

# MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS

## Admission Criteria

Concordia College admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, age or gender to its programs and activities. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or disability in the administration of its educational policies, financial aid program, athletics and all other educational programs and activities. Admission criteria include:

1. Applicants must possess an earned baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution with a GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale). Exceptions to this rule may be granted by the Graduate Programs Committee, in consultation with the Admission Committee of individual programs.
2. Applicants shall demonstrate they possess sufficient academic and professional background and experience.
3. Applicants shall present evidence they possess the potential for success in a graduate level academic program.
4. Applicants shall demonstrate their proficiency in written and oral communication in English necessary for success in graduate study.
5. Each program has its own requirements. Refer to specific program requirements for details.

## Admission Deadlines

See individual program

## Admission Procedures

See individual program

## Admission Procedures for International Students

In addition to meeting the previously stated admission requirements, to qualify for admission in an advanced degree program, all international students must demonstrate proficiency in English, must complete a credentials check through a third party provider, and must provide evidence of adequate financial support for themselves and any dependents for the duration of their graduate program.

**Deadline** – Programs may have particular deadlines for applications and deposits in order to allow enough time to process the application and complete other requirements for international students. Please see individual programs for specific dates and requirements for admission.

**Language Proficiency** – English proficiency shall be demonstrated prior to admission by achieving a score on the IELTS (minimum score of 6.5) or TOEFL (minimum score of 80) that meets the specific graduate program requirements. The test date must be within two years of the date of application. Information on these tests can be obtained online ([www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org) (<http://www.ielts.org>) and [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org) (<http://www.toefl.org>)). Students' official results must be received directly from the testing service before they may enroll. Concordia's TOEFL code is 6113; no code is required for IELTS. Individual programs may have additional proficiency requirements.

**Validation of Credentials** – International students must submit their undergraduate transcript(s) to an approved credential evaluation agency

for evaluation. These approved agencies can be found on the NACES website ([www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org) (<http://www.naces.org>)).

**Financial Requirements** – International students must demonstrate and certify adequate financial support before Concordia can issue an I-20 form. To do so, students must submit the International Student Financial Aid and Certification Form and a certified bank statement.

**Medical Insurance** – International students are required to carry and show evidence of health insurance valid in the United States while they are enrolled.

## Procedures for Transfer of Credit

While a program may elect to set additional requirements for evaluating the credentials of applicants who propose to obtain credit for graduate work completed at other institutions or in other programs, the following standards shall apply for transfer of credits into a graduate program at Concordia College.

Effective fall 2016, transfer credits will be calculated in the total credits earned but grades calculated in the GPA will be only Concordia courses. In practice, this means that transfer credit is marked with satisfactory (S) grades. Transfer credits taken on a pass-fail basis are not accepted.

1. **Comparability of academic credit.** In order to be acceptable for transfer credit, the academic credit earned at other institutions or programs shall be from programs that are at least equivalent to that into which the applicant proposes to transfer. For example, if the Concordia program carries specialized accreditation or meets specific professional standards in order to facilitate licensure or similar recognition, transfer credits need to have been earned in programs with equivalent standards.
2. **Recency of course completion.** In order to be eligible for transfer credit, the courses for which the academic credit was earned must have been taken within seven years of application and carry a grade of B or higher.
3. **Level.** In order to be eligible for transfer credit, the academic credit must have been earned at a minimum of the graduate level.
4. **Content.** In order to be eligible for transfer credit, the academic credit must be at least 75% equivalent to the course established for the Concordia graduate program into which the transfer is proposed.
5. **Limitations and residency.** Transfer of credit is limited to no more than one-third of the total number of graduate hours required in the program for graduation purposes. Individual programs may further limit the number of transfer credits allowed.
6. **International Transfer Credit.** Students requesting transfer of credit for courses taken at universities outside of the United States must have their final transcripts evaluated by an approved credential evaluation agency found on the NACES website ([www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org) (<http://www.naces.org>)).

## Action on Applications

All applicants who have provided the required application materials will be notified of action taken on their request for admittance to the graduate program. Admission of all graduate students requires approval by the program director and/or department chair and the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies or their designee.

## Admission Status

The following definitions may be applied in making admission decisions for a graduate program at Concordia College:

1. **Accepted.** The applicant has satisfied all the criteria for full acceptance into the graduate program and is expected to begin active graduate study with the beginning of the next available port of entry. Students should consult their individual program guidelines, as some programs may accept students to a program on a deferred status basis. An applicant who is accepted has completed the application process in full, including payment of any application processing fees.
2. **Provisional acceptance.** The applicant has satisfied most but not all the criteria for admission into the graduate program. The status of the applicant must be converted to full acceptance no later than the completion of three graduate courses. When the conditions are fulfilled, the student initiates the process for Change of Status. Forms are available on the Graduate and Continuing Studies (<https://cobbernet.cord.edu/directories/offices-services/graduate-and-continuing-studies/>) Cobbernet website. If an applicant fails to satisfy the conditions set at the time of provisional acceptance within the first three graduate courses, the provisional acceptance reverts to denial of admission and the applicant will not be allowed to proceed with further graduate study. The student may appeal this decision to the Graduate Programs Committee.
3. **Admission denied.** The applicant did not meet one or more of the criteria for admission to the program and it is unlikely that provisional acceptance would remedy the situation. Applicants may also be denied admission because a program's maximum enrollment has been reached. The applicant shall be advised of whether they may reapply at a later time.
4. **Applicants not seeking degrees.** It is anticipated that certain programs will attract individuals who are pursuing post-baccalaureate level education for purposes other than earning a graduate degree. These individuals may be admitted at the discretion of the program provided that such admission does not displace qualified applicants who desire to pursue degrees. Such non-degree-seeking graduate students are expected to satisfy minimum admission standards including possession of a baccalaureate degree. Non-degree-seeking graduate students are subject to the same retention standards as degree-seeking graduate students, except for the aforementioned course limitation. Financial aid is not available for non-degree-seeking students.

## Change in Classification

Students enrolled with non-degree status may subsequently desire to be considered for admission to pursue an advanced degree. Such a change in status may be accomplished for a subsequent term by submitting a complete application to the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies as a degree-seeking student. Appropriate credit hours earned in the non-degree-seeking status may be used to fulfill graduate degree requirements if approved by the student's program director. No course taken in the non-degree status for which the grade is less than B will be permitted on a Plan of Study for a graduate degree.

## Academic Progress

### Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average

Concordia cumulative GPA is the GPA calculated from just the courses attempted at Concordia (not transfer grades).

The overall cumulative GPA must be at least 3.0 for all graduate coursework completed. Because a 3.0 cumulative GPA is required for graduation, this is the standard by which academic progress is determined. No courses with grades lower than a C may be counted for

graduate credit. Students receiving two grades of C (2.0) or lower in the program, earned after they have been admitted or admitted conditionally, will have their progress in the program reviewed by the program director.

### Academic Probation

Because a 3.0 cumulative GPA is required for graduation, this is the standard by which academic progress is determined.

A student not meeting the standards for acceptable academic progress at the end of the term is placed on academic probation. Academic probation will require the student to work with the program director to develop an academic improvement plan.

### Academic Suspension

Two consecutive or three nonconsecutive probation-level terms (less than a 3.0 cumulative GPA) will result in suspension. In some programs, academic suspension may require a complete withdrawal from the program. Please see your individual program. In addition, students may be suspended from Concordia at any time if their academic performance in any given term falls below a 1.0 GPA. Students will be on suspension for two academic terms.

