



Addendum 3.1

2019 – 2020 Student Handbook

April 20, 2020

The April 20, 2020 addendum contains changes and updates as outlined below. Students are encouraged to contact their academic advisor with any questions.

POLICIES AND DISCLOSURES – EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

[19-20.3.1 Graduation Requirements Policy – Effective Immediately](#)

[19-20.3.2 Transfer Credit Policy – Effective Immediately](#)

[19-20.3.3 Withdrawal for Special Circumstances Policy – Effective Immediately](#)

[19-20.3.4 Chapter 31 VA Disclosure – Effective Immediately](#)

TUITION RATES AND POLICIES – EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2020

[19-20.3.5 Tuition Rates – Effective July 1, 2020](#)

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[19-20.3.13 Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\) Policy for Title IV Students – Effective July 1, 2020](#)



Addendum 19-20.2.1

March 2, 2019

The March 2, 2020 addendum corrects the misprinted **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for Title IV Students**. The correct policy was published in the 2018 Student Handbook, Edition 3 on December 28, 2018. The correct version is published below to replace the misprinted version in the 2019 – 2020 Student Handbook.

[19-20.2.1 Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\) Policy for Title IV Students](#)

Addendum 19-20.1.1-6

September 1, 2019

[19-20.1.1 Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy – Effective September 1, 2019](#)

[19-20.1.2 Non-Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy – Effective September 1, 2019](#)

[19-20.1.3 Academic Integrity Policy – Effective September 1, 2019](#)

[19-20.1.4 Student Code of Conduct – Effective September 1, 2019](#)

[19-20.1.5 Complaint and Grievance Policy – Effective September 1, 2019](#)

[19-20.1.6 Student Appeals Policy – Effective September 1, 2019](#)



19-20.3.1

Graduation Requirements Policy is effective immediately.

Graduation Requirements Policy

Students must successfully complete all degree requirements with passing grades, meet the minimum GPA requirements, meet all financial obligations to the institution, have all official transcripts on file and apply for graduation by submitting a Petition for Graduation. Students who use Federal Student Aid to cover any portion of tuition are also required to complete Direct Loan Exit Counseling.

Undergraduate Requirements

Students enrolled in undergraduate programs must complete a minimum of sixty (60) semester hours in the associate's program and 120 semester hours in the bachelor's program. At least 25 percent of the courses that comprise the program must be completed with CSU, which is a minimum of 15 semester hours (5 courses) in an associate's program and a minimum of 30 semester hours (10 courses) in a bachelor's program. Students must also maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA to be eligible for graduation. Though a grade of "D" is considered passing, students may be required to repeat a course in which a "D" is earned if the grade results in a substandard cumulative GPA.

Graduate Requirements

Students enrolled in a master's program must complete a minimum of 36 semester hours. At least 50 percent of the courses that comprise the program must be completed with CSU, which is 18 semester hours (6 courses). Grades below a "C" are not considered passing in the graduate program, consequently, students may be required to repeat a course in which a "C" is earned if this grade results in a substandard cumulative GPA.

Graduation with Honors

Students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs who achieve high level of academic achievement may qualify for honors if certain criteria is met. Honors are noted both on the students' diplomas and transcripts.

Types of Honors

Cum laude signifies a high level of academic achievement in a baccalaureate degree program and is translated as graduation with praise. This honor requires a 3.5 – 3.79 cumulative GPA.

Magna cum laude signifies a very high level of academic achievement in a baccalaureate degree program and is translated as graduation with great praise. This honor requires a 3.8 – 3.99 cumulative GPA.

Summa cum laude signifies the highest level of academic achievement in a baccalaureate degree program and is translated as graduation with great praise. This honor requires a 4.0 cumulative GPA.

Qualifying for Honors

Graduating with honors is a tribute that recognizes academic achievement and represents a student's academic experience. A cumulative "honors GPA" is calculated by combining all coursework attempted at CSU. Students must have no grade lower than a "C", must have no record of academic integrity violation, and must not have repeated



any course taken at CSU due to non-satisfactory grades. Honors designation is only awarded for bachelor degree programs.

Letter of Pending Graduation

Students who need to verify that they have graduated or are scheduled to graduate due to an upcoming promotion board, school admission, or other work-related circumstance may request a Pending Graduation Letter from the Office of the Registrar by submitting the request to Registrar@columbiasouthern.edu or 1.800.977.8449 ext. 6526.

Note: Students enrolled in the DBA program should refer to the DBA Graduation Requirements Policy.



19-20.3.2

Transfer Credit Policy is effective immediately.

Transfer Credit Policy

Columbia Southern University (CSU) evaluates transfer credit when a student submits official post-secondary transcripts, military and employer courses that have been reviewed by the American Council on Education (ACE), credit by examination score sheets, or professional training certificates. Courses accepted for transfer credit must be relevant to the program of study and equivalent in both content and degree level. Transfer credit evaluations are conducted in the Office of the Registrar. Exceptions must be approved by the Academic Program Director. Transfer credit appeal decisions are determined by the Dean of the College.

Sources of Transfer Credit

Academic Credit

CSU accepts transfer academic credit from institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and/or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Transferrable courses with a grade of “D” or above may apply to undergraduate degree requirements unless a minimum grade of “C” is required to satisfy specific program requirements. “D’s” are not accepted as transfer credit for English composition or any mathematics requirement for any degree program. Transferrable courses with a grade of “B” or above may apply to master’s degree program requirements; in some cases, a grade of “C” may be considered.

Transcripts that are not in English must be evaluated by an approved third party, such as those recognized by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Service (NACES), and translated into English or evaluated by a trained transcript evaluator fluent in the language on the transcript. Evaluators possess expertise in the educational practices of the country or origin and must include an English translation of the review. All translated materials must be official.

Credit by Examination

CSU accepts credit by examination and uses guidelines established by ACE to determine if the examinations warrant awarding academic credit. Provided minimum passing scores are met, CSU accepts credit by examination from testing centers, to include but not limited to, the following examples:

- [The College Level Examination Program \(CLEP\)](#)
- [DSST](#)
- [Excelsior’s UExcel](#)

Professional Licenses, Certificates, and Training Programs

CSU uses guidelines established by ACE to determine if certain training programs, certificates, professional licenses, and/or military training warrant awarding academic credit. The following ACE publications are used:

- [The National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training](#)



- **Military Guide: Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services**

Professional training certificates without an ACE recommendation may be considered in cases where industry curriculum standards can be determined and will require approval by the Academic Program Director from the applicable college.

Experiential or Equivalent Learning

CSU takes into consideration that adult learners gain knowledge outside of a traditional academic environment and will consider experiential learning credit through a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) review. A PLA review is performed by subject matter experts with experience in the evaluation of prior learning and follows the **Council for Adult and Experiential Learning's (CAEL) Ten Standards for Assessing Learning.**

Interested CSU students are responsible for collecting documentation to build a portfolio and are encouraged to submit the portfolio to LearningCounts® for a comprehensive review. To learn more about a PLA review, please visit <https://earncollegecredit.org/csu/>.

Technical Credit

Technical credit will require a review and decision by the appropriate Academic Program Director in order to assess comparable course content and learning outcomes alignment to determine transferability.

Maximum Allowable Transfer Limits

Undergraduate Degrees

A maximum of 45 semester hours may be awarded as transfer credit for an associate's degree program and 90 semester hours for a bachelor's degree program. Transfer credit for experiential learning may not exceed 25% of the degree program.

Master's Degrees

A maximum of 18 semester hours may be awarded as transfer credit for a master's degree. Transfer credit for experiential learning may not exceed 25% of the degree program.

Doctoral Degrees

A maximum of 9 semester hours may be awarded as transfer credit for doctoral programs. No credit for experiential or equivalent credit may be considered.

Additional Transfer Credit Limitations

Please note that transfer credit does not apply towards CSU certificates.

Developmental and remedial coursework is not transferrable towards CSU degree programs. In addition, other transfer credit decisions made at previously attended colleges or universities involving auditing or waiving of program requirements are not applicable at CSU.

Transfer credit may be limited in order to satisfy specific degree program requirements.



