Mission

The Pitt Pharmacy Doctor of Pharmacy Program Academic Performance Committee (APC) is committed to ensuring that students maintain academic standards necessary for successful progression, graduation, and practice within the profession of pharmacy.

Background

Students currently enrolled in the PharmD program were selected by the Admissions Committee of the School of Pharmacy after much deliberation. Their past academic success and life experiences indicate each student's potential for academic success in the program. It is the mutual responsibility of a student and the APC to ensure that the student meets the academic standards in all courses of the curriculum and other graduation requirements. To this end, these Policies and Procedures form a framework in which decisions regarding the progression of students can be uniformly, but individually, made.

Students are required, at a minimum, to review these Policies and Procedures upon entry into the School of Pharmacy and at the beginning of each academic year. The Policies and Procedures for the Academic Progression of Students may be found on the PittPharmacy intranet (www.intranet.pharmacy.pitt.edu) and linked to the *Student Handbook*. Any situation that arises that is not specifically covered by these Policies and Procedures will be adjudicated by the dean, after consultation with the APC. These policies and procedures will be reviewed, and may be revised, on an annual basis.

Academic Performance Committee Membership

The Committee is composed of faculty and staff within the School of Pharmacy, appointed in accordance with the School of Pharmacy Bylaws. All committee proceedings regarding academic standards and student progression are strictly confidential.

I.   General Policies for All Students

    A. Pre-professional Courses, Professional Course Load, Grading and Schedule
    Pre-professional courses must be successfully completed prior to entry into the professional program.

    Students in the PharmD program must carry a full course load during each academic term, except by permission from the APC.

    All School of Pharmacy courses must be taken for a letter grade except for experiential learning, professional and career development, case conference courses and any elective courses approved by the Curriculum Committee for alternative grading.

    The PharmD curriculum is intensive. Students are expected to devote full time to the academic program once enrolled. Thus, the School of Pharmacy schedule of classes, assignments, practice experiences, examinations, and other activities take precedence over outside employment or extracurricular activities.   The University of Pittsburgh AC 15 Credit Hour policy defines "…a semester credit hour is most typically awarded for an activity that consists of 50 minutes of classroom instruction with an expectation of **two hours of outside study for each hour of time in class per week** for the semester."

Courses and make-up sessions (including testing) may be scheduled outside the usual hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

B. Course Withdrawal

School course withdrawal procedures are in compliance with University policy. (See https://www.policy.pitt.edu/ac-14-course-withdrawal-formerly-09-01-07.) A student may withdraw from professional course(s) only after written permission has been obtained from the assistant/associate dean of students. Course withdrawal must be processed through the student records manager within the time period specified by the University. A student is not permitted to "unofficially withdraw" by merely not attending classes.

Under no circumstances will withdrawal from a professional course be granted solely based on poor performance in the course, except in the event of resignation from the program, as described in section I-D below. Course withdrawal may affect student academic standing; therefore, the APC chair will be notified following withdrawal confirmation.

C. Leave of Absence

A student in good academic standing may, for valid reasons, petition in writing directed to the assistant/associate dean of students and the chair of the APC for a leave of absence from the program. In the written petition, a student must specify the reason for the request and the anticipated length of the leave of absence. Unless special permission is granted by the assistant/associate dean of students and APC chair, the leave of absence may not exceed one academic year.

When a leave is approved, the assistant/associate dean of students and APC chair will notify the Director of the PharmD Program and the student records manager who will notify the Director of Experiential Learning and faculty and staff with legitimate educational interest. Confidentiality of information will be maintained.

A student who is granted a leave must notify the assistant/associate dean of students and the APC Chair by written letter or electronic communication (e.g., email) of their intent to re-enter the program no later than July 15 or November 15 before the beginning of the term in which they intend to return so a place in the class may be confirmed.   The assistant/associate dean of students and APC chair will notify the Director of the PharmD Program and the student records manager who will notify the Director of Experiential Learning and faculty and staff with legitimate educational interest to facilitate course and experiential learning planning. In the case of a medical leave, a student must submit physician evidence of readiness to re-enter the program.

A student will not receive program credit for any courses taken at this or any other university or college during the leave of absence.

In the event a student on a granted leave of absence is not able to return to the professional program by the agreed upon date (no greater than one year), the student must submit, in writing, another request for leave extension to the assistant/associate dean of students and the APC chair, clearly detailing the reason(s) for not meeting the original date of return, the anticipated date of return and their intentions regarding returning to the professional program. When a leave is approved, the assistant/associate dean of students and APC chair will also notify the Director of the PharmD Program and the student records manager.

In the event of a leave of absence and extension lasting more than two years, the student must petition the APC for re-admission. Automatic re-admission is not guaranteed, a place in a class may not be available due to enrollment capacity and a student should also anticipate that the ever-changing curriculum may necessitate individualization of academic scheduling for coursework required to achieve success in practice. The APC will communicate an individualized academic plan which may require repetition of coursework and experiences.

A student who does not intent to return to the professional program after a leave of absence should submit in writing a request for academic resignation as outlined below in section I-D no later than one month prior to the agreed upon date of return. A student who does not return by the stated deadline of their approved absence and does not submit a written requests for either extension of the leave or resignation will be dismissed from the program.

D. Academic Resignation from the Program
School academic resignation procedures are in compliance with University policy. (See https://www.policy.pitt.edu/ac-67-termination-registration-formerly-09-05-08 ()

A student who wishes to resign from the program must officially communicate this in writing or via electronic communication (e.g., email) to the assistant dean of students and the chair of APC. The assistant/associate dean of students and APC chair will notify the Director of the PharmD Program and the student records manager who will notify the Director of Experiential Learning and faculty and staff with legitimate educational interest. The student records manager will initiate the process to withdraw the student from all classes.

