

Progression

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Program Progression

Degree Plan

All matriculated students must have a current degree plan on file prior to registration for any class; this applies to new and continuing students. A hold may be placed on a file and the student prevented from registering if a current degree plan, reflecting the correct course of study, is not on file. Degree plans may be completed by mail for new students who are unable to meet with faculty prior to the first semester. The faculty advisor can indicate it is a “preliminary” plan, if necessary, in order to have a beginning plan on file.

Progression in the PhD Program is based on the following policies:

- For any PhD course, a merit grade of less than 3.0, a “WF”, or “F” is considered failing, and if the course is required for the program, it must be repeated with an earned grade of 3.0 or greater or “Pass”.
- If a student earns less than a 3.0 merit grade, a “WF”, or “F” in a second PhD course, the student is dismissed from the program.
(Approved by PhD Committee September 25, 2007)

Preregistration for Courses

Each semester, at specified times, preregistration is held for the following semester. Announcements of preregistration dates are e-mailed to students. Students are advised by their assigned faculty advisor and must register online by the specified date and time. Students who fail to preregister will be required to wait until the general registration date at the beginning of the next semester. This may result in desired classes being closed and may necessitate a delay in completing program requirements. Failure to register by the end of the add/drop period at the beginning of the next semester will result in automatic withdrawal from the program and necessitate re-application for admission.

Program Length

The PhD in Nursing degree is designed to be completed in three to four years of full-time study or five to six years of part-time study. The need to engage in part-time study is taken under consideration during program planning with students. Students can switch from part time to full time or vice versa throughout the program as needed. All work to be applied toward the PhD must be completed within eight years of initial enrollment in the program.

Student Minimum in Courses

At least 4 students must sign up for a course to provide sufficient classroom interaction and efficient use of the faculty time. If fewer than 4 students register for a particular course by the end of the registration period, the students will be contacted by their advisor and redirected to another course in their program of study.

Priority for Course Space

When course spaces are limited, fully matriculated students are given priority over non-degree seeking students. First-time enrollees are given priority over students who are repeating a course.

Transfer of Courses

At least 25% of credits must be taken at MUSC to be eligible for graduation. Students must be accepted into the program and at that time, they may petition the PhD committee to accept coursework from other programs that may be equivalent to our courses. This coursework then will be reviewed by the faculty teaching the course and the faculty will make a decision regarding the equivalence of coursework and number of credits accepted. (Approved by PhD Committee, May, 2006)

The Office of Enrollment Services will be informed in writing regarding approved transfer of course work. They will add the course to the student’s transcript with a grade of “EX”. The student will not be charged for the course and the hours will not count

towards the GPA but for the overall program hours. (Approved by APG Committee July 7, 2003)

Non Degree Students

Students must be matriculated within another PhD program to enroll as a non degree student in an MUSC PhD in Nursing course; the limit of courses that outside students may take within the CON PhD program is three. (Approved by PhD Committee, May, 2006)

Repeating a Course

When a student is required to repeat a course, the computation of his/her overall grade point average includes each grade earned. However, credit hours will be counted only once to determine eligibility for the degree. This policy also applies to non-degree seeking students who are later admitted to the College of Nursing. Students repeating courses may not displace first time enrollees. No more than one course may be repeated.

Dropping a Course

After the drop period, a student may withdraw from a course if permission is obtained in writing from the course instructor, the student's faculty advisor, and the Director of the PhD Program. However, withdrawal from a course for any reason (academic, personal, health, etc.) regardless of the grade assigned (i.e., Withdraw/Passing, Withdraw/Failing, Withdrawal) constitutes one attempt in the course. A grade of WF does count as a failure of the course. A second attempt to take the same course will exhaust a student's repeat option. (Example: requesting a grade of WP, WF, or WR, in a course in which a grade of WP, WF, or less than 2.0 had been previously earned will result in dismissal from the program.) "Request for Course Add and/or Drop" forms and "University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence" forms (if needed) are available in the Office of Student Services, room 216. (Approved by APG July 7, 2003)

Leave of Absence

A leave of absence may be granted by the Associate Dean for Academics upon request by the student. "University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence" forms are available in the Office of Student Services, room 216. The leave will begin immediately and will apply to the semester(s) for which it is granted. After the specified time, the student will be readmitted automatically to the College. If the student does not return after the time granted by the leave of absence expires, the student will be withdrawn from the College. Typically, no more than one leave of absence will be granted during a program of study. Exceptions may be petitioned to the PhD Program Committee.

The student is accountable to maintain communication with the faculty advisor, Director of the PhD Program, and the Office of Student Services regarding any changes in plans during the leave time period. Students returning from a leave of absence may not have immediate access to some courses, based on faculty-student ratios or course offerings.

Procedure for requesting leave:

Students who fail to adhere to the following procedures will receive recorded grades of “0.0” in the affected course(s).

1. Obtain a “University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence” form from the MUSC Office of Student Services (room 216).
2. Make an appointment with the faculty advisor to discuss reasons for the decision to request a leave of absence.
3. Secure the faculty advisor's signature on the “University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence” form.
4. Return the “University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence” form to the MUSC Office of Student Services (room 216) immediately.

Withdrawal from the Program

When withdrawing from the program, the student notifies his/her faculty advisor and completes the “University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence” form and a “Request for Course Add and/or Drop” form (both available from the Office of Student Services, room 216). These completed forms are then forwarded to the associate dean for academics for final approval.