Credit for experiential or equivalent learning may only be applied to CSU undergraduate and master's level course offerings, excluding General Education requirements.

Transfer Credit Decision Appeal

Students may appeal transfer credit decisions by submitting the Transfer Credit Decision Appeal form to the Office of the Registrar, which will be escalated to the appropriate Academic Program Director for consideration. Appeals must be submitted to Registrarappeals@columbiasouthern.edu.

Transfer of CSU Credit

CSU recognizes that students pursue education in a variety of institutional settings to meet educational goals. Transfer credit decisions are made at the discretion of each institution and in accordance with its academic mission and transfer credit policies. It is, therefore, recommended that students seek prior approval of CSU credits for purposes related to transferability of credit, credentialing, tuition reimbursement, or other academic and professional reasons. Students who wish to learn more about transferring CSU credit may send inquiries to Registrar@columbiasouthern.edu.



19-20.3.3

The **Withdrawal for Special Circumstances Policy** has been updated to reflect the correct address for email communication. The correct email address is RegistrarAppeals@columbiasouthern.edu. No other changes have been made to this policy. This update is effective immediately.

Withdrawal for Special Circumstances Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Withdrawal for Special Circumstances Policy is to provide students who encounter special circumstances the opportunity to withdraw from a course when such withdrawal would normally not be considered. Eligible students fall under the following categories:

- The student has a course on Incomplete.
- The student has a course that has ended with a final grade.

Policy

Columbia Southern University (CSU) recognizes students may encounter life situations that impede successful course completion. Students experiencing an extenuating circumstance, such as a prolonged illness, death in the immediate family, military deployment, or similar incident, have the option to request a Withdrawal for Special Circumstances (WSC). Requests for a WSC are limited to students who have a course(s) on Incomplete or have a course that has ended with a sub-standard, final course grade directly related to the incident.

Students are eligible to request one WSC per calendar year and the request must be within one calendar year from original course end date. Each withdrawal request may include all courses in which the student is enrolled during the period of special circumstance. Requests for a WSC are not automatically granted and are reviewed independently through the Student Appeals process. Students who wish to withdraw under special circumstances must submit documentation which supports the extenuating circumstance. Acceptable documentation should include applicable dates to justify the request and may include:

- Medical documentation by a licensed practitioner
- Deployment notice documentation
- Officially signed letter from a Unit/Battalion Commander or Employer
- Death certificate
- Any other documentation deemed acceptable to CSU

Students approved for a WSC will receive a grade of “W” for the course, which will be recorded in the student record. The grade of “W” will have no effect on the cumulative CSU GPA, but will count toward hours attempted when determining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and may affect Federal Student Aid (FSA)



eligibility. Students using FSA should contact their academic advisor to discuss SAP standing and the Office of Financial Aid to discuss FSA eligibility. An approved WSC is subject to the Tuition Refund Policy, Official Course/Drop Withdrawal Policy, and requirements outlined within the Textbook and Course Material Policy.

Students applying for a Withdrawal for Special Circumstances should submit a formal letter to RegistrarAppeals@columbiasouthern.edu and include necessary documentation to support the request. Students will be notified of a decision within 7 calendar days.

Note: DBA students enrolled in Dissertation/Research courses are not eligible for the Withdrawal for Special Circumstances and should be working with their dissertation chair regarding any special circumstances that arise during this period of their program.



19-20.3.4

The **Chapter 31 VA Disclosure** applies to students utilizing VA Benefits and is effective immediately.

Disclosure for Students Utilizing VA Benefits

In accordance with Title 38 US Code 3679 subsection (e), CSU adopts the following additional provisions for any students using U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Post 9/11 G.I. Bill (Chapter 33), or Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Chapter 31) benefits, while payment to the institution is pending from the VA.

CSU will not:

- Prevent the student's enrollment;
- Assess a late penalty fee to;
- Require student secure alternative or additional funding;
- Deny their access to any resources (access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities) available to other students who have satisfied their tuition and fee bills to the institution.

However, to qualify for this provision, such students may be required to:

- Provide Chapter 33 Certificate of Eligibility (or its equivalent) or for Chapter 31, VA VR&E's contract with the school on VA Form 28-1905 by the first day of class.



19-20.3.5

The following **Tuition Rates** are effective July 1, 2020.

CSU tuition rates are priced competitively to allow your dream of achieving a quality education to be within reach. Tuition and other student fees are payable in U.S. funds by check, credit card, money order, or other approved financing programs. A complete listing of payment options can be found on the CSU website.

Education Level	Cost Per Credit Hour
Undergraduate	\$235.00
Graduate†	\$325.00
Doctoral	\$420.00

Rates are per credit hour. Most courses are three (3) credit hours. Tuition and fees are payable in U.S. funds. Tuition Rates are subject to change. CSU Learning Partners receive a tuition discount that is applied to the full tuition rate. For the most current tuition information, please visit <https://www.columbiasouthern.edu/tuition-financing/tuition-financing>.

†The tuition rate for graduate courses per credit hour is \$250 for all active-duty military members using military tuition assistance (not applicable for CSU learning partners). The lower rate is offered to keep the tuition rate at the DoD cap of \$250.



19-20.3.6

The **Tuition Refund Policy** is effective July 1, 2020.

Tuition Refund Policy

LifePace Learning, Term and Veterans Flexible Enrollment

Students who wish to drop/withdraw (See [Official Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)) from a course or withdraw from their program are encouraged to complete the Official Course Drop/Withdrawal Form located in the myCSU Student Portal; however, students may withdraw in any manner by contacting the Office of the Registrar. Any refunds due will be issued within 30 calendar days. All students who drop/withdraw from a course after the drop date (7 calendar days) will be charged a one-time 20 percent Registration Fee (maximum of \$200 per degree program). The remaining tuition will be refunded based on the course start date and the tuition percentage amounts listed below. Note: Refunds may be reduced by the cost of the textbook (See [Textbook and Course Material Policy](#)).

Table 1 displays the percentage of tuition returned to the student minus the application and/or registration fee AFTER the listed timeframes.

Table 1 – Percent Return

**Percent return is effective after the timeframe.*

Timeframe*	Percentage returned to student
1 st week	80%
2 nd week	60%
3 rd week	40%
4 th week	20%
5 th week	0%

Sample Refund Calculation: The following tables pertain to the sample refund calculation. Table 2 denotes the institutional charges. Table 3 is a sample refund calculation.

Table 2 – Institutional Charges

CSU Institutional Charge	Amount
Tuition (3-credit undergraduate course)	\$705
One-time Registration Fee – 20%	\$141



Table 3 – Sample Refund Calculation

**Student requests to drop course AFTER the first week, i.e. in Week 2, (and after the 7-day cancellation period from the time of enrollment):*

CSU Institutional Charge	Eligible Refund
Tuition (3-credit undergraduate course)	\$705
One-time Registration Fee	(\$141)
Net Remaining Tuition	\$564
Refund Percentage	80%
Eligible Refund	$\$564 * 80\% = \451.20

Note: Refunds may be reduced by the cost of the textbook (See [Textbook and Course Material Policy](#)).



19-20.3.7

The **Academic Integrity Policy** is effective July 1, 2020.

Academic Integrity Policy

Ethical conduct is foundational to a successful academic career at Columbia Southern University (CSU). Students, faculty, and staff must commit themselves to the highest standards of honesty, fairness, and responsibility. Therefore, any deviation from these standards is a breach of the ethics that ensures the quality of CSU's academic programs, and thus, is a violation of CSU's Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic integrity demonstrates intellectual honesty by avoiding incidents of cheating, plagiarism, and self-plagiarism (unless otherwise approved). CSU has established the following definitions of plagiarism, cheating, and self-plagiarism:

- **Plagiarism** is representing the words, ideas, or works of an author without giving proper attribution to sources used through the use of in-text citations and references.
- **Cheating** is using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or other information to fulfill scholastic requirements with the intent to defraud. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: contract cheating, submission of another student's work, purchasing assignments, collusion, or submitting an assignment with the intent to defraud.
- **Self-plagiarism** is submitting previously submitted course work without prior professor approval.