A student may appeal suspension status if they have mitigating circumstances beyond their control such as illness or injury, death of a relative, or other circumstances that result in undue hardship. The Graduate Programs Committee will review appeals and their decision is final.

After the suspension period has passed, a student is eligible to apply for readmission. The readmission decision will take into consideration the student's history and actions or circumstances that would justify readmission. If readmitted, the student may be reinstated on a probationary and contractual basis and required to meet specific expectations.

### Academic Dismissal

If the student fails to meet the expectations established upon readmission after suspension, the student will be dismissed from the college and is not eligible to be considered for readmission.

In addition to the criteria listed above, the college reserves the right to suspend or dismiss students who otherwise fail to meet college academic or conduct standards.

Note: Students receiving financial aid should consult the Financial Aid Office for the Financial Aid Academic Progress Policy as different criteria apply.

### Retention

While each program may elect to set additional retention requirements for continuation of study in their graduate programs, the following minimum standards evidencing acceptable progress shall apply to all graduate programs at Concordia College.

1. **GPA.** To continue as a student in a graduate program, the cumulative GPA must be at least 3.0 for all graduate courses taken in the program. If the student transfers graduate credit hours from another institution or program, the GPA for purposes of this guideline will be calculated for courses taken at Concordia only. Further, no courses in which a grade lower than a C (2.0), including C-, was awarded may be counted for graduate credit at Concordia. (See Repeating Courses (p. 6).) Students receiving two grades of C (2.0) or lower in their graduate program (including prerequisites carrying

undergraduate course designations) earned after they have been admitted or admitted conditionally will have their progress in the program reviewed by the program director. The program director has the authority to remove the student from the program. See specific program guidelines for additional GPA requirements.

2. **Work evaluations.** In programs requiring clinical, studio or experience-based components, the attendant evaluations must be favorable and recommend continuation of the student in the program.
3. **Final evaluation.** At the conclusion of the capstone course or culminating experience, the program faculty shall prepare a final evaluation of each candidate for graduation. That evaluation shall be performed in accordance with the standards set by each program. The program director shall notify students whether or not they may advance to graduation.
4. **Graduate program grades.** Grades given in graduate courses are in the Grades and Grade Points chart (p. 8). Only those credits that were completed with a grade of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, or S may be applied toward a graduate degree.
5. **Appeals.** The college maintains procedures available for applicants and students who disagree with decisions concerning admission to and/or retention in graduate programs of the college. These procedures are specified in the section below.

## Appeal Procedures Related to Admission and Retention in a Graduate Program

Students have a right to appeal decisions that negatively affect their progress in their graduate program. Graduate students may appeal decisions pertaining to transferability of courses from other institutions or programs, grades awarded, and recommendations against continuation of study in the program.

1. **Admission Decisions:** In cases in which applicants disagree with admission decisions or believe that their applications warrant special consideration in light of program and/or college admission guidelines, the following appeal procedures may apply.
  - a. **Written appeal.** The applicant shall file a written appeal with the Graduate Programs Committee within 30 calendar days of the date of the letter notifying the applicant of the admission decision.
  - b. **Content of the appeal.** The appeal letter shall include a complete explanation of the basis of the appeal.
  - c. **Investigation.** The Graduate Programs Committee shall determine appropriate investigative measures and conduct an analysis to resolve the appeal within 30 calendar days of receiving the written appeal. The committee shall consider the record of the decision and appeal in its entirety, applying college and program graduate admission standards as its criteria. The decision of the committee may be appealed to the Dean of the College as a final step in the appeals process if desired by the applicant. The decision of the dean is final and not subject to further appeal.
2. **Retention:** In the event that graduate students disagree with a decision made concerning their progress in the program once they have been admitted to the program, these appeal procedures may apply.
  - a. **First level of appeal.** In order to be considered a valid appeal, the graduate student shall address the appeal first to the faculty member in case of a course grade or to the department chair or program director for other issues. In order to be considered, the appeal shall be made within 30 business days of notification and in a form acceptable to the sponsoring department or program.

In the event that the graduate program director or department chair is the faculty person responsible for the decision to which the student objects, the program will arrange for an appropriate person to hear the appeal at the first level. The program director must advise the student in writing of the decision within seven business days of receiving the appeal.

- b. **Second level of appeal.** If the student does not agree with the decision made at the first level of appeal, the matter may be submitted to the Graduate Programs Committee for consideration. In order to be considered a valid appeal at the second level, the appeal must be in writing, filed with the Graduate Programs Committee within seven business days of the first-level appeal decision, and include a complete description on which the appeal is based. The graduate student filing the appeal must notify the sponsoring program that the appeal is being pursued to the second level by providing a copy of the written appeal at the same time as it is filed with the Graduate Programs Committee. The sponsoring program may file a response to the appeal at this time.
- c. **Investigation.** The Graduate Programs Committee shall examine the entire record of the appeal, including the response by the sponsoring program, and conduct such investigation as it determines is warranted. The committee shall apply the college and program performance and retention standards in reaching its decision concerning the appeal. The chair of the committee shall notify the student and the program in writing of its decision within seven business days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Committee is final.

## Background Checks

Background checks may be required by some programs. See individual program for additional information.

## Records Information

The official student file will be maintained by the individual program directors, the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies, and the Office of the Registrar.

## Financial Information

The cost of tuition and fees vary per program. Contact the individual program director for information. Housing is considered primarily for undergraduate students; however, some graduate programs make arrangements for housing. Contact the program director for information.

Tuition, room, board and fees are listed for the entire year but are due at the beginning of each semester. Price increases during the academic year are not anticipated; however, the college reserves the right to make them should unforeseen circumstances make it necessary.

Besides covering tuition, room, board and student activity events in programs that charge a comprehensive fee, the comprehensive fee entitles you to free admission to most campus concerts, athletic contests, plays, lectures, and other campus events. Other fees may be charged by individual graduate programs. Consult the program director for additional information.

## Financial Arrangements

**Advance payments:** A nonrefundable application fee must accompany the application for admission by new students, excluding students who are readmitted. See individual program for additional information.

**Prepayment:** Tuition and fees are due the beginning of each semester. When financial aid or other adjustments are expected, those adjustments may be deducted from the balance. Please do not delay payments while waiting for adjustments. Interest will be charged on unpaid balances that are outstanding 30 days or more. Students should not expect to be registered for the next semester if fees are not paid in full.

## Graduate Withdrawal Policy

### Return of Title IV (Federal) Aid Policy

When a student ceases attendance in all classes during a given semester or summer school, a calculation of "earned" versus "unearned" federal aid must be determined. This federal policy assumes you earn your aid based on how much time has elapsed in the term. For instance, if there are 100 days in a term and you withdraw on day 20, you have earned 20 percent of your federal aid. All remaining federal student aid is unearned and must be returned. As a result, your earned federal student aid may not cover all unpaid institutional charges due to Concordia College at the time of withdrawal.

If you are taking courses in more than one block (i.e., Part of Term) and withdraw from all active courses, you will be considered withdrawn unless Concordia College obtains a written confirmation from you stating you will be attending a later block in the same semester/summer school at the time of the withdrawal request. This pertains even if you are currently enrolled in a later block course. Unless Concordia obtains written confirmation from you at the time of withdrawal, all future classes for the semester/summer school will be dropped (34 CFR 668.22).

The withdrawal date is the date you begin the withdrawal process. If you fail to withdraw officially, the withdrawal date will become the midpoint of the term unless the institution can document a later date. In certain circumstances, if an earlier date of last academic activity is determined this date may be used in the calculation of "earned" federal aid.

