



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY

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CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY – PORTLAND ONLINE M.ED. STUDENT HANDBOOK

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ACADEMIC INFORMATION AND POLICIES

It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the regulations of the university as published in the official Academic Catalog; in particular, the requirements for graduation, and to ensure that these requirements are met. This publication provides excerpts from the catalog and other practices of our university to act as a guide to your enrollment.

PRIVACY RIGHTS OF STUDENTS (FERPA)

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) of 1974 is a Federal law that applies to educational agencies and institutions that receive funding under a program administered by the US Department of Education. The statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the Department's regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99. In accordance with the FERPA, as amended by P.L. 93-380, Concordia University grants all the rights under the law to all enrolled students. Enrollment begins on the first day of the first course taken at Concordia University and extends until the student graduates. The act establishes the rights of currently enrolled, eligible students to inspect and review their educational records; and provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. No one outside the institution shall have access to, nor will the institution disclose any personally identifiable information from any student's educational records without the written consent of students except to university officials, to persons in compliance with a judicial order, and to persons in an emergency in order to protect the health and safety of the student or other persons. All these exceptions are permitted under FERPA law.

At its discretion, Concordia University may provide Directory Information in accordance with the following FERPA provisions: Student name, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletics teams, and these title/topics. Concordia also considers photographs to be Directory Information.

As such, release of photographs is also provided. Concordia University's primary use of "directory information" is in writing press releases for students involved in music, drama, athletics or representing Concordia University in other public capacities. Please be assured that Concordia University uses discretion when releasing information and does not routinely give out addresses, telephone numbers, or email addresses.

The University may disclose directory information without the student's prior written consent, unless the student notifies the university by completing a Student Records Privacy Form and submitting it to the Registrar's Office. Please note that such withholding requests are binding for all information to all parties other than for educational purposes. Students should consider all aspects of a Directory Exemption prior to filing such a request. A 'request for nondisclosure' will be honored by the institution for only one academic year commencing with the fall semester; therefore, the exemption form must be filed annually in the Registrar's Office within the first two weeks of the term.

To read Concordia University's FERPA policy, please go to <http://www.cu-portland.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/records-privacy-request.pdf>

For more information concerning FERPA, please go to <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.

Information not Disclosed

According to the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), the following is not considered directory information and may not be disclosed in anyway (except to a school official with a legitimate educational interest, or to a third party with a signed and dated consent from the student):

- Student identification numbers
- Social Security numbers
- Ethnicity / race/ nationality
- Gender

If an individual requests student information not included under the term “directory information”, the Office of the Registrar must obtain a signed Student Release of Non-Directory Information Form.

Academic Integrity at Concordia University

A college degree prepares people to serve as professionals in society. All professions expect that their members conduct their work with integrity and character, for their work affects the whole fiber and strength of the society. As part of Concordia’s goal to prepare students to be leaders for the transformation of society, students are expected to pursue their studies with integrity and character. By choosing to attend Concordia, students agree to the following statements and practices.

Purpose

The *Code of Academic Integrity at Concordia University Online* reflects the community’s values of honesty and integrity in the work of all scholars and students. Students are charged to honestly complete and present their work under the terms specified by the instructor. As a Christian community, the covenant of trust pledged among community members is honored, and the values expressed in Philippians 4:8-9 are modeled:

“Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.”

Statement of Academic Integrity

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does “fraudulent” mean?

“Fraudulent” work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one’s own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a student’s final work without full and complete documentation.

What is “unauthorized” assistance?

“Unauthorized assistance” refers to any support students solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another’s work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

Breach of Academic Integrity: Sanctions Process

If an instructor perceives that a student has committed a breach in academic integrity, the student and instructor meet to discuss the event.

That event is resolved as follows:

It is determined that no breach in academic integrity has been committed. (In the case of perceived plagiarism, i.e. faulty or incorrect documentation, the student may be required to re-do parts of the paper or the paper may be graded down.)

– OR –

It is determined that a breach in academic integrity has occurred. The student receives a “0” for the assignment and documentation (Academic Breach Reporting Form and evidence) of the event is sent to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee (AIAC) file.

In the case of a second breach in academic integrity in the same class, same term, the student is dismissed from the class, and the student receives an “F” grade in the course without opportunity to withdraw. The instructor sends an Academic Breach Report and evidence to be placed in the student’s file.