CSU uses the style of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) (current edition) when assignment instructions indicate APA format is required. The APA manual presents explicit style requirements for students in the preparation of written assignments. APA is used to provide a standardized style format for written assignments while ensuring proper attribution is given to sources used in academic work through the use of in-text citations and references. Resources to assist students in complying with APA standards are located in the myCSU Student Portal under the [Resources tab](#).

CSU students agree to an Honor Pledge through the submission of each course enrollment.

I promise that I will not be involved in cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation of sources while enrolled as a student at Columbia Southern University. I have read the Academic Integrity Policy, which outlines disciplinary procedures that will result from failure to comply with this policy. I understand that violation of the Academic Integrity Policy will result in disciplinary action, outlined within the policy.

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy include, but are not limited to:

- Using unauthorized materials, or receiving unauthorized assistance in connection with any work completed or submitted



- Presenting the work or ideas of another as one's own without proper acknowledgment of the source, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in the verbatim or near-verbatim form
- Sharing, selling, buying, or uploading work or information related to any graded assignments
- Using another student's graded work to complete an assignment(s)
- Resubmitting, in whole or any portion of, a previously written work by the student without professor consent
- Using sources deemed as inappropriate by the University such as
 - Internet essay/paper generators
 - Homework assistant websites
- Using an alternate, stand-in, or proxy during an examination
- Violations outlined within the Final Examination Proctor Policy

Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy are a very serious matter and are officially documented in the student's record and preclude students from graduating with honors. Students who are found to violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action which are based on the type of violation and are cumulative throughout the student's tenure at CSU. Violations that occur during a final examination are also included in the cumulative number of violations and are subject to the same sanctions outlined herein. Dropping or withdrawing from a course in which there is an Academic Integrity violation does not void the violation.

Sanctions include but are not limited to:

- Point(s) deduction
- Assignment failure
- Course failure
- Probation
- University dismissal
- Degree revocation

The following procedures are followed to address situations wherein students exhibit behavior in violation of academic integrity standards. Matriculation from one offense to the next is based upon formal notification from the university. Please note: CSU reserves the right to amend the procedure as appropriate based upon the severity of the violation.

Plagiarism

Students found guilty of plagiarism, as defined within this policy, shall receive sanctions as outlined below:

- **First Offense**
Students will be allowed to resubmit the assignment in question within 14 calendar days with corrections. Faculty have the discretion to penalize up to one letter grade.
- **Second Offense**
Students will receive a zero on the assignment in question without the opportunity for resubmission and will be placed on Academic Integrity Probation for 12 credit hours



- **Third Offense**
Students will receive a course failure for the course in question, be placed on Academic Integrity Probation for 12 credit hours, and will be required to complete a training module with the Office of Student Resolution and Conduct within four weeks of notification. Students failing to complete the required training module will be referred to the academic dean/assistant provost of the student's degree program for additional sanctions
- **Fourth Offense**
Students will be dismissed from the university

Cheating

Students who choose to participate in cheating, as defined within this policy, shall receive sanctions as outlined below:

- **First Offense**
Students will receive a zero on the assignment in question, be placed on Academic Integrity Probation for 12 credit hours, and be required to complete a training module with the Office of Student Resolution and Conduct within four weeks of notification. Students failing to complete the required training module will be referred to the academic dean/assistant provost of the student's degree program for additional sanctions
- **Second Offense**
Students will be dismissed from the university

Academic Integrity Probation

Students placed on Academic Integrity Probation will remain on Academic Integrity Probation for 12 credit hours (unless otherwise specified) wherein they must exhibit integrity through submission of coursework and complete a required training module through the Office of Student Resolution and Conduct within four weeks. Additionally, students may be limited to enrolling in one course at a time if it is determined necessary.

Students are removed from Academic Integrity Probation after 12 credit hours (unless otherwise specified) provided they have not received any academic integrity-related infractions during their probationary status. Students who fail to complete their probationary status without academic infractions or fail to complete the required training module will be referred to the academic dean/assistant provost of the student's degree program for additional sanctions, up to and including dismissal.

There shall be no statute of limitations that precludes the University from acting on the discovery of alleged violations. This could take place during the time in which the course in question is being offered, after the course has ended, or after the student has graduated. In the event additional academic integrity violations are discovered after degree conferral, the student will be referred to the provost/chief academic officer for review and decision.

Students found in violation of the Academic Integrity policy may contest the infraction by following the process outlined within the Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy.



19-20.3.8

The **DBA Graduation Requirements Policy** has been updated and is effective July 1, 2020, Term 1B21.

DBA Graduation Requirements Policy

Students must successfully complete all degree requirements with passing grades, meet the minimum GPA requirements, successfully defend the dissertation, meet all financial obligations to the institution and have all official transcripts on file. Students enrolled in the DBA program are eligible to apply for graduation by submitting a [Petition for Graduation](#) upon receiving approval of a successful dissertation defense.

DBA students must complete a minimum of 61 semester hours with a minimum of 15 hours of dissertation/research courses. At least 85 percent of the courses that comprise the program must be completed with CSU, which is a minimum of 52 semester hours in the DBA program.

Honors designation is not awarded for DBA programs. Though a grade of “C” is considered passing, students may be required to repeat a course in which a “C” is earned if this grade results in a substandard cumulative GPA. Grades below a “C” are not considered passing.



19-20.3.9

The **DBA Institutional Academic Progress Policy** has been updated and is effective July 1, 2020, Term 1B21.

DBA Institutional Academic Progress Policy

University policy requires students to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 in the DBA program and maintain successful academic progress in dissertation research courses. These performance standards form a basis for the following academic classifications:

- Good Standing
- Academic Probation
- Academic Dismissal

Guidelines and procedures for placing students in the above classifications include:

Good Standing (Active)

A student in good standing must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. In addition, a student performing research in support of their dissertation must make successful progress.

Academic Probation

The University may place a student on academic probation for several reasons:

- Cumulative GPA falls below 3.0
- Unsatisfactory Progress (“U”) in the dissertation research course
- Withdrawal from the same course twice
- Repeat pattern of consecutive withdrawals from courses impeding academic progress

The Office of the Registrar specifies the conditions of academic probation to students in writing.

A student placed on academic probation due to their cumulative GPA falling below 3.00 is given 6 credit hours to raise the GPA to 3.0 or higher. A student placed on probation due to receiving a “U” in a dissertation research course must receive an “S” in the next dissertation research course. A student placed on probation for repeated withdrawals from the same course must complete the course on the third attempt. Students must demonstrate academic progress and avoid repeated patterns of withdrawing from courses to avoid academic dismissal.

Academic Dismissal

Students enrolled in the DBA program are expected to progress through the program timely and successfully; therefore, academic dismissal due to substandard academic performance is final. The University will dismiss a student from the program under the following circumstances:



- Not achieving a GPA of 3.0 or higher at the conclusion of the probationary period
- Withdrawing from the same course three times
- Earning two consecutive grades of “U” in dissertation research courses

However, a student may appeal a dismissal due to two consecutive grades of unsatisfactory in dissertation research courses.

Appeal Process

A student dismissed from the DBA Program for earning consecutive “U” grades in dissertation research courses may submit a written appeal via email, within ten business days of the date the decision was sent, to the DBA Appeals Board through the DBA Program Coordinator. The written appeal by the student to the Board must clearly state the reasons for the appeal and remedy sought. The DBA Academic Program Director will appoint three academic faculty to evaluate the appeal. The Board composition will consist of the Lead Faculty of the DBA Program, acting as chair, and two faculty members from the DBA Program unrelated to the student’s committee.

The DBA Appeals Board will review all submissions, obtain additional information and opinions if desired, and provide the student with a written response within ten business days of receipt. The DBA Program Director will receive a copy of the Board’s response. The findings and recommendation of the DBA Appeals Board are final.



19-20.3.10

The **DBA Time Limits Policy** has been updated and is effective July 1, 2020, Term 1B21.