If you withdraw before completing 60 percent of the term, you "earn" federal funds in direct proportion to the length of time you were enrolled. The percentage of earned aid is determined by dividing the total number of calendar days enrolled by the total number of calendar days in the term. If you complete 60 percent of the term, you earn all federal financial aid for the term.

The responsibility to repay unearned aid is shared by the institution (Concordia) and the student. The institution's share is the lesser of the unearned aid or unearned institutional charges. The institution's share must be repaid to the federal aid programs in the following order before the student's share is considered.

1. Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan
2. Direct Federal Graduate PLUS Loan
3. Federal TEACH Grant
4. Other Title IV Assistance

Concordia College returns the unearned federal aid within 45 days of the student's withdrawal date or the date the college became aware that a student withdrew.

Any remaining refund will then be returned to other institutional, state or private student assistance that has been received. Any refund in excess of student aid will be returned to you only after account balances in the Business Office have been paid. Specific examples of refund calculations are available upon request from the Financial Aid Office.

In the event the financial aid exceeds the direct costs in the Business Office and you receive a cash credit balance, withdrawal will result in repayment of a portion of that credit balance. The portion to be repaid is determined by multiplying the cash payment by the remaining weeks in the semester divided by the total weeks in the semester.

## How to Withdraw

To officially withdraw from the graduate program, you must contact the director of the program. It is our preference you complete the necessary paperwork indicating your intent to withdraw; however, if your circumstance prevents this, please contact your program director.

If you would like to rescind a withdrawal and regain financial aid eligibility for courses in progress of being withdrawn, you must submit a written request to the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies. The reinstatement of financial aid eligibility will be contingent upon you being granted a return to the same courses from which you originally withdrew (34 CFR 668.22).

## Refunds for Reduced Load

If you find it necessary to drop a course during the semester, obtain a drop-add form from the Office of the Registrar. The completed form must be submitted by the deadlines on the academic calendar (<http://www.ConcordiaCollege.edu/academiccalendar/>). Tuition refunds through the eighth week of the semester will be granted effective on the date the drop-add form is returned to the Office of the Registrar. Dropping below full-time status may have an impact on the financial aid received.

Any questions or problems related to refunds should be directed to the controller in the Business Office.

In order to receive any credit balance, complete settlement of your bill must be made. Loans are the primary source of financial aid to graduate students.

## How to Apply for Financial Aid

To apply for all forms of federal financial aid you must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA can be completed any time after Oct. 1 for the following academic year, but students beginning a graduate program in the summer should also complete a FAFSA for the current academic year. For example, if you are beginning a program in summer 2020, you will need to complete a 2019-20 FAFSA. The FAFSA can be completed online at the following site: [www.studentaid.gov/fafsa](http://www.studentaid.gov/fafsa) (<http://www.studentaid.gov/fafsa/>).

An Award Letter is sent to students once financial aid has been awarded. It is necessary to complete the FAFSA every year.

The financial aid package is awarded on the basis of financial information contained in the FAFSA. Aid received from any source that was not originally considered in the aid package may affect the amount received. Students are required to notify the Financial Aid Office of all such aid received from any source.

## Loans

Three types of loans for graduate college costs at Concordia are available:

1. **Federal Direct Loan program:** This program provides unsubsidized loans at a fixed interest rate set by Congress. This rate is evaluated annually for new loans that are received for that academic year. The interest rate for loans taken during the 2019-20 year is fixed at 6.08 percent. Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan will accrue



interest while enrolled in college. Repayment begins six months after enrollment ceases or you drop to less than half-time enrollment status. The maximum annual amount for this loan is \$20,500 for unsubsidized Stafford Loans with a maximum total debt of \$138,500. However, total eligibility cannot exceed the cost of attendance at the institution. FAFSA is required to be eligible for this loan program.

2. **Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loan:** This federal loan is available to graduate students that have no adverse credit at a fixed rate set by Congress. This rate is evaluated annually for new loans that are received for that academic year. The interest rate for Graduate PLUS loans taken during the 2019-20 academic year is fixed at 7.08 percent. A credit check is required and interest begins to accrue when the loan funds are disbursed. Only available to graduate students whose cost of attendance has not been fully met by other aid sources. FAFSA is required to be eligible for this loan program.
3. **Private loans:** Some commercial lenders offer private loan programs. The Financial Aid Office website maintains a list of private loan lenders, but students are not required to use a lender that is on this list. Private loans are credit based, so fees and rates will vary depending on the creditworthiness of the borrower and may in some cases require a co-signer.

## Refunds in Financial Aid Resulting from Withdrawal from the Program

The Business Office determines the refund amount for tuition, fees, room and meal plan in the event that you withdraw from school during the semester. Please refer to the information under Withdrawals and Refunds (p. 4) in the Financial Information pages of the catalog.

## Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

In accordance with federal and state regulations, all graduate students must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress toward the attainment of a degree. At Concordia College, satisfactory academic progress is monitored at the end of every academic term (i.e., semester and/or summer school).

All financial aid applicants are subject to the standards outlined here even if financial aid was not received in the past. There are three distinct dimensions to the satisfactory academic progress standards: maintaining the minimum required grade point average, successfully completing a degree at the required pace and completing your program of study within an established time frame.

At minimum, graduate students must:

1. Maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or greater; and,
2. Pass 67 percent of all academic courses attempted at Concordia College; and,
3. Complete their program of study/degree within 150 percent of the credits normally required for attainment of the degree.

## Programs Covered by this Policy

All types of federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs are covered by this policy, including grants, scholarships, student employment and federal and state loan programs.

## Monitoring Progress

A student's progress will be monitored at the end of fall and spring semesters and summer school. The overall cumulative grade point average (GPA), pace, and maximum time-frame assessment will be

based on the student's entire academic record, including all transfer credits accepted. Admission to Concordia College, or maintaining good academic standing as defined by the graduate program, does not necessarily constitute maintaining satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes.

## Maximum Time Frame

Graduate students must complete their program of study by attempting no more than 150 percent of the credits normally required for attainment of the degree. For example, if a degree program can normally be completed in 30 credit hours, a student's financial aid eligibility will be suspended once the student has attempted 45 credit hours, whether the student has attained the degree or not.

The maximum time-frame component will be based on the student's entire graduate academic record, including all graduate transfer credits accepted. Attempted credits include all unsatisfactory grades of C-, D+, D, D-, I, IP, F, DR, DP, U, W, WD, NR and NG; along with satisfactory grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C or S. Repeated courses are counted as attempted credits each time they are attempted and the LAST grade received will be computed in your GPA.

Maximum time frame cannot be appealed. Once Concordia College is aware that you cannot complete your degree within 150 percent of the published length of the program, you become ineligible for financial aid.

## Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average

For purposes of financial aid, the cumulative grade point average (GPA) will be assessed on all Concordia and graduate transfer courses. The overall cumulative GPA must be at least 3.0 for all graduate coursework completed. Grades of "IP", "NG", "NR", "S", "U", "I", "W" and "DR" do not affect the GPA calculation. Grade changes of an incomplete ("I") and in progress (IP) grade will affect the GPA calculation once the final grade is submitted.

## Pace of Progression

Pace of progression is measured by dividing the cumulative number of earned credit hours by the cumulative number of credit hours the student has attempted at the completion of each academic term. This includes any course for which the student has remained enrolled past the drop-add period. A graduate student's pace must be equal to, or greater than, 67 percent.

