrees are conferred three times a year in May, August and December. The Commencement Convocation is held once a year in May.

Students will be billed a graduation fee upon submitting the application for graduation. The graduation application fee is not refundable. In the event the student does not complete the requirements for the degree within one year of the originally indicated date, a new application including a new application fee will be required.

Students completing a credit certificate must submit an application for the certificate at least one

semester in advance of completing the requirements. Failure to comply may result in a delay of receiving the certificate by a semester. There is no fee for the credit certificate at this time.

### **Transcripts**

The transcript is the student's official academic record. The student's written request must be received before a transcript will be released. The student can complete a Transcript Request form available in the Registrar's Office or online at the Registrar's webpage ([www.sacredheart.edu/registrar](http://www.sacredheart.edu/registrar)), or send a written request. A fee is charged for each transcript requested. Transcripts will be withheld if the student has a financial obligation to the University. Allow 7–10 business days for processing a transcript request. Additional time to process requests may be required at peak times such as the start and close of each semester.