DBA Time Limits Policy

Students enrolled in the DBA program are expected to complete the program in no fewer than three (3) years and no more than seven years from the date of initial enrollment in the Doctoral Orientation course. In addition, students must meet the following program milestones:

- Complete all coursework within four years of completing the Doctoral Orientation course
- Successfully defend dissertation within three years of passing the comprehensive exam course

In some cases, due to extenuating circumstances, students can appeal the 4-year coursework and/or 3-year research limit to the DBA Appeals Board, not to exceed ten years from the start of enrollment in the program. The DBA Appeals Board will be appointed by the DBA Program Director and consists of:

- Lead Faculty of the DBA Program, Chair
- Two DBA program faculty member (unrelated to student's committee)

Students who wish to appeal shall submit a formal letter to the DBA Program Coordinator clearly stating the reason(s) for the appeal and remedy sought. The DBA Program Coordinator will provide the appeal to the DBA Appeals Board. The DBA Appeals Board will review the appeal, all submissions, obtain additional information if necessary, and provide the student with a written response within ten business days of receipt. The DBA Program Director will receive a copy of the Board's response. The findings and recommendation of the DBA Appeals Board are final.



19-20.3.11

The **DBA Continuous Enrollment Policy** has been discontinued. The change is effective July 1, 2020.

DBA Continuous Enrollment Policy - Discontinued

The DBA Continuous Enrollment Policy is discontinued, effective July 1, 2020. Students are encouraged to contact their academic advisor with any questions.



19-20.3.12

Grading Policies is effective July 1, 2020.

Grading Policies

Columbia Southern University (CSU) students can view course grades at any time through Blackboard or by visiting the [myCSU Student Portal](#). The myCSU Student Portal provides students the option to print course grade reports and review all assignment grades for courses completed at CSU, and print an unofficial transcript.

Course specific grading information is available within each Course Syllabus, to include assignment weights.

Grading System

The following scale is used to determine final course grades and are recorded on the CSU transcript unless noted:

<i>Grading</i>		<i>Points per credit hour</i>
A	90-100	4.00 Quality Points
B	80-89	3.00 Quality Points
C	70-79	2.00 Quality Points
D	60-69	1.00 Quality Points
F	59-0	0.00 Quality Points
W	Withdrawn	0.00 Quality Points
W/F	Withdraw/Fail	0.00 Quality Points
I	Incomplete or Extension	0.00 Quality Points
IP	In Progress	0.00 Quality Points
R	Retake	0.00 Quality Points
DN*	Dropped for Non-Attendance	0.00 Quality Points
DP	Dropped from Course	0.00 Quality Points
DC*	Institutional Drop	0.00 Quality Points
S	Satisfactory Progress	0.00 Quality Points
U	Unsatisfactory Progress	0.00 Quality Points
W/U	Withdrawal/Unsatisfactory	0.00 Quality Points

**Not recorded on the CSU transcript.*

Grade Descriptions

Final course grades of A, B, C, and D generate quality points as described in the grading system table, are included in the cumulative grade point average (GPA), and are counted towards hours attempted to determine Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).



Course grades of W, I, IP, R, DN, DP, DC, S, U, and W/U do not generate quality points and are not normally included in the cumulative GPA. However, grades of W, I, R, S, U, and W/U are calculated as attempted hours to determine SAP.

While final grades of F and W/F do not generate quality points, they are included in the GPA and counted towards hours attempted to determine SAP.

A grade of IP is assigned as a placeholder when a student is in the process of completing a course during original course start and end dates. In cases where a student has been granted additional time to complete course assignments (Incomplete or Extension), a grade of “I” will be assigned as a placeholder until an earned grade is determined.

Grade Point Average

The grade point average (GPA) is computed by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of hours completed.

Grading Rubric

Columbia Southern University has established functional scoring rubrics for all assignment types (e.g., research paper, case study, article critique). The rubrics are located in Blackboard units with the assignments and are available for student review. Faculty apply the rubrics to evaluate the assignments and enter the scores and feedback directly into the rubric located with the assignment. There are also non-functional scoring rubrics for written response assessment items and discussion forums. The written response rubric is found in the unit assessment directions, and the discussion forum rubric is found in the Unit I Discussion Board. Faculty apply these rubrics in scoring the items and provide summative feedback in the “Feedback to Learner”, which is found in the gradebook.

Grading Timeframes

CSU requires all assignments to be graded in a timely manner.

- Unit Assessments and Final Examinations are required to be graded within three days of submission.
- Papers, Projects, Article Critiques, and Case Studies are required to be graded within five days of submission.
- Assignments in the DBA program may allow a seven, ten, or fourteen day grading time period.

Please Note: There may be times in which a grading delay could occur due to extenuating circumstances. These delays will be communicated appropriately.

Assignment Submission Timeframes

The following list defines information regarding assignment submissions for students enrolled in the Term learning option:

- Weekly course assignments must be turned in during the week they are assigned. Students have the option to submit assignments one week in advance, unless otherwise indicated by the university.



- Students are required to respond to the Discussion Board assignment by Saturday, 11:59 PM CT and comment on another student's response by Tuesday, 11:59 PM CT.
- Assignments not turned in by the deadline will be penalized as follows:
 - One day late – 10 points deduction
 - Two days late – 20 points deduction
 - Three days late – 30 points deduction
 - Assignments will not be accepted after the third day. The student will earn a zero on assignments not turned in by the third day after the deadline unless otherwise approved by the course professor, per the Assignment Make-Up Policy.
 - Students earn zero points if Discussion Board assignments are submitted late.

Contesting Grades

Students who feel that a grade awarded is inconsistent with published policy, course syllabi, rubric item, or assignment requirements should address the grade with their faculty member during the course. At the conclusion of the course, should the student remain dissatisfied with the rendered grade, the student may contest the grade by following the steps outlined within the Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy.

Related Policies

Students enrolled in CSU courses, including the DBA dissertation courses, are expected to meet attendance and participation requirements. Please refer to the Attendance Policy and Unofficial Withdrawal Policy to learn more details.

To learn more about SAP, which may impact federal student aid eligibility, please refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.

To learn more about incomplete grades and course extensions, students may wish to refer to the Incomplete Grading Policy and Course Extension Policy.



19-20.3.13

The **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for Title IV Students** has been updated and is effective July 1, 2020.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for Title IV Students

Term

Federal regulations require CSU to establish and apply reasonable standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for eligible students to receive financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act. CSU students who wish to be considered for financial aid must:

- Be in good standing at the university;
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress in their program of study, as outlined in this policy.

SAP is a financial aid eligibility requirement and is administered by the university in addition to the academic standards of performance required under the CSU Academic Progress Policy.

Students are evaluated for SAP at the end of every payment period. All students are evaluated on three standards: grade point average (qualitative measure), pace of completion (quantitative measure), and maximum timeframe. Students must meet all three standards to maintain eligibility for Title IV funds.

Undergraduate Students

Standard 1: Grade Point Average (Qualitative Measure)

Undergraduate students must maintain a minimum qualitative measure of progress defined as a 2.0 cumulative GPA.

Standard 2: Pace of Completion (Quantitative Measure)

Undergraduate students (either full-time or part-time) must achieve a passing rate of at least 66.67 percent of all credit hours attempted. Credit hours attempted include completed courses, repeated courses, withdrawals, and incompletes. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the pace of completion as attempted and completed credit hours.

Standard 3: Maximum Time frame

Undergraduate students must complete their degree program within 150 percent of the semester hour requirements for the degree as published in the catalog. Students must complete an associate degree within 90 semester hours and a bachelor's degree within 180 semester hours. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the maximum timeframe calculation.

Graduate Students

Standard 1: Grade Point Average (Qualitative Measure)

Graduate students must maintain a minimum qualitative measure of progress defined as a 3.0 cumulative GPA for their degree program.



Standard 2: Pace of Completion (Quantitative Measure)

Graduate students must achieve a passing rate of a minimum of 50 percent of 0 to 9 attempted credit hours, a minimum of 60 percent of 10 to 18 attempted credit hours and a minimum of 66.67 percent of 19 or more attempted credit hours towards the degree program. Attempted hours include completed courses, repeated courses, withdrawals, and incompletes. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the pace of completion as attempted and completed credit hours.