When documentation for two (2) cumulative breaches has been recorded with the Registrar’s office, the student is placed on academic probation.

Appeals Process

If a student believes that the determination of a breach is in error, s/he has the right to appeal the decision, accordingly:

The appeal, with appropriate documentation, must be delivered to the chair of the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee within 72 hours of action taken by an instructor that identifies a breach in academic integrity. Members of the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee include: two students appointed by ASCU President, 2 faculty members appointed by the CLC Chair, and a college Dean (rotating) as chair. The committee then determines whether to repeal or uphold the decision.

If the decision is upheld, the student may appeal again to the Provost, and then, if they choose, the President of the University. The President's decision is final.

If the decision is repealed, the record for the breach is erased and the student continues work in the class with no penalty.

Students indicate consent to the Academic Integrity Policy (and all policies and guidelines of the university contained in all official handbooks and the university catalog) when they sign their application for admission to Concordia.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION GRADUATE PROGRAM ACADEMIC STANDING POLICY

The College of Education believes that its M.Ed. candidates at Concordia University are enrolled in some of the most innovative and engaging master's degree programs available. The focus of all programs is on the candidate's success and the transfer of that success to classrooms or the workplace.

To facilitate student success, standards of academic excellence must be maintained and safeguarded. To that end, the University developed the following parameters for academic probation, dismissal, and student readmission in order to support candidates who may find themselves in academic difficulty.

Academic Standing

1. Candidates must earn a grade of B- or better in each course to receive credit for the course.
2. A letter grade of 'C+' or below means the candidate has failed that course and will be placed on academic probation.
3. A failed course may be repeated once. If the new grade is a B- or better, the candidate remains in good standing.
4. If the repeated course is awarded a 'C+' or lower, the candidate is dismissed from the program.
5. If a candidate fails two courses in succession, he or she will be dismissed from the program.
6. If a candidate fails two courses, he or she will be dismissed from the program if the first course failed has not already been retaken successfully.
7. Although a student may receive credit for a course with a B- grade, a cumulative minimum GPA of 3.0 must be maintained to remain in good academic standing* and earn the degree.

* Good standing means that the candidate has a grade point average of such quality that he or she may continue to advance towards program completion.

Incomplete Grades

Candidates are expected to complete all academic work in whatever length of time is allotted for the course. If candidates cannot complete course requirements by the completion date due to unavoidable or unforeseen circumstances, they may request an Incomplete ("I") grade from the instructor.

If granted, the candidate and the instructor will determine, and confirm with a student contract, a final completion date which must be met for the passing grade to be issued. In all cases, an Incomplete is given with a back-up grade. If the candidate does not complete the work by the agreed date, the incomplete "I" grade will default to the backup grade. Unless an exception is approved by the CU Dean of Online Education, the work needed to be completed, as

designated on the Incomplete form, must be finished by the end of the course that immediately follows the course for which the Incomplete was assigned (Graduate will be 5 weeks).

In online courses, Instructors may grant a grade of "I" only when a student has completed 75% of the course with a "B-" or better. An incomplete grade is not included in the grade point average (GPA).

At Concordia University Online, a term is defined as five courses, taken in an established sequence. The student's work is evaluated each term according to the following scale:

Grade Quality Points

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	0.7	0.0

ACADEMIC PROBATION/DISMISSAL/GRIEVANCE/APPEAL PROCESSES

In order to remain academically eligible for enrollment, a graduate student must obtain a minimum cumulative and term grade point average of 3.00. Students failing to achieve these minimums at the end of each term are automatically placed on Academic Probation. If in the succeeding term, the student fails to meet the minimum standard (term and/or cumulative) for grade point average, the student will be academically dismissed.

Note: Please reference the Academic Catalog for additional standing policies that may apply to your specific program.

Academic Probation

After a term's grades have been posted, students receive a letter from the Registrar announcing their status of Academic Probation, as well as the procedures to follow, and the various responsibilities of the student.

Learners will be directed to tools and strategies to use in developing a plan for their return to good academic standing and future academic success. This plan will be reviewed and approved by the Director of Student Services, and will be placed in the learner's file.