Procedure

Students who withdraw from the program must adhere to the following procedures:

1. Obtain a “University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence” form from the Office of Student Services (room 216).
2. Make an appointment with the faculty advisor to discuss reasons for the decision to withdraw from the program.
3. Secure the faculty advisor's signature on the “University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence” form.
4. Return the “University Withdrawal/Leave of Absence” form to the Office of Student Services (room 216) immediately.

Students who fail to adhere to the above procedures will receive recorded grades of “0.0” in the affected course(s). Students who register for a course and subsequently never attend classes and/or fail to complete paperwork to drop the course will receive a grade of “0.0” in the course. (Approved by APG Committee July 7, 2003)

Readmission after Voluntary Withdrawal

The Admission, Progression and Graduation Committee will act upon all requests for readmission. Readmission to the College is not automatic. A student who withdrew voluntarily should submit a new application for admission to the MUSC Office of Enrollment Services, 41 Bee Street. The new application should include a typewritten letter stating the circumstance that resulted in the student's withdrawing from the program and reason(s) that readmission to the program is justified.

Academic Probation

The PhD student whose semester or cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation for 1 semester. The student must improve the cumulative GPA to 3.0 or greater upon completion of the next semester in order to remain in the program.

Dismissal from the Program

The PhD Program Committee will recommend to the Director of the PhD Program that a student be dismissed from the program if the student:

1. Fails to register for consecutive semesters and has not requested a leave of absence.
2. Fails to return after the length of time an LOA expires.
3. Has a GPA that indicates the student will not be able to meet the 3.0 requirement for graduation or has failed two courses.
4. Does not complete requirements for the degree within an 8-year period after initial registration for the PhD program.

(Approved by PhD Committee September 25, 2007)

Grading Policies

Recording of Grades

All courses grades, except those dropped during the add/drop period, are recorded on student transcripts. Courses accepted for transfer from other schools carry no grade; credit hours will be recorded as credit earned only. Variable course credits must be established prior to registration and approved by the Director of the PhD Program.

When the student is required to repeat a course, the computation of his/her overall grade point average includes each grade earned. However, credit hours will be counted only once to determine eligibility for the degree. Students who register for a course and subsequently never participate in classes or fail to complete paperwork to drop the course will receive a grade of “WF” in the course. Rank in class is calculated according to the overall grade point average within the college of the student’s enrollment.

Types of Grades

Grades are posted either as the merit score (0.0 - 4.0) or as a Pass/Fail, as deemed by the course description and syllabus. Alternate grades, which reflect special circumstances, can include an incomplete (I), withdrawal passing (WP), withdrawal failing (WF), or complete withdrawal from all registered courses (WR). Each type of grade is explained in more detail below: Merit, Pass/Fail, Withdrawal, and Incomplete.

Merit Grades

Merit grades are assigned on an interval scale ranging from 0.0 to 4.0 points. Faculty use the raw score (the percentage) and then convert to the merit grade system (congruent with the Medical University of South Carolina Grading System) as shown in Table 1.

Grades with a calculated percentage of 0.5 and above are rounded to the next highest whole number. Grades with a percentage of 0.49 and lower are rounded to the lower

whole number. (Example: A grade of 75 = 74.5 through 75.49; 74 = 73.5 through 74.49, etc.).

Table 1. Raw Score to Merit Grade Conversion

Raw Score Ranges (%)	Raw Score (%)	Alphabetic Grade	Merit Grade 0.0 – 4.0
95 and above	95 – 100	A	4.0
85 – 94	94	B	3.9
	93	B	3.8
	92	B	3.7
	91	B	3.6
	90	B	3.5
	89	B	3.4
	88	B	3.3
	87	B	3.2
	86	B	3.1
	85	B	3.0
75 – 84	84	C	2.9
	83	C	2.8
	82	C	2.7
	81	C	2.6
	80	C	2.5
	79	C	2.4
	78	C	2.3
	77	C	2.2
	76	C	2.1
	75	C	2.0
70 -74	74	D	1.8
	73	D	1.6
	72	D	1.4
	71	D	1.2
	70	D	1.0
69 and below	69	F	0.0

Pass/Fail Grades

Pass/Fail Grades are identified by the course description and course syllabus, and grades are entered onto the transcript as a “P” or “F” and do not contribute to the cumulative GPA.

Withdrawal

After the drop period, a student may withdraw from a course if permission is obtained in writing from the course instructor, the student’s faculty advisor, and the Director of the PhD Program. Withdrawal from a course for any reason (academic, personal, health, etc.) regardless of the grade assigned (i.e., Withdraw/Passing, Withdraw/Failing, Withdrawal) constitutes one attempt in the course. A second attempt to take the same

course exhausts a student's repeat option, regardless of the outcome. (Example: requesting a grade of WP, WF, or WR, in a course in which a grade of WP, WF, or less than 2.0 had been previously earned will result in dismissal from the program.)

- A Withdraw Passing (WP) grade counts as one attempt at the course, but does not contribute to the cumulative GPA.
- A Withdraw Failing (WF) grade counts as a failure of the course, counts as one attempt at a course, but does not contribute to the cumulative GPA.
- A "WR" may be given if a student withdraws passing from all registered courses within a semester, and this is granted for unusual circumstances which are out of the student's control.

Incomplete Grades(s)

An "Incomplete" (IN) is awarded when all requirements of a course have not been completed by the end of the semester. This designation is reserved for students where failure to complete the course are due to circumstances beyond the student's control. The option for an "IN" is granted by the course faculty. The Incomplete must be addressed before the drop/add period deadline of a semester if the student plans to utilize that semester for course registration. Hence, PhD students may not register for courses until an "Incomplete" grade from the previous semester is removed.