Standard 3: Maximum Time frame

Graduate students must complete their degree program within 150 percent of the semester hour requirements for the degree as published in the catalog. Students must complete a master's degree within 54 semester hours and a doctorate degree within 90 semester hours. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the maximum timeframe calculation.

SAP Policy Notification

Students are notified of the SAP policy in the CSU catalog, website and during the initial financial aid application process. All periods of enrollment at CSU are calculated in SAP, including periods of enrollment during which a student did not receive financial aid.

Course Drop

Students are allowed to drop a course without any negative impact on SAP through the term "drop date" as listed on the academic calendar. A course designated as a "DP" does not count as attempted hours or in the GPA when determining SAP.

Official Course Withdrawal

A student who withdraws from one or more courses after the drop date will be issued a grade of "W." Course withdrawals will count as attempted credit hours when measuring the maximum time frame and quantitative progress of SAP, but will not be included in the GPA. A student who withdraws from all attempted credit hours during the student's first period of enrollment with CSU will also obtain an undefined GPA. An undefined GPA is equivalent to a 0.00 GPA.

Unofficial Course Withdrawal

A student who unofficially withdraws from one or more courses will be issued a grade of "W/F" or "W/U." "W/F" grades will count as credit hours attempted when measuring the maximum time frame and quantitative SAP. A grade of "W/F" counts as a grade of "F" when measuring qualitative SAP progress. Grades of "W/U" will count as attempted credit hours when measuring the maximum time frame and quantitative progress of SAP, but will not be included in the GPA.

Transfer Credits

Transfer credits accepted toward the student's degree program will be included as credit hours attempted and earned when calculating the SAP maximum timeframe and quantitative progress.

Repeated Courses

Students receiving Title IV Aid may repeat a course, as allowed under CSU academic policy. Repeated courses will be issued a grade of "R" and count as attempted credit hours toward the quantitative and maximum timeframe SAP



standards. A grade of “R” does not count in qualitative determination of SAP. The grade earned upon retake will be used in the cumulative GPA.

Incomplete Grades

Students receiving federal student aid may receive incomplete grades, as allowed under CSU academic policy. A grade of incomplete will count as credit hours attempted in determining SAP. Students issued a grade of incomplete while on SAP Financial Aid Warning will not be eligible to use federal student aid for subsequent payment periods, pending the resolution of the incomplete grade.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grades

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grades will count toward total hours attempted for the Pace of Completion and Maximum Timeframe (calculation of both attempted hours and, if passed, completed credit hours) but will not count in the GPA calculation.

Change of Program

All periods of enrollment count when assessing satisfactory academic progress for undergraduate students. All attempted credit hours will be included in making satisfactory academic progress determinations when a student changes degree programs (majors) at the same degree level (e.g., Bachelor to Bachelor). For graduate students, only the credit hours associated with the courses that apply to each specific Graduate degree program will be used in the satisfactory academic progress evaluation.

SAP Evaluation and Warning

SAP is evaluated after every payment period. Students who fail to meet the CGPA and/or pace of completion requirements of SAP will be notified and will be placed on SAP Financial Aid Warning for one term and are encouraged to work with their academic advisor to discuss enrollment options. A student placed on SAP Warning will be eligible to receive federal student aid for one period of enrollment.

A student who exceeds the maximum time frame requirement of SAP will be ineligible to continue to receive federal student aid unless an appeal is granted, as described below.

A student who fails to meet one or more of the SAP standards at the end of the Financial Aid Warning period will be ineligible to receive federal student aid unless an appeal is granted.

Financial Aid Suspension Appeal

Students not meeting SAP at the end of the Financial Aid Warning period may appeal that determination and loss of federal student aid eligibility if they have extenuating circumstances, such as injury or illness, the death of a relative, or other special circumstances. The appeal must contain the Financial Aid Suspension appeal form completed by the student and must explain and document why the student was not able to make satisfactory academic progress during the period of substandard academic performance, what has changed that will allow the student to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements at the next evaluation and a proposed Academic Plan leading to successful program completion prepared by the student’s academic advisor.

Maximum Time Frame Appeal

Students who reach or exceed the maximum time frame allowed while completing their first degree are no longer eligible to receive federal student aid. Students may appeal this decision. The appeal must contain the MTF appeal form completed by the student and the student’s academic advisor, a detailed explanation and supporting



documentation of any unusual circumstances such as injury, illness, death of a relative, or other special circumstances that prevented the student from obtaining a degree within the 150% credit hour requirement. The appeal must also include a proposed Academic Plan leading to successful program completion prepared by the student's academic advisor to include expected graduation date and credit hours remaining in the degree program. If the appeal is approved, aid will be awarded only for the remaining credits required for the completion of the degree.

Submission of Appeal

Students will be sent an email notification from the Office of Financial Aid to include the appeal form once a student becomes ineligible to receive federal student aid due to an adverse SAP determination. Appeals should be submitted in writing and addressed to Columbia Southern University, SAP Appeals Committee, Office of Financial Aid, 21982 University Lane, Orange Beach, AL 36561 or emailed to Attention: SAP Appeals Committee at SapAppeals@columbiasouthern.edu. Appeals without supporting documentation will not be considered. The committee will make every effort to consider each appeal carefully and provide a decision within seven to ten business days.

SAP Financial Aid Probation

Appeals that are approved will result in a student being placed on SAP Financial Aid Probation. While on SAP Financial Aid Probation, students will be evaluated at the end of each payment period to ensure the student is meeting SAP and/or the conditions of the Academic Plan. Students on SAP Financial Aid Probation are eligible to receive federal student aid.

Reinstatement of Financial Aid

If a student's appeal is denied or a student does not wish to appeal, a student may regain eligibility for federal student aid by enrolling in and successfully completing courses in his or her degree program without the use of federal student aid. A student may request financial aid reinstatement once he/she successfully completes enough credits to meet the minimum SAP standards. A student should contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#) in writing if the student feels he or she has regained financial aid eligibility and wishes to be reinstated.

End – Addendum 19-20.3.1-13



Addendum 19-20.2.1

March 2, 2019

The March 2, 2020 addendum corrects the misprinted **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for Title IV Students**. The correct policy was published in the 2018 Student Handbook, Edition 3 on December 28, 2018. The correct version is published below to replace the misprinted version in the 2019 – 2020 Student Handbook.

19-20.2.1

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for Title IV Students is effective December 28, 2018.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for Title IV Students

Term

Federal regulations require CSU to establish and apply reasonable standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for eligible students to receive financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act. CSU students who wish to be considered for financial aid must:

- Be in good standing at the university;
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress in their program of study, as set forth in this policy.

SAP is a financial aid eligibility requirement and is administered by the university in addition to the academic standards of performance required under the CSU Academic Progress Policy.

Students are evaluated for SAP at the end of every payment period. All students are evaluated on three standards: grade point average (qualitative measure), pace of completion (quantitative measure), and maximum timeframe. Students must meet all three standards to maintain eligibility for Title IV funds.

Undergraduate Students

Standard 1: Grade Point Average (Qualitative Measure)

Undergraduate students must maintain a minimum qualitative measure of progress defined as a 2.0 cumulative GPA.

Standard 2: Pace of Completion (Quantitative Measure)

Undergraduate students (either full-time or part-time) must achieve a passing rate of at least 66.67 percent of all credit hours attempted. Credit hours attempted include completed courses, repeated courses, withdrawals,



and incompletes. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the pace of completion as attempted and completed credit hours.

Standard 3: Maximum Time frame

Undergraduate students must complete their degree program within 150 percent of the semester hour requirements for the degree as published in the catalog. Students must complete an associate degree within 90 semester hours and a bachelor's degree within 180 semester hours. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the maximum timeframe calculation.

Graduate Students

Standard 1: Grade Point Average (Qualitative Measure)

Graduate students must maintain a minimum qualitative measure of progress defined as a 3.0 cumulative GPA for their degree program.