## Failure to Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students who do not meet the above standards of satisfactory academic progress at the end of each academic period will automatically be placed on financial aid warning for the following academic term. Students on financial aid warning may continue to receive financial aid for one payment period even though they are not meeting the minimum satisfactory academic progress standards. At the end of the warning period, a student's satisfactory progress will be evaluated again. If it is determined that the student is meeting the minimum progress standards, the student will be considered to be in good standing and may receive financial aid in the upcoming term. If the student fails to meet the minimum satisfactory academic standards after the warning period, aid will be suspended for the upcoming term.

Students will be placed on **suspended** status if they:

- Fail to make financial aid satisfactory academic progress while on **warning** status; or
- Are dismissed from college.

Students whose financial aid have been suspended are not eligible to receive financial aid until they meet one of the following conditions:

- Continue to attend Concordia College at their own expense and return to full compliance with all parts of the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy
- Demonstrate special circumstances to justify appeal consideration.

## Right to Appeal

A student whose financial aid has been suspended can submit a written appeal to the Financial Aid Office. An appeal form is included with the suspension notification and is also available in the Financial Aid Office.

The appeal form and supporting documentation must be submitted to the associate director of Financial Aid in the Welcome Center by the deadline indicated in the suspension notification. The appeal should clearly detail the mitigating circumstances that hindered the student's academic performance and relevant documentation should accompany the appeal form. Acceptable reasons to appeal include but are not limited to: illness or injury of the student, illness or death of an immediate relative to the student, military service, divorce or separation of student/spouse, etc.

If the appeal is granted or approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation and their aid eligibility will be reinstated for one term. If the student fails to meet the financial aid satisfactory academic progress standards at the end of the probation period, future aid is suspended until the student is in full compliance with all satisfactory academic progress standards or provides justification for another appeal consideration.

Action taken on a financial aid appeal is final and is transmitted to the student in writing. Appeals should be submitted by the deadline detailed in the suspension notification. Depending on the timeliness of the appeal, it is possible for a student to have an appeal denied and also not be entitled to a refund of charges if the student chooses to withdraw from classes. A student who enrolls and is attending classes, whose appeal is subsequently denied will be eligible for a refund of charges based solely on the schedule of refunds in the Business Office.

## Cautionary Note

Because the status of federal and state student assistance programs is ever changing, we run the risk that published information may become outdated. Should this occur, we will publish all applicable changes using the numerous media available on this campus.

## Glossary of Terms

**FAFSA:** Free Application for Federal Student Aid – financial statement that is used in applying for financial aid on an annual basis

**Lender:** your local bank, savings and loan, credit union, or other financial institution participating in a private loan program

**Need:** the difference between the cost of education and the family's calculated ability to meet that cost

**Package:** the financial aid, determined by the Financial Aid Office, that you receive

**Rolling Basis:** an arrangement in which once you are accepted and apply for financial aid, you are notified immediately of the financial aid decision

**Student Aid Report (SAR):** the report the student receives from the U.S. Department of Education indicating financial information on file regarding the student; it is used in the corrections process

**Verification:** a requirement of the federal government to verify accuracy of the financial data in the aid application

## Office of the Registrar Registration Information

After students have been accepted to a graduate program at Concordia College, they will receive registration instructions from the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies. Graduate students will register for classes during the spring semester for summer and fall courses and register during the fall semester for the following spring's courses. Students will be contacted by their academic advisor, who will assist them in completing the registration process.

**Drop-Add Policies:** For programs that allow students to drop a course, graduate students must follow college-designated policies for dropping and adding courses. Individual programs may allow students to register for some designated courses on a pass-fail basis. Students should consult the handbook for their particular program to determine if this option is available to them.

For information about tuition refunds for a reduced course load, see Refunds for Reduced Load (p. 4).

**Repeating Courses:** Students enrolled in some graduate programs at Concordia College are allowed to repeat one graduate course. See the individual program for additional information. A course may be repeated if the student has earned a grade of C or below, or a U, and if space permits. All courses attempted remain on the student's transcript; only the last grade is computed into the GPA and credit is only earned once. In the case of extenuating circumstances, a student may file a petition to retake one additional course. The Graduate Programs Committee will receive the petition and rule on it. Federal regulations prohibit Concordia College from awarding federal financial aid to a student for repeating a course unless the student failed the course.

**Pass-Fail Registration Option:** Students may elect to take a maximum of 4 credits on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) basis, in addition to any transfer credits allowed by the graduate level program as well as courses set up to be graded on a pass-fail basis (capstone projects, internships, research thesis). The grade of S is awarded for C and higher level work. The grade of U is awarded for C-, D, and F level work. A course taken as pass-fail will be counted in the attempted hours but will not affect the Concordia GPA. Individual graduate level programs may appeal to the Graduate Programs Committee for an exception to allow more than 4 credits on an S/U basis. Individual graduate level programs may also elect to exclude certain courses from pass-fail options or not allow any pass-fail options.

## Student Enrollment Status

- Full time: Students enrolled in 8 or more credits
- Three-quarter time: Students enrolled in 6-7.99 credits
- Half time: Students enrolled in 4-5.99 credits

## Departure/Exit Procedures

**Withdrawal from Current Term:** If it is necessary to withdraw from the term, the student must obtain the application for withdrawal from the program director. The program director will submit the application to

the Business Office, Office of Financial Aid, the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies, and the Office of the Registrar. If endorsed, the withdrawal becomes effective on the date it is approved and is reflected on the academic record. A "W" is noted on the transcript for each dropped course. Failure to file an application for withdrawal or filing an application late will result in additional charges being assessed. Withdrawal from the term may affect a student's financial aid.

Students who stop attending classes and who do not withdraw in the prescribed manner will be charged as if they had continued in the classes and may earn failing grades. Students who have completed all coursework and are in the process of completing the research thesis or capstone project will not be allowed to withdraw.

The college reserves the right to withdraw students who discontinue class attendance.

The college also reserves the right to withdraw students on academic probation who are not attending classes and who obviously are not going to meet their probation status requirements. See program information for specific academic conduct policies.

If students engage in behavior that suggests a danger to self or others, or if students' behavior demonstrates they are emotionally or psychologically incapable of functioning properly in the college setting, the college reserves the right to withdraw students involuntarily.

**Military Withdrawal:** The college will make every effort to accommodate the needs of students called to active military duty during an academic term. Students who receive orders to report for active U.S. military duty are instructed to contact the Office of the Registrar. Students in this situation must present their Military Orders to initiate accommodations regarding coursework in progress. An approved plan regarding coursework must be established prior to students' departure. Generally, there are three approaches that may be taken:

1. If orders are received late in the term, students may be able to complete coursework prior to leaving.
2. In some situations, it will be feasible for students to receive an Incomplete in a course or courses. If it is not feasible to receive an Incomplete, the students will be allowed to drop a course or courses with a full refund of tuition and fees associated with the dropped course(s). If students receive an Incomplete but are unable to complete the work due to a change in circumstances, the students may appeal to the Graduate Programs Committee for a retroactive course drop under the same terms outlined above.
3. In many situations, it will be necessary for students to withdraw from the college to fulfill military obligations. In this circumstance, students will be withdrawn from all courses with a 100-percent refund of tuition and fees and unused portion of room and board.

Concordia College is approved by the Minnesota State Approving Agency for Veteran's Educational Benefits. To obtain benefits, the veteran must apply for a Certificate of Eligibility. Application forms may be obtained from the Veteran's Administration Regional Office. This should be done as soon as possible after acceptance so that the Certificate of Eligibility may be obtained before veterans come to campus.

In granting credit to veterans who have pursued specialized training programs in the armed forces, the college follows the Guide to the Evaluation of Education Experiences in the Armed Services, prepared by the American Council of Education.

