

## **Criteria for Satisfactory Progress For Graduate Students in the Department of Statistics**

The University of Wisconsin-Madison  
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The progress of every graduate student in the Department of Statistics will be reviewed semi-annually. The reviews will take place before the start of the Spring Semester and during the Summer. The review will be conducted by a committee or person to be designated by the Department Chair.

In addition to the Departmental Criteria, the student must satisfy all rules and regulations of the Graduate School. It is the student's responsibility to understand the Graduate School rules. Students should take particular cognizance of the residence requirements as described in the Graduate School Bulletin.

As a result of each review the student will be deemed either to be making Satisfactory Progress or not. The student will be notified of the results of the review only if the Criteria are not satisfied. The consequences of failing to satisfy the Criteria are given below; the immediate consequence is to make the student ineligible for Departmental support as a TA, RA or PA.

In order to be deemed to be making Satisfactory Progress, graduate students must satisfy minimum requirements in each of the following areas:

- Grade Point Average
- Approved Credits
- Time Limits
- Handling of Incompletes

There are exceptions to the Criteria for part-time students; see below. Throughout this document, semester means Fall or Spring; Summer session is excluded (although Summer grades are used to compute grade point averages). To 'Pass' a course means to receive a grade of C or better.

### **1 Grade Point Average**

At the end of each semester the Department will compute the cumulative grade point average (GPA) of each student in the program, with two exceptions. The GPA will not be computed at the end of the first semester of study, nor will it be computed in semesters during or after the passing of the preliminary exam. 'Cumulative' means the GPA in all courses numbered 301 or above in any department since entering the program. The cumulative GPA must equal or exceed 3.00 in order to satisfy this Criteria. If the cumulative GPA is below 3.00, then the student has failed to satisfy the Criteria.

### **2 Approved Credits**

**Prior to the semester in which the Preliminary Exam is passed, each semester the student must pass at least six credits approved by the academic advisor and in every two consecutive semesters pass at least fifteen credits approved by the academic advisor.** The Department requires no minimum number of credits during the semester in which the Preliminary Exam is passed and subsequent semesters; however, the student should be aware of any Graduate School rules.

The credit limit may be relaxed, at the discretion of the Department, if it is believed a lower requirement is more appropriate for a student's academic goals.

### **3 Time Limits**

The Statistics Department does not require new students to choose between the M.S. and Ph.D. programs at admission. Thus, it would be pointless to give two sets of time limits for two types of students. The following criteria reflect the belief that the M.S. program should be a two-year program for most students. Note exceptions below for students who earn a M.S. from the Department and then decide to pursue the Ph.D. degree.

Time limits for students who begin graduate study in the Department in the Fall Semester:

1. Pass Statistics 710 within four semesters.
2. Pass the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam within six semesters.

Time limits for students who begin graduate study in the Department in the Spring Semester:

1. Pass Statistics 709 within four semesters and pass Statistics 710 within five semesters.
2. Pass the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam within six semesters of the first Fall Semester of enrollment; that is, the first Spring Semester is not included in the count for students who start their program in the Spring.

(Note: Students in the M.S. program usually do not enroll in 709 or 710. Thus, a typical consequence of the above time limits is that M.S. students who have not graduated after four semesters will subsequently fail to satisfy the Criteria.)

Students who successfully complete the Department's M.S. exam within four semesters and who have sufficient mathematical background to enroll in Statistics 709 shall be granted a two-semester extension to the time limits for passing 709, 710, and the Ph.D. Qualifying exam.

Students who interrupt their graduate studies with an approved leave of absence will have the above time limits modified in a reasonable manner to be determined by the Department.

### **4 Incompletes**

Any student who received an Incomplete in a course must provide the Department with a brief written explanation of the circumstances that led to the Incomplete, including a description of the work that must be completed. For an Incomplete received during Summer or Fall, the explanation must be received before Monday of the week before the next Spring semester classes start. For an Incomplete during Spring, the explanation must be received before June 15 of the same year.

If the explanation either arrives late or is deemed unacceptable by the Department, then the student will be deemed not to be making Satisfactory Progress.

If the explanation is accepted, the student will have one semester to remove the Incomplete; otherwise in the next review the student will fail to satisfy the Criteria. For example, if a student receives an Incomplete in Fall, he/she has until the end of the Spring Semester to complete the work, receive a grade, and report the grade to the Statistics Department. Thus, the student should complete the work in time for the instructor in the course to finish grading by the end of the appropriate semester.

In some cases, several students in a class will be given an Incomplete because the instructor is not able to complete course grading on time. In such cases, the instructor may provide the Department with one letter to cover all students affected. In these cases, the student need not write a letter to the Department.

## **5 Consequences of Failure to Meet Criteria**

A student who fails to satisfy the Criteria is ineligible for departmental support as a TA, PA, or RA beginning with the following semester (Fall for the summer review, Spring for the pre-Spring review). Three consecutive reviews in which a student fails to meet the Criteria for Satisfactory Progress will result in the Department immediately notifying the student and the Graduate School that the student is not longer eligible to be student in the Department. The student may petition to remain in the Department after three consecutive failures to meet the Criteria. For example, a student who is simultaneously pursuing two Master's degrees may reasonably be allowed four years to complete the degrees.

A student who has failed to satisfy the Criteria is eligible to take courses, finish degree requirements and receive a degree. Failure to satisfy the Criteria will not appear on the student's transcript.

## **6 Part-time Students**

A student who enters the Department as a part-time student will meet with an advisor to create individualized Criteria to be approved by the Department. It is anticipated that the individualized Criteria will follow the above guidelines on Grade Point Average and Incompletes, but the requirements on the number of approved credits and time limits will be relaxed.

A student with full-time status who wants to switch to part-time status must petition the Department for permission; permission will not be granted if it appears that a primary reason for the request is to avoid the consequences of failing to satisfy the Criteria.

## **7 Appeals and the Student's Responsibilities**

The student may appeal in writing to the Department Chair any decision on Satisfactory Progress. The results of the review will stand, pending the outcome of the appeal. Thus, it is recommended that a student anticipate potential problems and makes an appeal early.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure he/she receives the results of the Department's review. In particular, the student must check his/her departmental mailbox in a timely manner or leave a forwarding address with the staff member in charge of mail. Ignorance of the result of the review is not grounds for an appeal. (We expect students will know they have failed to meet the Criteria before the Department does.) Also, note the student's responsibility regarding Incompletes as explained earlier.