Standard 2: Pace of Completion (Quantitative Measure)

Graduate students must achieve a passing rate of a minimum of 50 percent of 0 to 9 attempted credit hours, a minimum of 60 percent of 10 to 18 attempted credit hours and a minimum of 66.67 percent of 19 or more attempted credit hours towards the degree program. Attempted hours include completed courses, repeated courses, withdrawals, and incompletes. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the pace of completion as attempted and completed credit hours.

Standard 3: Maximum Time frame

Graduate students must complete their degree program within 150 percent of the semester hour requirements for the degree as published in the catalog. Students must complete a master's degree within 54 semester hours and a doctorate degree within 90 semester hours. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the maximum timeframe calculation.

SAP Policy Notification

Students are notified of the SAP policy in the CSU catalog, website and during the initial financial aid application process. All periods of enrollment at CSU are calculated in SAP, including periods of enrollment during which a student did not receive financial aid.

Course Drop

Students are allowed to drop a course without any negative impact on SAP through the term "drop date" as listed on the academic calendar. A course designated as a "DP" does not count as attempted hours or in the GPA when determining SAP.

Official Course Withdrawal

A student who withdraws from one or more courses after the drop date will be issued a grade of "W". Course withdrawals will count as attempted credit hours when measuring the maximum time frame and quantitative progress of SAP, but will not be included in the GPA. A student who withdraws from all attempted credit hours



during the student's first period of enrollment with CSU will also obtain an undefined GPA. An undefined GPA is equivalent to a 0.00 GPA.

Unofficial Course Withdrawal

A student who unofficially withdraws from one or more courses will be issued a grade of "WF". Unofficial withdrawals will count as credit hours attempted when measuring the maximum time frame and quantitative SAP. A grade of "WF" counts as a grade of "F" when measuring qualitative SAP progress.

Transfer Credits

Transfer credits accepted toward the student's degree program will be included as credit hours attempted and earned when calculating the SAP maximum timeframe and quantitative progress.

Repeated Courses

Students receiving Title IV Aid may repeat a course, as allowed under CSU academic policy. Repeated courses will be issued a grade of "R" and count as attempted credit hours toward the quantitative and maximum timeframe SAP standards. A grade of "R" does not count in qualitative determination of SAP. The grade earned upon retake will be used in the cumulative GPA.

Incomplete Grades

Students receiving federal student aid may receive incomplete grades, as allowed under CSU academic policy. A grade of incomplete will count as credit hours attempted in determining SAP. Students issued a grade of incomplete while on SAP Financial Aid Warning will not be eligible to use federal student aid for subsequent payment periods, pending the resolution of the incomplete grade.

Change of Program

All periods of enrollment count when assessing satisfactory academic progress for undergraduate students. All attempted credit hours will be included in making satisfactory academic progress determinations when a student changes degree programs (majors) at the same degree level (e.g. Bachelor to Bachelor). For graduate students, only the credit hours associated with the courses that apply to each specific Graduate degree program will be used in the satisfactory academic progress evaluation.

SAP Evaluation and Warning

SAP is evaluated after every payment period. Students who fail to meet the CGPA and /or pace of completion requirements of SAP will be notified and will be placed on SAP Financial Aid Warning for one term and are encouraged to work with their academic advisor to discuss enrollment options. A student placed on SAP Warning will be eligible to receive federal student aid for one period of enrollment.

A student who exceeds the maximum time frame requirement of SAP will be ineligible to continue to receive federal student aid unless an appeal is granted, as described below.

A student who fails to meet one or more of the SAP standards at the end of the Financial Aid Warning period will be ineligible to receive federal student aid unless an appeal is granted.



Financial Aid Suspension Appeal

Students not meeting SAP at the end of the Financial Aid Warning period may appeal that determination and loss of federal student aid eligibility if they have extenuating circumstances, such as injury or illness, the death of a relative, or other special circumstances. The appeal must contain the Financial Aid Suspension appeal form completed by the student and must explain and document why the student was not able to make satisfactory academic progress during the period of substandard academic performance, what has changed that will allow the student to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements at the next evaluation and a proposed Academic Plan leading to successful program completion prepared by the student's academic advisor.

Maximum Time Frame Appeal

Students who reach or exceed the maximum time frame allowed while completing their first degree are no longer eligible to receive federal student aid. Students may appeal this decision. The appeal must contain the MTF appeal form completed by the student and the student's academic advisor, a detailed explanation and supporting documentation of any unusual circumstances such as injury, illness, death of a relative, or other special circumstances that prevented the student from obtaining a degree within the 150% credit hour requirement. The appeal must also include a proposed Academic Plan leading to successful program completion prepared by the student's academic advisor to include expected graduation date and credit hours remaining in the degree program. If the appeal is approved, aid will be awarded only for the remaining credits required for the completion of the degree.

Submission of Appeal

Students will be sent an email notification from the Office of Financial Aid to include the appeal form once a student becomes ineligible to receive federal student aid due to a negative SAP determination. Appeals should be submitted in writing and addressed to: Columbia Southern University, SAP Appeals Committee, Office of Financial Aid, 21982 University Lane, Orange Beach, AL 36561 or emailed to Attention: SAP Appeals Committee at SapAppeals@columbiasouthern.edu. Appeals without supporting documentation will not be considered. The committee will make every effort to consider each appeal carefully and provide a decision within seven to ten business days.

SAP Financial Aid Probation

Appeals that are approved will result in a student being placed on SAP Financial Aid Probation. While on SAP Financial Aid Probation, students will be evaluated at the end of each payment period to ensure the student is meeting SAP and/or the conditions of the Academic Plan. Students on SAP Financial Aid Probation are eligible to receive federal student aid.

Reinstatement of Financial Aid

If a student's appeal is denied or a student does not wish to appeal, a student may regain eligibility for federal student aid by enrolling in and successfully completing courses in his or her degree program without the use of federal student aid. A student may request financial aid reinstatement once he/she successfully completes enough credits to meet the minimum SAP standards. A student should contact the Office of Financial Aid in writing, to financialaid@columbiasouthern.edu, if the student feels he or she has regained financial aid eligibility and wishes to be reinstated.



Addendum 19-20.1.1-6 September 1, 2019

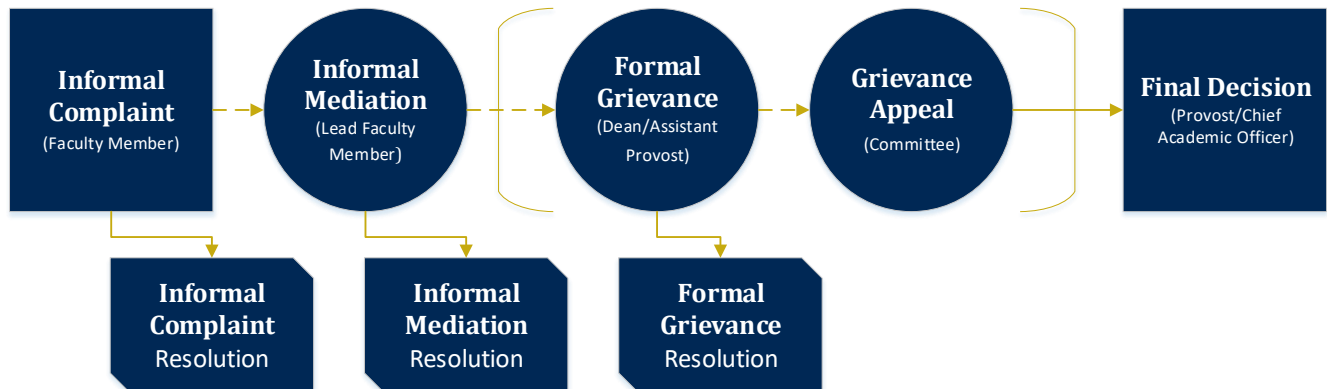
19-20.1.1

Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy is effective September 1, 2019.

Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy

Columbia Southern University (CSU) acknowledges that students have the right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement through a comprehensive complaint procedure. The purpose of the Academic Complaint and Grievance policy is to provide students with a pathway to have a complaint reviewed and a resolution rendered, within the academic or classroom context. An academic complaint is based on a case or circumstance that the student feels violates a published policy, syllabus, or rubric. Academic complaints include, but are not limited to, academic integrity, grading, feedback, etc.

