

# Academic Action Overview for George Mason Undergraduates

Warning. Probation. First Suspension. Second Suspension. Dismissal. 13 Credit hour rule. **What do these mean?**

Academic action categories are intended to communicate to students the extent to which their academic performance meets standards expected for graduation. As stated in the University Catalog, "A student is in good academic standing unless academically dismissed, suspended, or on probation." Although warning status for undergraduates is still considered "good standing," it is noted on the transcript, and should be taken seriously by the student.

The 13 credit hour rule applies to all undergraduate degree seeking students who have less than a 2.0 cumulative GPA. It limits their credit hours in future semesters, including summer, to a maximum of 13 until their cumulative GPA is 2.0 or above. The 13 credit hour rule does not apply to Non-Degree Undergraduate students since their semester credit hour maximum is set to 10.

Students needing information about their semester grades or grade changes should go to Patriot Web. Information about academic action policies can be found in the University Catalog section on "Requirements for Retention."

## Special Information for each Status

**Warning:** While a warning is the least severe of the negative academic actions, it serves as a reminder that a higher level of academic performance will be required. Students on warning are subject to the 13 credit hour rule for all future semesters until their cumulative GPA is at least 2.0. Students are urged to consult with their advisors, reduce their course load voluntarily if they have pre-registered for more than 13 credit hours, and take advantage of the university's learning support services.

**Probation:** This is a more serious status and applies to students who may still take courses, subject to the 13 credit hour limitation. However, students on academic probation are not eligible to hold or run for elective or appointive office in any organization or activity associated with the university, to compete in any athletic activity, or to serve as a working staff member of any student organization. Even more than warning status, probation sets a serious academic precedent that may lead to suspension and ultimately dismissal.

**Suspension:** First and Second Suspension result from such serious unsatisfactory performance that they result in the student's being ineligible to continue attending George Mason. Periods of time away from the university for first suspension depend upon the semester in which it was earned: for spring suspensions, the student will be out the following summer and fall; for summer suspensions the student will be out just the following fall; for fall suspensions the student will be out the next spring and summer. The second suspension period is for one calendar year. Another way to look at the suspension period is to calculate the semester in which the

student is eligible to return. The chart below is an example showing the eligible return semester following suspensions that occur in the year 2006 – 2007.

### **Eligible to Return Semester after 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Suspension**

Suspended at end of	Spring 2006	Summer 2006	Fall 2006
1 <sup>st</sup> Suspension return (1-2 semesters out)	Spring 2007	Spring 2007	Fall 2007
2 <sup>nd</sup> Suspension return (one calendar year out)	Summer 2007	Fall 2007	Spring 2008

The university hopes that the period of suspension can be used to resolve whatever problems may have interfered with academic progress. Students on suspension are encouraged to make use of the counseling and learning services offered by the Counseling Center during the period of suspension. However, the university will not accept for transfer any courses taken at other colleges or universities during the period of suspension. Note that the 13 credit hour rule and probation status apply to the first semester for which suspended students are eligible to return.

**Dismissal:** The most serious category of academic action, the dismissal status is assigned to students who are not normally expected to return to the university. Students are dismissed following a third suspension.

Although academic dismissal is considered permanent, occasionally students are able to return to the university, with approval of the Dean and the Office of Admissions required. The 13 hour rule and probationary status would apply. Approval to return after dismissal is limited to students who have been away for at least three years, and who can demonstrate a renewed ability to succeed academically. See catalog sections “Academic Dismissal” and “Academic Clemency Policy.”

### **General Information Regarding Warning, Probation, Suspension and Dismissal Status**

1. The university’s minimum standard for undergraduate academic achievement is 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. Students with a credit level of at least seven hours and a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 fall into one of three categories: warning, probation, suspension (a third suspension is a dismissal).

Link here <http://registrar.gmu.edu/students/standing/GPARetentionLevelsCompare20042007.pdf> to see the Retention Level Standards chart.

2. Grades of IN are computed as failures according to George Mason grading policy (see "Additional Grade Notations" section of the Catalog). Approved changes of grade, including changes from Incomplete, may increase your semester grade point average above a 2.0. When IN or other grades are replaced with grades sufficient to increase the semester GPA above 2.0, the

academic action notation (warning, probation, etc) will be removed from your record, and the resulting restrictions will no longer apply. Go to Patriot Web and click on Academic Records to track grades and grade changes. NOTE: If your courses are dropped because of academic action, you may re-register only on a space-available basis.

3. Students are strongly encouraged to use the counseling and learning (including tutorial) services offered by the Counseling Center. For more information, go to the university web site, click on "Students," then go to "Counseling Center" under Academic Support Services and University Life.

4. By action of the Faculty Senate in 1999, all undergraduate students with a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 will be limited to a maximum of 13 credit hours in all future semesters, including summer terms, until the cumulative GPA reaches or exceeds 2.0. Students whose cumulative GPA is less than 2.0 and have more than 13 credit hours one week before the start of the next semester or term will have their most recently registered courses automatically dropped until no more than 13 credit hours remain. In some cases, students may be dropped below full time, which can have negative consequences, especially for financial aid. We urge you to voluntarily amend your schedule right away, in order to maintain the best course registration for you and your academic program.

5. Students will be sent just one university notification of their academic action status and the resulting 13 hour limitation, at the end of the semester in which it was incurred.

6. Students in suspension or dismissal status who are already registered for a future semester will be automatically dropped from their courses. Those students must take responsibility for requesting a refund of any tuition paid for that semester. A refund request form can be found on the Student Accounts website <http://studentaccounts.gmu.edu/>.

7. Appeals regarding suspension status or the 13 credit hour rule are occasionally allowed by the Deans, but approval is ordinarily limited to circumstances where nonacademic factors have affected the student's academic performance. Please see the list of Deans and Directors.

8. "Meet frequently with your adviser" is the most important advice we can give students who seek to achieve and maintain good academic standing. Your adviser is not only a good source of information about which courses to take, but also about support services on campus, and possible careers in your field. If you are an undeclared student, please contact the Academic Advising Center for assistance.

Comments on how this message may be improved are welcome. Please direct them to the Registrar's Office. Thank you.