Academic Dismissal

After a term's grades have been posted, students who have been on Academic Probation at Concordia and who's cumulative or term GPA remains below 3.0, are academically dismissed. This dismissal is final. Students are ineligible to enroll in any Concordia University course. Students receive a letter at their current address from the Registrar announcing their Academic Dismissal. The letter also describes the appeal process as well as the various responsibilities of the student.

The student has the right to appeal the dismissal by submitting a letter to the Scholastic Standards Committee (SSC) describing the extenuating circumstances that led to the student's dismissal, and strategies for future success. Once the letter is submitted, the SSC calls an Academic Hearing prior to the subsequent term. The hearing includes feedback from professors, advisors, the Director of Student Services, the Registrar, and the Director of Financial Aid. The student's professors are consulted prior to the meeting.

After reviewing the student's appeal letter, the APPA Final Report(s), and professors' input, the Scholastic Standards Committee meets/confers by teleconference with the student; the goal is to determine the student's intent and ability to be successful at Concordia. The SSC's decision is shared in writing with the student, and a copy becomes a part of the student's Concordia file.

The Scholastic Standards Committee's decision is considered final. The student has the right to resubmit their appeal to the SSC if additional information is available that may impact the original decision. The Office of the Provost should be contacted if there is a conflict of interest or equity and compliance issue with the committee so appropriate accommodations can be recommended. Students who are readmitted will be automatically placed on Academic Probation. The student will be advised to complete all of the requirements of Academic Probation.

Academic Grievance and Appeal

At times, students may have an academic grievance (e.g., concerns over grades, grading practice, course design) that they wish to resolve. The following procedures provide a mechanism by which students can seek to express concerns, disagreements, or complaints regarding a faculty member, and seek redress of perceived injustice, harassment, discrimination or inequity.

If a student has a concern over a faculty member's exercise of his/her professional responsibilities, the following procedure should be used:

Step 1: The student discusses his/her concerns with the Director of Student Services. This will provide an opportunity to review the appropriate university policies and practices related to the student's concern.

Step 2: The student addresses the concerns directly with the faculty member in an attempt to resolve the issue. If the student feels that there is unacceptable risk of negative recourse, the student can invite the Director of Student Services to attend the meeting. If the concern over retribution is too great, he/she should move to *Step 3*.

Step 3: If the student feels that the direct discussion of the concern(s) with the faculty member did not (or cannot) provide adequate opportunity to address the concern(s), or if the resolution is not acceptable to the student, he/she can share the concern with the Dean of the appropriate program. The student should submit the grievance to the appropriate Dean, providing any pertinent information or materials, and a description of the process used to attempt to resolve the grievance to that point. The Dean can choose to work with the student and the faculty member separately, or call for a joint meeting with the student and the faculty member.

Step 4: If the student feels that the process with the Dean of the appropriate college or school did not provide adequate opportunity to address the concern(s), or if the resolution is not acceptable to the student, he/she can appeal the decision to the Provost. As with step 3, the Provost reserves the right to construct the appeal meeting as appropriate to the specific situation. The student submits the appeal in writing to the Office of the Provost, including a description of the grievance, a description of the process used to attempt to resolve the grievance to that point, especially the results of the meetings with the Dean, and any concerns that the student has over the proper application of policies or procedures, or challenges to his/her due process rights. The Provost will review the appeal on the basis of (1) application of appropriate policies and practices, and (2) the guarantee of the student's due process rights.

Step 5: As a Final Appeal, the student can address the concern to the President of the University. The student should submit the appeal in writing to the President, including a description of the grievance, a description of the process used to attempt to resolve the grievance to that point, and any concerns that the student has over the proper application of policies or procedures, or challenges to his/her process rights. The President will review the appeal on the basis of the proper application of this process and related policies, and the guarantee of the student's due process rights. The President's decision is the final decision in the student grievance.

Assumptions of the Grievance Process:

1. The grievance process will be consistent with Matthew 18.
2. Resolution of concerns and complaints will best occur as close to the source as possible.
3. The philosophy and tenor of the process should be one of mutual respect and an attempt to reach a mutually agreeable resolution.
4. The process should be consistent with existing institutional policies and practices, and with bylaws of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (6.47). The process must recognize the difference in power and authority of students and faculty members, and guarantee that students will be free from any negative consequences of pursuing the grievance process.
5. Both the student and the faculty member should have the opportunity to have advocates in the process (these advocates can be friends, fellow students and faculty members, clergy, etc., but legal counsel is not appropriate during this process).
6. If any of the specific individuals in the grievance process are judged to have a conflict of interest, the Provost can appoint a replacement.
7. All efforts will be made to facilitate the process at a distance, utilizing the most appropriate medium (teleconference, web meeting, etc.).