**Non-Returning:** Any student who does not plan to return to Concordia for the next semester must meet with the program director to complete an Application for Withdrawal.

See additional information under Withdrawal from Current Term (p. 6).

**Academic Leave:** Academic Leave is an option in some, but not all, graduate programs. When allowed, students in good standing may apply for an academic leave, allowing them to take leave from the college for up to two terms without having to apply for readmission. Leaves will only be considered in extreme cases where circumstances prohibit all meaningful progress toward the degree. During an academic leave, students will not have access to institutional resources such as the library, nor will their thesis advisors/project advisors or instructors be available for consultation. Should the student return at the scheduled time, the requirements for graduation will follow the catalog at the time of original admission and must be completed within the seven-year time limitation for degree completion. Applications will be reviewed by the director of the program. The program director will submit the application for academic leave to the Business Office, Office of Financial Aid, the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies, and the Office of the Registrar.

**Readmission:** If the student has not been granted academic leave and stops attending Concordia for one or more complete academic terms and wants to return, the student must contact Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies. Before an application for readmission will be considered, the student will be asked to address and resolve any pending issues (such as those related to academic, disciplinary, or financial status) with the college at the time the student stopped attending. Students who are readmitted two years or more after their last enrollment must satisfy requirements published in the catalog in effect at the time of readmission. All requirements for the program must be completed seven years after taking the first graduate course included in the Plan of Study. Once these issues are resolved, the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies will process the application for readmission and inform the student of the resulting decision. Readmission of all graduate students requires approval by the program director.

**Continuing Registration:** In those programs requiring continuing registration credits to maintain active student status while working on the capstone/research thesis/professional project, students are responsible for enrolling in the Continuing Registration course each term. If a student has not been granted academic leave and stops attending Concordia for one or more academic terms and wants to return, the student must retroactively enroll in and pay for the missing terms of Continuing Registration credits.

Further information and registration assistance is available from the Office of the Registrar (<https://www.concordiacollege.edu/directories/offices-departments-directory/registrar/>).

## Glossary of Terms

The following definitions will help you interpret college regulations and understand academic requirements:

**Credit Hour:** A credit hour is a unit of measure that gives value to the level of instruction, academic rigor and time requirement for a course taken at an educational institution. See Glossary of Terms (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/undergraduate-academic-community/office-registrar/glossary/>) for more information, including the federal definition of a credit hour.

**Grades:** Grades are indicated by letters, using the traditional method of describing the quality of work in a course. See the following chart for how letter grades are interpreted in terms of quality and grade points. Policy for assigning grades is at the discretion of the individual instructor.

**Grade Points:** Grade points are the numerical measure of the quality of work. Each grade received is assigned the value indicated on the chart below. The grade points earned in a single course are determined by multiplying the numerical equivalent of the letter grade by the number of credit hours for the course.

### Grades and Grade Points

Grades	Interpretation	Grade Points
A	excellent	4.0
A-		3.7
B+		3.3
B	good	3.0
B-		2.7
C+		2.3
C	satisfactory	2.0
C-		1.7
D+		1.3
D		1.0
D-	minimum passing	0.7
AU	audit	0 <sup>1</sup>
IP	in progress	0 <sup>1</sup>
NG	no grade	0 <sup>1</sup>
NR	no report	0 <sup>1</sup>
F	failure	0
S	passing grade (S-U course)	0 <sup>1</sup>
U	failing grade (S-U course)	0 <sup>1</sup>
I	incomplete	0 <sup>1</sup>
W	withdrawn	0 <sup>1</sup>
DR	dropped course	0 <sup>1</sup>
X	unfinished thesis/ professional project	0 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Grades that do not affect the grade point average

**Grade Point Average:** Concordia cumulative GPA is the GPA calculated from just the courses attempted at Concordia (not transfer grades). GPA is determined by dividing total number of grade points by the number of credit hours attempted. A GPA of 2.0 is the same as a C average, 3.0 as a B average, etc.

**Incomplete Credits:** A grade of "I" is a temporary indicator that credit may be earned upon satisfactory completion of all course requirements. The grade of "I" is justified only when the student is unable to complete course requirements because of circumstances beyond their control and when arrangements have been made with the professor before the end of the semester. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with the professor and request the grade of "I" and develop a plan to meet the instructor's requirements. The instructor will indicate course requirements to be completed, date by which requirements will be completed and received by the instructor (no later than the eighth week

of the following semester), and the course grade which will be recorded should the student fail to meet all conditions of the agreement.

If an "I" has been automatically converted to an F or another assigned default grade, the student may request to complete the necessary coursework. This may only be permitted at the instructor's discretion and must be completed within one year, which is in accordance with the grade change policy. The student may not complete coursework after that time.

**In Progress:** A grade of "IP" is a temporary indicator that credit may be earned upon satisfactory completion of the coursework. Individual programs may have different reasons for using IP grades.

**No Grade:** A grade of "NG" can only be applied to courses where continuing registration is required.

**Change of Grade:** Once a grade is recorded on a student transcript, it becomes part of the institutional record and can be changed only to correct an error in the original grade computation or in cases where there has been a violation of academic integrity. A grade change cannot be made because required (or additional) coursework has been turned in after the end of the term. A grade change can be made by the instructor of record for a course or be made with approval of the chief academic officer, if the instructor of record is not available. A change of grade may not be made more than one year after the grade was officially recorded in the Registrar's Office.

A student who wishes to appeal a grade may appeal to the department chair or program director, who, in consultation with the faculty member and one or two other faculty members agreeable to the student, will determine whether the grade should be changed. Appeals must be submitted no later than midsemester following the semester in which the grade was assigned. Students seeking an appeal of the academic department/program decision may bring a petition to the Dean of the College or designee. The only exception is the grade of "X" for an unfinished thesis/professional project. See Time Limitation (p. 9) for additional details.

**Withdrawn:** Students who officially withdraw from the term will receive a grade of "W" for the course(s).

**Unfinished Thesis/Professional Project:** In some programs, but not all, students who register but do not complete the thesis or professional project will receive a grade of "X" for the course.

## Policies and Regulations

### Academic Advisors

The program director or their designee will serve as the academic advisor.

### Course Registration

Current graduate students may register the first day of registration for any term. Students will complete registration online. ALT PIN numbers will be provided by the academic advisor.

Class schedules and descriptions of the registration procedures can be found online from the Office of the Registrar.

Registration must be completed and all tuition and fees must be paid to the Business Office before published deadlines.



## Graduate Courses

Courses at the 600 and 700 levels are offered for graduate credit only. Courses offered at the 600 level may be open to graduate students or to undergraduate seniors who meet specific requirements.

In some instances, courses included in a graduate program may be cross-listed as both an undergraduate and graduate class. In those instances in which undergraduate and graduate students are taking the same course, it is the expectation of Concordia College that course requirements for graduate students will have added rigor that can be easily discerned through an examination of the course syllabus. While the nature of these expectations may vary from course to course, it is assumed that the following categories will usually be the focus for increased rigor. In all cases, additional expectations for graduate students should be clearly identified on the syllabus.

- Higher grading expectations
- Additional assignments, papers and/or projects and/or additional expectations including, but not limited to: more sophisticated topic choices, paper length, number of required sources, expectations for public presentation(s), etc.
- Increased scholarly reading and more sophisticated research/scholarship expectations

## Time Limitation

All requirements for the degree must be completed within seven years after taking the first graduate course included in the Plan of Study. If an academic leave is granted, the student is still required to complete all degree requirements within the seven-year time period. In exceptional cases when students need to petition for an extension in order to complete the degree, they should contact the Graduate Programs Committee to initiate an appeal process.