A student may not "unofficially resign" by failing to attend classes. Resignation constitutes withdrawal from all courses being taken. A student who has resigned from the program must re-apply to the program using the outlined application and admission processes.

E. Missed or Incomplete Course Work
A student may, for valid extenuating circumstances, be unable to complete a professional course. At the conclusion of the term, extenuating circumstances must be attested to by the assistant/associate dean of students and communicated to the course coordinator. Under these extenuating circumstances that may have resulted in poor academic performance, a "G" grade will be submitted by the course coordinator. In all other circumstances, course incompletions will result in "I" (Incomplete) grade assignments.

The Pitt Pharmacy Intervention and Remediation Policy will govern the actions for resolution of "I" or "G" grades.

II. Academic Progression, Promotion and Academic Probation of PharmD Students

Promotion of a student to the next professional year of the PharmD program is dependent on successful completion of the previous professional year. The following outlines the situations in which a student would not meet the criteria for promotion.

A. Cumulative & Term Grade Point Averages
Calculation of grade point average (GPA) will include all required professional courses and approved electives taken while enrolled in the PharmD program.

Cumulative GPA will be calculated at the end of each term. All PharmD students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.00. A student who fails to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.00 or above will be placed on academic probation and given one opportunity to repeat selected courses in order to raise their cumulative GPA above 2.00. A student failing to increase their cumulative GPA above a 2.00 during this period of academic probation will be dismissed from the PharmD program.

Term GPA will be calculated at the end of each term. A student with a term GPA under 2.00 will be placed on academic probation and must achieve a minimum TERM GPA of 2.00 or above during the following term. A student failing to achieve a term GPA of 2.00 or above during this period of academic probation will be dismissed from the PharmD program.

B. Course Grades

A student earning the following grades will not be eligible for promotion to the next professional year and will be placed on academic probation.

1. "F" grade or Unsatisfactory ("U") grade in any course within a given term
2. Grades below a "C-" in any two courses in a given term

For a student meeting criteria B.1, or B.2 above:

If the inadequate performance occurs at the end of the fall term a student may, with the approval of the APC:

1. take no courses during the spring term and return to the school for the next fall term to repeat the professional course(s) they performed inadequately in, as well as other professional courses as determined by the APC
OR
2. continue into the spring term, taking professional courses as determined by the APC. The following fall term, the student would repeat the courses of inadequate performance, as well as other courses, as determined by the APC.

If the poor performance occurs at the end of the spring term, the student may, with the approval of the APC:

1. take no courses during the fall term and return to the school the next spring term to repeat the professional course(s) they performed inadequately in, as well as other professional courses as determined by the APC
OR
2. the student may choose to return in the fall term to repeat professional courses in which they performed marginally and/or take elective courses (if prerequisites for the electives have been met). The professional course(s) they performed poorly in would be repeated the following spring term when again offered. A student will not be permitted to take courses in the next professional year.

C. Academic Probation

A student on academic probation and those who are repeating courses must earn a passing grade in these courses and have a minimum cumulative GPA and also term GPA of 2.00 or above in the next semester to continue in the PharmD program. A student on academic probation who earns an "F" or a "U" (unsatisfactory) grade in any required or elective course OR grades below "C-" in any two courses (required or elective), within a given term, will be dismissed from the PharmD program and not permitted to register.

D. Experiential Learning

First Professional (P1) through Third Professional (P3) Years

Experiential learning activities and requirements in the P1 through P3 years, called Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (IPPEs), are embedded into specific courses. A student earning "U" final course grades are not eligible for promotion to the next professional year and will be placed on academic probation.

Students may not start P4 Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) rotations until all P1, P2, and P3 course and program requirements have been successfully completed.

Fourth Professional (P4) Year during Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPEs)

1. A student who earns a "U" grade in any APPE rotation must repeat the same type of rotation during either in an open (or "off") block or in a block after the last scheduled rotation for the P4 year.
2. A student who fails to earn a passing grade in the repeated rotation or who earns a "U" grade in any subsequent rotation will be dismissed from the program.

E. Extenuating Circumstances
In highly unusual cases, the APC, in consultation with the dean, may make exceptions to the above policy.

III.   Re-admission of Dismissed Students

A. Petition for Re-admission
A student who has been dismissed (not permitted to register) from the program will not be considered for re-admission for at least **six months** after the date of dismissal. After this time, a student must apply for re-admission on a competitive basis with all other applicants for that year. Such students, if admitted, will be expected to follow a course of study determined by the APC and must conform to any curricular changes that have occurred since they were last enrolled.

B. Regulations for Re-admitted Students
All re-admitted students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or greater and make satisfactory scholastic progress (i.e., not again be placed on academic probation) for all remaining terms to continue in the PharmD program. Re-admitted students' academic performance will be evaluated at the end of each term; failure to meet the requirements for continuing in the PharmD program will result in permanent dismissal.

IV.   Due Process and Right of Appeal

A student will be notified in writing (via electronic notice as well as certified mail) of any committee decisions for academic probation or dismissal from the PharmD program, including the reason for this action.

A student who wishes to appeal should submit written evidence of extenuating circumstances to the APC chair within two weeks of the date of the letter from the APC. A student may request to appear before the APC to further explain their particular situations.

Following appeal to the APC, students may then appeal decisions to the dean by providing written petitions within two weeks of the committee's action upon the appeal. At that time, the dean will consult with the APC and final decisions will be rendered.

V.   Other Requirements for Student Progression and Graduation

The APC will recommend an individual student for graduation upon successful completion and adherence to all course-based requirements, GPA requirements, defined technical standards and all professional development experiences, including but not limited to, completion of portfolio requirements, co-curriculum requirements, Readiness Assessment testing, and other requirements as published for the program.

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