The process to file an academic complaint is as follows:



Informal Complaint

Within five business days of the specific occurrence, the student may provide the faculty member (whom the complaint is against) with a clearly written complaint that includes the specific policy, syllabus item, and/or rubric information that has been allegedly violated. The faculty member is responsible for reviewing the complaint and providing a response in writing to the student within three business days.

If the complaint is related to the lack of email response of the faculty member, the student should make a final attempt to contact the faculty member and allow 48 hours for response prior to moving to Informal Mediation.



Informal Mediation

If the resolution rendered remains unsatisfactory upon receiving the faculty member's response, the student may contact the lead faculty member* of the course within five business days of the informal complaint response. The student will provide the lead faculty with the faculty member's response and the specific policy, syllabus item, and/or rubric information that has allegedly been violated. The lead faculty is responsible for reviewing/investigating the complaint and providing a written response to the student within three business days.

*Students may contact the [Office of Student Resolution and Conduct](#) to gain understanding and contact information for the appropriate lead faculty member.

Formal Grievance

If the resolution rendered remains unsatisfactory upon receipt of a response from the lead faculty member, within 10 business days the student may submit a formal letter to Grievance@columbiasouthern.edu outlining their grievance to be formally recorded by the institution. The student will be responsible for providing dates and documentation wherein they attempted an informal resolution for their complaint. The grievance will be provided to the dean/assistant provost responsible for the course in question. The dean/assistant provost will notify the faculty member that a formal grievance has been received and may choose to schedule a phone/virtual conference with the student and faculty member in order to gain more details regarding the formal grievance. The dean/assistant provost is responsible for reviewing/investigating the formal grievance and providing a written response within 10 business days of receiving the formal grievance.

Grievance Appeal

If the resolution rendered remains unsatisfactory upon receipt of a response from the dean/assistant provost, the student may submit a formal letter within 10 business days to Grievance@ColumbiaSouthern.edu outlining the desire to appeal the grievance decision and request a hearing before the Academic Grievance Appeals Committee. The student must submit all evidence to support that informal and formal processes have been completed, in addition to a clearly articulated expected outcome.

The Academic Grievance Appeals Committee shall be comprised of:

- Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs, chair
- Dean of Faculty Development
- Dean of Student Affairs
- Academic Program Director
- Academic discipline faculty

A virtual/in-person hearing shall be scheduled within 15 days of receipt of the grievance appeal. During the hearing, the student will be required to present their perspective to the committee. The Office of Student Resolution and Conduct will be responsible for scheduling the hearing with the committee, student, and faculty member. The faculty member will be present to provide rationale for the decision rendered. Within five



business days of its conclusion, the committee will provide a formal recommendation to the provost/chief academic officer. The provost/chief academic officer shall provide a written decision to the student within five business days of receipt of the Academic Grievance Appeals Committee's recommendation. The decision of the provost/chief academic officer shall be the final action taken by the institution.

Students who wish to file a complaint with an external agency may review agency contact information on the [CSU Website](#). Students are encouraged to proceed through university processes before filing a complaint with an external agency.



19-20.1.2

Non-Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy is effective September 1, 2019.

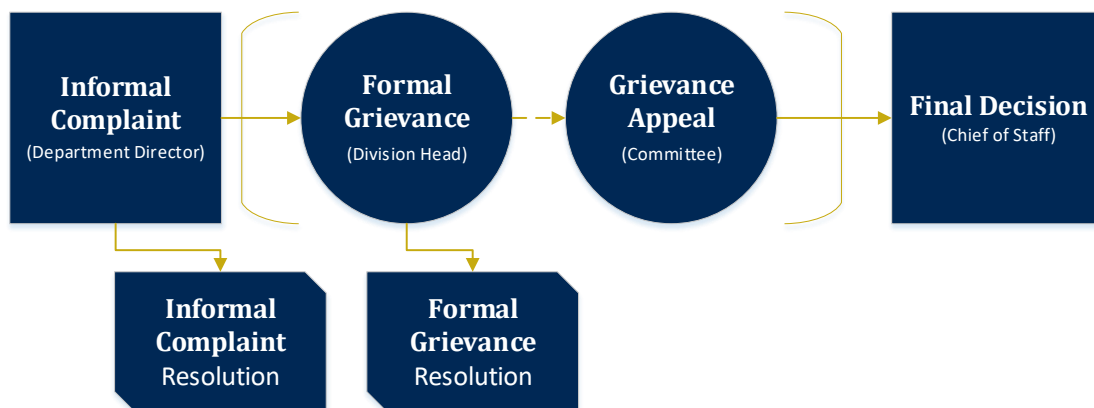
Non-Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy

Columbia Southern University (CSU) acknowledges that students have the right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement through a comprehensive complaint procedure. The purpose of the Non-Academic Complaint and Grievance policy is to provide students with a pathway to have a complaint reviewed and a resolution rendered, for situations that arise outside the context of the classroom. A non-academic complaint is based on a case or circumstance that the student feels violates a published policy, procedure, or agreement made between the student and the institution. Non-academic complaints include, but are not limited to: financial decisions*, refunds, honors status, disparate treatment, etc.

Students with complaints of sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, including gender-based discrimination, stalking, and pregnancy, should contact the [Title IX Coordinator](#).

**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and any other appeal that has a separate policy/procedure is excluded from this policy*

The process to file a non-academic complaint is as follows:



Informal Complaint

Within five business days of the specific occurrence, the student may provide the department director* with a clearly identified complaint. The written complaint should include the specific policy/agreement that has been violated, and their desired resolution. The department director is responsible for reviewing/investigating the complaint and providing a written decision to the student within three business days.



*Students may contact the [Office of Student Resolution and Conduct](#) to gain understanding and contact information for a specific department director.

Formal Grievance

If the resolution rendered remains unsatisfactory upon receipt of a response from the department director, within 10 business days the student may submit a formal letter to Grievance@columbiasouthern.edu outlining their grievance to be formally recorded by the institution. The student will be responsible for providing dates and documentation wherein they attempted informal resolution for their complaint. The grievance will be provided to the division head for review and investigation. The division head will notify the department director that a formal grievance has been received. The division head may choose to schedule a phone/virtual conference with the student and department director in order to gain additional details regarding the formal grievance. The division head is responsible for reviewing and investigating the formal grievance and providing a response to the student within 10 business days of receipt of the formal grievance.

Grievance Appeal

If the resolution rendered remains unsatisfactory upon receipt of a response from the division head, the student may submit a formal letter, within 10 business days, to Grievance@ColumbiaSouthern.edu outlining the desire to appeal the grievance decision and request a hearing before the Non-Academic Grievance Appeals Committee. The student must submit all evidence to support that informal and formal processes have been completed, in addition to a clearly articulated expected outcome.

The Non-Academic Grievance Appeals Committee shall be comprised of:

- Director of Student Resolution and Conduct, chair
- Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs
- Assistant Provost of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation
- Associate Vice President of Finance

A virtual/in-person hearing shall be scheduled within 15 days of receipt of the grievance appeal wherein the student will be required to present their perspective to the committee. The Office of Student Resolution and Conduct will be responsible for scheduling the hearing with the committee, student, and department director. The department director will be present to provide rationale for the decision rendered. The committee will conduct the hearing and at the conclusion of the hearing and review of evidence shall provide a formal recommendation to the chief of staff within five business days of the hearing. The chief of staff shall provide a written decision to the student within five business days of receipt of the Non-Academic Grievance Appeals Committee's recommendation. The decision of the chief of staff shall be the final action taken by the institution.

Students who wish to file a complaint with an external agency may review agency contact information on the [CSU Website](#). Students are encouraged to proceed through the university processes before filing a complaint with an external agency.



19-20.1.3

Academic Integrity Policy has been updated and is effective September 1, 2019.

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Definition

Academic integrity demonstrates intellectual honesty by avoiding incidents of cheating, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and/or poor scholarship.