## Degree and Graduation Requirements

A minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate level coursework is required. The graduate program shall indicate the type of culminating or capstone experience that shall be required as a condition of progressing to candidacy for the master's degree. Examples may include a thesis, a professional project, a written or oral comprehensive exam, performance or exhibition, consulting engagement, successful completion of a capstone course, evaluation of a portfolio, or a combination of these, as determined by the program requirements.

Students graduate according to requirements published in the catalog at the time of their matriculation at Concordia. Students who are readmitted two years or more after their last enrollment must satisfy requirements published in the catalog in effect at the time of readmission. Graduate students are expected to read and adhere to the values and responsibilities of Academic Integrity (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/academic-student-life-policies/academic-integrity/>).

Graduate students are expected to comply with the general Academic Policies of Concordia College (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/academic-student-life-policies/>).

## General Degree Requirements

### Research Involving Human Subjects

If the proposed research or project involves human subjects, the research plan or project will be reviewed by an approved college procedure to assure the protection and rights of those subjects and the procedure

established for obtaining informed consent. No research of this type will be initiated until the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved it. Forms are available in Moodle. Allow at least four weeks during the academic year for IRB approval.

## Degree Completion Procedures

### Degree Completion Procedures for Programs that Require a Thesis or Project Paper

Contact specific programs to review deadlines, and make form submissions. Forms are available on the Graduate and Continuing Studies (<https://cobbernet.cord.edu/directories/offices-services/graduate-and-continuing-studies/>) Cobbernet page.

### Proposed Plan of Study

Students are assigned an academic advisor upon admission to a degree program. It is the student's responsibility to meet with the advisor to discuss and/or develop their Plan of Study to meet degree requirements. If required to complete a Plan of Study, this should be recorded on the Plan of Study Form, along with the signatures of the advisor and department chair or program director. The Plan of Study will be placed in the student's official file.

### Thesis/Project Advisor Examining Committee

A thesis/project advisor is selected to supervise the completion of the culminating experience. The student determines a topic for the thesis/project in cooperation with their thesis/project advisor. The thesis/project advisor has background, expertise or interest in the topic and/or methodology that the student wishes to pursue. The thesis/project advisor will assure that appropriate action by the Institutional Review Board has been taken. The student then submits the Examining Committee Approval Form to the department chair or program director. The thesis/project advisor serves as the chair of the examining committee. The student is required to meet with the examining committee as soon as a draft of the capstone has been prepared to allow the committee to provide input on the project. All committee members, except for an expert from the field, must hold graduate faculty status.

The examining committee will have a minimum of three members. The members consist of:

1. The advisor is selected by the program director. The advisor-student relationship must be a mutually acceptable one. The advisor will act as chair of the student's committee. The student and advisor will work with the program director to determine the remaining members of the committee.
2. A second member, who must be a full or associate member of the Concordia graduate faculty within the department or program or a related discipline.
3. A third member, who must be a full or associate member of the graduate faculty from a different discipline, different department or program, or a different institution.
4. If desired, a fourth member, who could be either a faculty member or a qualified off-campus expert in the field, may be selected.

Consult the requirements of an individual program for project options for examination and completion of the program.

Note: If a potential committee member does not have Concordia graduate faculty status, temporary status must be obtained from the Office of Academic Affairs.

Students will register for continuing registration courses during the semester in which the master's project or thesis is initiated.

### **Scheduling of Oral Examination**

When students are prepared to take oral examinations following the completion of their thesis/project, they set the time, place and date in consultation with their examining committee. The oral exam shall take place by Nov. 15 or April 10 of the semester in which the student intends to complete the degree.

The request for the Oral Examination must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the time of the examination and signed by each member of the committee. Also, two weeks in advance of the oral examination, students are responsible for submitting a copy of their final thesis or project.

### **The Oral Examination**

The advisor will facilitate the oral examination.

The examining committee is responsible for choosing one of four decisions regarding the oral examination:

1. Pass, no changes (there are no suggestions from the committee and the thesis/project may go to print as is)
2. Pass with changes overseen by the advisor (there are edits that are suggested by the committee, but they will be compiled by the advisor and overseen by the advisor)
3. Pass with changes overseen by the committee (there are edits that are suggested by the committee). These are compiled by the advisor to allow the student to make changes, but the committee as a whole will review the changes.
4. No pass.

Students who fail the final oral examination cannot receive a passing grade on their thesis/project and will not receive the degree. Students may appeal through the appropriate department or program and the Dean of the College/designee to repeat the oral examination during a subsequent term.

At the conclusion of the oral examination, the committee members will sign the Oral Examination Form indicating which of the four options they chose. A copy of this form is placed in the student's file. The program director is responsible for notifying the Registrar of the outcome of the oral examination.

**Continuing Registration Requirement:** Some programs have a continuing registration requirement during the semester in which the examination will take place. See individual program for further information.

### **Formatting and Submission of Thesis or Project Paper**

Standards for the preparation of a research paper must conform to the manual of style required by the discipline in which the degree is taken. Students must work closely with their major advisors and examining committees in the preparation of the thesis/project. Each individual program has additional requirements pertaining to the formatting and submission process.

### **Graduation and Commencement**

The official date of graduation will be the next available college graduation date after successful completion of all requirements (including all coursework and submission of the thesis, professional project, or other capstone), regardless of your participation in the commencement ceremony. Students should notify the Office of the Registrar and the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies of intent

to graduate the semester prior to the semester in which they plan to graduate.

The college holds a commencement ceremony each year following the completion of the spring semester. Graduate students will be invited to participate in the commencement ceremony directly following successful completion of their thesis, professional project, or other capstone projects.

Academic garb should be ordered from the Bookstore no less than eight weeks prior to commencement.

### **Academic Integrity**

The Concordia community expects all of our members to act with integrity – to act with honesty, uprightness and sincerity. Every member of our academic community is charged with the responsibility of encouraging and maintaining an environment of academic integrity. Faculty are especially important in this regard: they should be models of academic integrity and foster an understanding of its importance and principles. Faculty are responsible for providing students with a syllabus within three class sessions. This syllabus serves as a contract between faculty and students and specifies the expectations of academic integrity, identifies what constitutes as academic misconduct, delineates consequences for academic integrity violations, and states that violations will be reported. Faculty are responsible for adhering to the goals of the course, the assessments of student learning, and fair grading. Students are responsible both for their own integrity and for engendering a respect for its values in their peers, values that apply to all their academic activities.

Although the area of academic integrity is commonly considered to be the province of faculty and students, the responsibility for academic integrity reaches beyond these groups. Because many staff may interact with students as they complete their course assignments, our integrity expectations for staff mirror those for faculty. We recognize that faculty and staff may also violate integrity. In instances involving faculty, the individual detecting a violation should contact the department chair or program director, or in cases involving department chairs or program directors, the Dean of the College/designee or the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies/designee. For cases in which staff violate academic integrity, the supervisor of the staff member should be contacted. All employees of the college are further bound by the contractual responsibilities and consequences specified in the Faculty or Staff Handbooks, which can be consulted for further details about handling academic integrity violations.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is defined as any activity that compromises the academic integrity of the college or undermines the educational process. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to:

- cheating: using a resource other than one's own work to answer questions;
- plagiarism: misrepresenting another's ideas as one's own or not giving credit to the creator of a work;
- falsification: submitting falsified or fabricated information;
- facilitating others' violations: knowingly permitting or facilitating the dishonesty of others; and
- impeding: placing barriers in the way of others' academic pursuits.

For additional examples of these types of academic misconduct, please refer to Appendix A.

## Determining Integrity Policy Violations

It may be difficult to determine intent, extent, or motive in cases of academic misconduct. Because of the potential seriousness of these cases, which can potentially result in suspension, it is important to consider the following:

- Has the individual received notification about the institution's academic integrity policy and what constitutes academic misconduct through a course syllabus?
- Was there intent to deceive?
- Does the incident in question represent a pattern of misconduct?
- Was the incident sufficiently egregious to warrant penalty?

Whether or not the discrepancy is attributed to poor scholarship or a violation of academic integrity is an important distinction for faculty to determine. Examples of academic misconduct and poor scholarship are provided in Appendix A. The burden of proof rests with the person filing the violation to demonstrate that one or more students have engaged in academic misconduct. If an academic integrity violation is suspected, the person filing the violation must present evidence of this misconduct and report the violation. Undergraduate academic integrity violations are to be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs, and graduate academic violations are to be reported to the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies.

## Penalties

Faculty must specify what constitutes academic misconduct in the course syllabus and bear the principal responsibility in prescribing penalties. Appropriate penalties for violations of academic integrity (whether academic misconduct or poor scholarship) are also to be included in the course syllabus. Faculty will be guided by a principle of justice; their response will be measured and appropriate, weighing the seriousness of the offense and the conditions that encouraged it. If a student violates academic integrity in an assignment for credit, the instructor has the option of assigning any grade for that assignment, including a failing grade ("F") or "0" (no credit). Note that a violation of academic integrity might automatically result in failure of a course either because this consequence was specified in the course syllabus or because the "F" or "0" reduced a student's class average below that required for a passing final grade or completion of the assignment is a condition of successfully completing the course. Students may not drop a course or change the grading of the course to pass-fail in order to avoid a penalty in the grade for the course.

Some violations of academic integrity may involve the mutilation and destruction of college or personal property. In such cases, restitution or remuneration may be required of the responsible party in addition to other penalties the college may elect to assess.

The Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies are responsible for the oversight of academic integrity at Concordia, including tracking and adjudicating offenders. The Dean of the College/designee or Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies/designee, following an appropriate determination, may institute penalties such as restitution, probation, suspension, or expulsion. Academic integrity violations may combine with other substantive violations of other college policy (e.g., theft, assault, vandalism, etc.) to warrant suspension or expulsion from the college. The preceding examples assume that a student violated academic integrity and a member of the faculty or staff detected that violation.

Students may report violations of academic integrity either by their peers, staff, or faculty. For example, an individual may facilitate an integrity

violation in a course while not being currently enrolled in the course. Additionally, a student may detect an integrity violation by a member of the college community. Those aware of this sort of violation should advise the supervising faculty member and/or consult the Dean of the College/designee or the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies/designee.

## Academic Responsibility Conduct Procedures

Every member of the Concordia College community is expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. While we expect violations of academic integrity to be infrequent, we acknowledge that violations may occur. The procedures that are described in this document are for processing academic integrity violations against students. (Procedures for investigation and adjudication of faculty members charged with academic integrity violations are found in the Faculty Handbook. Procedures for investigation and adjudication of staff members charged with academic integrity violations can be accessed at the Office of Human Resources.)

The college recognizes the need for a fundamentally fair conduct system that responds to allegations concerning violations of academic integrity. We presume, therefore, that a conduct system should minimally afford a student the right to receive a written notification of a violation, an opportunity to appeal the violation to objective decision makers, and the right to proportional sanctions.

## Steps for Filing a Formal Complaint

Faculty members have the authority and the responsibility to detect and investigate alleged violations of academic integrity in their courses. If, in the faculty member's opinion, there is adequate information to confirm that a violation has occurred, the faculty member will respond in the following manner:

1. A Notice of Student Academic Integrity Violation form should be completed as soon as possible. A copy of the form should be emailed to the student. The completed form should contain details about the violation, a description of the sanction(s) being imposed, and options for appeal.
2. The faculty member will then arrange to meet with the student within one week of completing the violation form. At this meeting the faculty member should review the violation, sanctions, and options for appeal. The faculty member will submit the Notice of Student Academic Integrity Violation form to the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies within three business days of meeting with the student.
3. If a faculty member is unable to schedule a meeting with the student within one week of completing the Notice of Student Academic Integrity Violation form, the electronic copy of the violation is the student's official notice of the violation. The faculty member will submit the Notice of Student Academic Integrity Violation form to the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies within 10 business days of completing the form.

## Appeals

In all cases, a student charged with a violation of the academic integrity policy has the right to appeal a determination that the student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy and/or has the right to appeal the imposed sanction(s).

- Appeal of Complaint: If a student wishes to appeal responsibility for a violation, the student must request a hearing of the Student Responsibility Board by submitting a request to the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies.

In order to initiate the appeal process, the student must submit the grounds for the appeal in writing to the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies within 10 business days of receiving a Notice of Student Academic Integrity Violation. Under extenuating circumstances, this timeline may be slightly extended not to exceed more than 30 days. See section on hearing procedures, findings, and decisions below for more details about the appeal process.

- **Appeal of Imposed Sanction(s):** If a student wishes to appeal the imposed sanction(s), the student has the right to request that the Dean of the College/designee or the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies/designee review the sanction(s). In order to initiate the appeal process, the student must submit the grounds for the appeal in writing to the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies within 10 business days of receiving a Notice of Student Academic Integrity Violation. Under extenuating circumstances, this timeline may be slightly extended not to exceed more than 30 days. See the section on findings and decisions below for more details about the appeal process.

### **Student Responsibility Board**

The Student Responsibility Board will hear all appeals involving alleged violations of academic integrity. The Board's sole duty is to determine responsibility for alleged violations; it will not determine sanctions nor hear appeals regarding sanctions. The Board will decide appeals with objectivity using the "more likely than not" standard of evidence.

The Student Responsibility Board, as defined in the Faculty Bylaws, is comprised of one faculty member, one staff member, and one student, all of whom will be trained on the Board's responsibilities. Student and faculty membership will be determined by their respective governing bodies. Faculty members will serve three-year terms. The college president will appoint the staff member. Strong consideration should be given to reappointment of some members in order to maintain operational continuity of the Board. The Dean of the College/designee or Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies/designee may attend any session of the Student Responsibility Board at which testimony is presented but may not attend deliberations of the Board. The college president will appoint the Board chairperson.

### **Rights of the Individual Issued a Complaint (Respondent)**

Clause 1. The right to a fair review of the complaint.

Clause 2. The right to testify on their own behalf.

Clause 3. The right to present information, including supporting documentation and expert witnesses.

Clause 4. The right not to be found in violation of college policy unless information provided meets the standard of "more likely than not."

Clause 5. The right to be notified in writing or electronically of a scheduled hearing no less than two business days in advance.

Clause 6. The right to be assisted by an advocate (a student or one other member of the college community) in preparing a response before the Board. Advocates are not allowed to address the Board unless granted permission by the chairperson.

Clause 7. The right to refuse to answer questions/participate in a hearing. The Board may draw reasonable inferences from refusal to answer or participate.

Clause 8. The right to contest the seating of any member of the Board for demonstrated bias or insufficient representation.

### **Rights of the Individual Issuing a Complaint (Complainant)**

Clause 1. The right to a fair review of the complaint.

Clause 2. The right to present information, including supporting documentation and expert witnesses.