- Plagiarism is defined as representing the words, ideas, or other works of another individual or entity as your own without giving proper credit to the original author or source.
- Cheating is defined as using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or computer-related information.
- Self-plagiarism is defined as submitting previously submitted course work that may or may not have received academic credit, without prior approval of the instructor.
- Poor scholarship is defined as an incorrect attempt to give credit to or document the use of an external source.

Statement of Policy

Ethical conduct is foundational to a successful academic career at Columbia Southern University (CSU). Students, faculty, and staff must commit themselves to the highest standards of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Therefore, any deviation from these standards is a breach of the ethics that ensure the quality of CSU's academic programs, and thus, is a violation of CSU's Academic Integrity Policy.

The Honor Pledge reads as follows:

I promise or affirm that I will not, at any time, be involved in cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation of sources while enrolled as a student at Columbia Southern University. I have read the Student Code of Conduct Policy and the Academic Integrity Policy, which explains disciplinary procedures that will result from failure to comply with these policies. I understand that violation of the Academic Integrity Policy will result in sanctions, appropriate to the incident and the student record as a whole, that are outlined within this policy.

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy include, but are not limited to:

- Using unauthorized materials, electronic or print, or receiving unauthorized assistance during any examination or in connection with any work completed or submitted for academic credit
- Presenting the work or ideas of another as one's own without proper acknowledgement of the source, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form
- Sharing, selling, or buying information related to any graded learning activities
- Using another student's graded work to complete assignment(s)
- Resubmitting, in whole or any portion of, a previously written work by the student without professor consent



- Falsifying or fabricating information
- Using sources deemed as inappropriate by the University such as:
 - Internet essay/paper generators
 - Homework assistant websites
- Using an alternate, stand-in, or proxy during an examination
- Violations outlined within the Final Examination Proctor Policy

APA Guidelines

Students are expected to follow the format of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) (current edition) when assignment instructions indicate APA format is required. The APA manual presents explicit style requirements for students in the preparation of written works which may include research papers, projects, and other written assignments.

As required by APA writing style, all sources used directly or indirectly (quoted or paraphrased) must be cited within the text and all appropriate sources shall be compiled in a reference list at the end of all applicable written works. Students and faculty should refer to all assignment instructions for specific guidelines. CSU has created the [CSU Citation Guide](#) and other resources to assist students in complying with APA standards. These resources are all located in the myCSU Student Portal under the [Learning Resources](#) tab.

Sanctions

Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy are a very serious matter and are officially documented in the student's record. Students who are found to be in violation of this policy are subject to sanctions which are based on the severity of the specific violation, in addition to any previous violation(s) identified. Violations are cumulative throughout the student's tenure at Columbia Southern University.

Sanctions include but are not limited to:

- Point(s) deduction
- Assignment failure
- Course failure
- University dismissal
- Degree revocation

Please note: Violations that occur during a final examination are also included in the cumulative number of violations that have occurred in the student's academic record. Final Examination sanctions may include a resubmission opportunity, point deduction, assignment failure, course failure, probation, suspension, and/or a university dismissal and degree revocation.

Statute of Limitations

There shall be no statute of limitations that precludes the University from acting on the discovery of alleged violations. This could take place during the time in which the course in question is being offered, after the course has ended, or after the student has graduated.



In the event additional academic integrity violations are discovered after degree conferral, it will result in degree revocation.

Students should be aware that dropping or withdrawing from a course in which there is an Academic Integrity violation does not void the violation and that all infractions will be recorded in the student's record.

Contesting Violation

Students found in violation of the Academic Integrity policy may contest the infraction by following the process outlined within the Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy.



19-20.1.4

Student Code of Conduct Policy has been updated and is effective September 1, 2019.

Student Code of Conduct Policy

Ethical behavior and conduct is foundational to a successful academic career at Columbia Southern University (CSU). Students, faculty, and staff must commit themselves to the highest standards of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Therefore, any deviation from these standards is a breach of ethics identified in CSU's Student Code of Conduct. Furthermore, violation of ethical standards can lead to disciplinary actions. Students are responsible to know and comply with the Student Code of Conduct and other academic and student affairs policies contained within the student handbook. In addition, students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity with faculty, staff and other students throughout all interactions online and/or at university-sanctioned events.

Students are prohibited from engaging in conduct that includes, but is not limited to:

- Disrespect of university personnel.
- Inappropriate communication including but not limited to harassment, prejudice, stalking, offensive language, threats, abuse, insults, or humiliation made within the university environment. The university environment consists of email correspondence, phone conversations, text messages, or other university communication mediums.
- Demeaning comments including, but not limited to those regarding an individual's religion, race, age, sexual orientation, or making unwanted sexual advances or intimidations.
- Breaches of privacy, hacking passwords or systems, distribution or replication of copyrighted material(s), unauthorized distribution of instructional materials, use of illegal or unlicensed software.
- Intentional breach of university policy or procedures.
- Reproduction of university materials to include course content, assessments, or other materials deemed to be the property of the university.
- Using and/or purchasing work that is not his/her own.
- Disruptive behavior that hinders or interferes with the educational process.
- Harassment or intimidation that has the effect of creating an offensive educational environment for any student, faculty, or staff member.
- Conduct that is disorderly, lewd, lascivious, indecent or otherwise inappropriate.
- Violation of any local, state, or federal law.
- Displaying harmful or threatening behavior towards students, faculty, or other university personnel.

Investigation

The director of student resolution and conduct or designated university official shall conduct investigations of the Student Code of Conduct in a prompt and reasonable manner. The purpose of the investigation is to determine if adequate evidence exists to support a formal review. While an alleged violation is being investigated, interim action may be initiated. These actions include but are not limited to, removal from a course(s), prohibited attendance to university-sanctioned events and other functions, and/or a no contact order.



In those instances where CSU determines the conduct does not warrant a specific charge, CSU may choose to issue a warning. Note: Warnings are not appealable.

In the event of a threat or imminent harm, the university reserves the right to take immediate action prior to the investigation in accordance with sanctions outlined therein.

Notification and Response

A student charged with a violation of the Student Code of Conduct will be notified of the specific violation in writing. Students shall be given 10 business days to submit a written response to the designated university official indicating responsibility for the charged offense or denying the charges. Failure of a student to respond to the official letter constitutes a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in additional sanctions by the university up to and including dismissal from the university. A student denying the charge(s) will follow the below process.

Review of Response

Reviews shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:

- The director of student resolution and conduct will assemble a committee of three university members to review the response.
- Additional documentation to substantiate a denial of the charge should be submitted to the director of student resolution and conduct.
- The determination of the misconduct shall be made on the basis of whether it is more likely than not that the student violated the Student Code of Conduct.
- The evidence in support of the charges shall be presented, considered, and a recommendation will be made by the committee to the director of student resolution and conduct or a designated university official.

Decision

- The decision shall be communicated to the student in writing from the director of student resolution and conduct or a designated university official.
- In accordance with the requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), upon written request, CSU will disclose to an alleged victim of a crime of violence, or a non-forcible sex offense, the results of any disciplinary review conducted by the institution against the student who is the alleged perpetrator of the crime or offense.
- In accordance with the requirements under HEOA, in cases of an alleged sex offense, both the accuser and the accused will be informed of the determination involving an alleged sex offense, including any imposed sanction(s).
- A summary report containing findings of fact, decision, and sanctions, will be placed in the student's file.

Sanctions

Disciplinary sanctions shall be based upon the seriousness of the charge(s) and may include, but are not limited to: warning, probation, loss of academic credit, suspension, and conduct dismissal.



19-20.1.5

Complaint and Grievance Policy has been discontinued.

The Complaint and Grievance Policy has been discontinued. All content and references pertaining to this policy are null and void indefinitely, effective September 1, 2019.

*This policy is wholly replaced by **19-20.1.1, Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy** and **19-20.1.2, Non-Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy**, which are included in this addendum.*



19-20.1.6

Student Appeals Policy has been discontinued.

The Student Appeals Policy has been discontinued. All content and references pertaining to this policy are null and void indefinitely, effective September 1, 2019.

*This policy is wholly replaced by **19-20.1.1, Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy** and **19-20.1.2, Non-Academic Complaint and Grievance Policy**, which are included in this addendum.*