Clause 3. The right to be notified in writing or electronically of a scheduled hearing no less than two business days in advance.

Clause 4. The right to contest the seating of any member of the Board for demonstrated bias or insufficient representation.

### **Hearing Procedures**

Clause 1. The Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies will contact the Student Responsibility Board chairperson to schedule a hearing to take place within two weeks of receiving an appeal of complaint.

Clause 2. All parties have the right to request with good reason that a hearing be rescheduled. Such requests must be presented to the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at least one business day in advance. The chairperson has sole authority to decide whether or not to grant the request.

Clause 3. Complainants and respondents must notify the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at least two business days before a scheduled hearing to contest the seating of any member of the Board for demonstrated bias or insufficient representation. (For example, graduate students may contest the seating of the Board's undergraduate student representative for insufficient representation and request a graduate student be seated on the Board.) If a board member is contested, the Board chairperson has authority to grant or deny the contest. If the chairperson is contested, the remaining members of the Board will decide whether or not to grant or deny the contest. Board decisions on disqualification are final. Alternates will be appointed to replace contested board members by the college president. See Special Provisions.

Clause 4. If the student requesting the hearing fails to appear at a properly scheduled hearing, the Board may proceed with the hearing.

Clause 5. Hearings are closed to the public.

Clause 6. Both the respondent and the complainant may call witnesses to provide relevant information. The Board may also call witnesses to provide relevant information.

Clause 7. Decision-making deliberations are to be conducted with only members of the Board present. Findings should be determined only on truthful statements and information presented at the hearing. Normally, previous violations of policy may not be considered when making a finding. However, an exception to this practice may be made in rare circumstances where the Dean of the College/designee or the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies/designee determines it is warranted. Participants in the hearing are expected to present all information in a truthful and complete manner. Lying to the Board is a violation of college policy and would be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Clause 8. All records of the hearing proceedings should be maintained in the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies.



## Findings

Following a hearing, the Board will make one of the following findings:

Clause 1. Respondent is responsible. The finding where the information and testimony presented (using the standard of "more likely than not") establishes that the violation was proved.

Clause 2. Respondent is not responsible. The finding where the information and testimony presented (using the standard of "more likely than not") establishes that the violation was not proved.

## Decision of Appeal

Clause 1. The Board chairperson will notify the Dean of the College/designee or the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies/designee about the outcome of an appeal of complaint within three business days of the hearing. The Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies will notify the complainant and respondent about the outcome of the appeal within three days of receiving the outcome from the Board chairperson. All decisions about responsibility made by the Board are final.

Clause 2. The Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies will notify the complainant and respondent about the outcome of an appeal of sanctions within 10 business days of receiving an appeal. All decisions about sanctions made by the Dean of the College/designee or the Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies/designee are final.

## Special Provisions

These procedures will be in effect year round. Consequently, interim appointments to the Student Responsibility Board may be made to accommodate these procedures at times other than the official academic year or during breaks.

## Appendix A: Examples of Academic Misconduct Violations

The damage done to an academic community through dishonest acts is serious. Its seriousness requires a measured, yet forceful response. Because some may claim that they did not understand what constitutes academic dishonesty, this appendix specifies some of the ways in which academic integrity may be violated. While the following specifications should not be considered exhaustive, violations of integrity generally may involve one or more of the following violations.

### Cheating

One cheats when one uses a resource other than one's own scholarship to answer questions. Cheating can include situations in which individuals:

- Glance at the examination paper of another student during the examination period;
- Write information on paper, clothing, furniture, or person for use during an examination;
- Consult reference materials during an authorized break period during an examination;
- Use electronic devices with information for retrieval during an exam;
- Use one's own work in different classes without permission; and
- Obtain unauthorized copies of examinations previously used in a course.

### Plagiarism

When one misrepresents another's ideas as one's own on an assignment or does not give credit to the creator of a work, one commits plagiarism. Examples of plagiarism include:

- Directly quoting from a work without using quotation marks;
- Using a source (directly in a quotation or paraphrasing from it) without crediting the creator in a citation;
- Submitting any part of another person's work as one's own;
- Not providing oral or written citations for information that is beyond common knowledge; and
- Falsification.

Those who falsify reality do not pursue truth. Rather, they pervert it. Examples of falsification include:

- Listing a false or unconsulted reference in a research paper;
- Creation of false data for a class presentation, laboratory exercise, or class assignment;
- Submission of another person's work as one's own;
- Completion of an examination or assignment for another individual; and
- Willful misrepresentation of one's academic efforts (e.g., overstating one's contributions to a group project).

## Facilitating Others' Violations

When we permit or facilitate the dishonesty of others, we too are guilty of an equally serious violation. Examples of facilitating include:

- Providing another with work to be submitted for credit;
- Laying out an examination book to give another ready access to responses;
- Giving assistance to an individual when such assistance is prohibited;
- Disclosing examination questions to students who have yet to take the same exam; and
- Failing to report known violations of academic integrity.

## Impeding

We must freely pursue truth without restraint. Barriers placed in the way of others' pursuit of truth will not be tolerated. Impeding can include theft and destruction of the products of the scholarship of others. Examples of impeding include:

- The destruction or intentional misplacement of library materials or instructional specimens;
- The contamination of laboratory samples, reagents, and unknowns;
- The willful decalibration of measuring devices used by others;
- The willful introduction of a computer virus into a program or computer system;
- The disabling or destruction of computers, networks, and other instructional and scholarly works and tools; and
- Providing misleading information to, or refusing to cooperate with, college officials investigating other integrity violations.

## Poor Scholarship

Occasionally what initially appears to be an act of academic misconduct may turn out to be a case of poor scholarship. Academic misconduct is characterized by intent to deceive, by gross verbatim use or limited alteration of another's work accompanied by explicit or implicit claims that the work is the student's own, and by a general disregard of institutional policies regarding academic honesty and misconduct. Poor scholarship consists of an inadequate understanding of scholarly conventions or an inability to implement those conventions properly in one's work.

Some examples of poor scholarship may include insufficient citation of sources, inappropriate paraphrasing of sources, or accidental misuse of communal resources, such as in a laboratory. While these are serious offenses in the scholarly world, these instances of poor scholarship are often caused by a lack of understanding. In such circumstances instructors are advised to keep in mind that students at Concordia College are in a position of apprenticeship: they are learning the skills of scholarship under the tutelage of their instructors.

Acts of plagiarism that result from poor scholarship should be dealt with in a spirit of apprenticeship and treated as an opportunity for teaching rather than as an infraction that warrants filing of a complaint, particularly for first-year students. An appropriate penalty, therefore, is the same as for any other situation in which students fail to achieve the goals of a course such as a reduced grade for the assignment in question and further instruction to remedy the deficiencies demonstrated by the student. Rarely would poor scholarship be a reason to not report academic misconduct for a capstone project, such as a thesis, professional project, or dissertation, especially at the graduate level.

This section was last updated on: 2018-03-21

## Programs

- Combined Dietetic Internship and Master of Science in Nutrition with an emphasis in Dietetics Leadership (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/graduate-academic-community/masters-degree-programs/combined-dietetic-internship-ms-nutrition-emphasis-dietetics-leadership/>)
- Master of Education with a concentration in Teaching and Learning (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/graduate-academic-community/masters-degree-programs/teaching-learning-med/>)
- Music Education, Master of Music (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/graduate-academic-community/masters-degree-programs/music-education-mm/>)
- World Language Instruction, Master of Education (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/graduate-academic-community/masters-degree-programs/world-language-instruction-med/>)