Disruptive Classroom Behavior

Concordia University is dedicated to high quality classroom instruction that affords all participants the right to learn. Within the context of the classroom, students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the learning environment. For this reason, obstruction or disruption of the teaching process, or the classroom environment, could result in disciplinary proceedings. If, after exhausting all other available options, a faculty member feels that a student is disruptive to the teaching and/or learning process, the student may be asked to leave the classroom pending a meeting with the faculty member.

Resolving a classroom behavior issue

These steps are put forth to facilitate successful learning in the classroom for all students. The student involved in the resolution process may attend class throughout the process. However, if there is a second incident, the student may be suspended from the class until after the resolution process has been concluded.

1. Utilizing the teachings of Matthew 18, the first level of resolution is between the faculty member and the student. The faculty member is responsible to initiate a meeting. If deemed necessary and appropriate by either the student or the faculty member, the Director of Student Services will be included in this meeting to mediate the discussion. If the outcome of the meeting is not satisfactory to the student or the faculty member, the faculty member initiates step 2.

2. Within one week of the first meeting, the Dean of the appropriate school or college will convene a meeting including the faculty member and the student. At the request of the student, advocacy for the student is available from Concordia University's Director of Student Services office. The goal of the meeting is to arrive at a workable resolution for the situation. The Dean of the appropriate school or college has the authority and responsibility to decide upon outcomes and sanctions.
3. If the outcome of step 2 is unsatisfactory to the faculty member or the student, appeals can be made to the Provost. The Provost will receive appeals in writing. If sufficient and compelling arguments are made for an appeal (e.g., sanctions too extreme, due process was not followed, new information introduced) the Provost will convene an appeal meeting. The Provost will structure the appeal meeting as appropriate to the situation.
4. As in all university disciplinary procedures, a final appeal may be made to the President. The President will receive appeals in writing and follow the procedure in step 3.

Sanctions for disruptive classroom behavior

Sanctions for classroom disciplinary violations will make every attempt to be educational rather than punitive. However, the integrity of the classroom environment will be protected throughout any disciplinary proceeding. Sanctions will also be appropriate to the level of violation. In some instances, an apology to the faculty member and/or the class will reinstate the student to a good standing in the class. Other sanctions may include, (but are not restricted to), a strict behavioral contract, short-term classroom suspensions, or in the case of continual violations, the student could be banned from the class permanently.

ADD, DROP & WITHDRAW DEADLINES

A student can add or drop until the first Friday of a 5 week course. If courses are dropped by the deadline there is no transcript notation. If a student withdraws from a course after the drop deadline and by the Friday of week 3, the student will be issued a grade of "W" for withdraw. After the withdraw deadline a student will be responsible for the academic outcome based on their performance in the course. Students who wish to drop a course and/or withdraw from the program must officially notify their academic advisor of their intent.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Schools participating in the Title IV financial aid program are required to implement a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy to ensure that students receiving federal student aid are making adequate progress toward completing their degree programs.

As a general rule, all students in the graduate program must meet the minimum requirement of the SAP policy measured by the end of each term to remain eligible for financial aid.

Qualitative SAP

Graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above.

Quantitative SAP

Students must earn credit for at least 2/3 or 67% of the cumulative hours attempted, measured at the end of each term completed. Earned credits include those courses graded as “A”, “B”, “C”, “D”. Courses graded as “F”, “I”, “W” do not count as credits earned but they do count as courses attempted for financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress purposes.

Maximum Timeframe Completion

Students must complete the program within a time frame of no longer than 150% of the published length of the educational program.

Example:

For graduate programs that require 30 credits for graduation, the student may receive federal and institutional aid for a maximum of 45 credits. This means that for the student to be successful, the student must maintain a minimum completion rate of 2/3 of credit attempted (67%). Anything beyond the 150% maximum allowable units will be not eligible for financial aid regardless of the student’s extenuating circumstances.

Financial Aid Warning

Students not meeting the SAP policy at the end of the term will be placed on financial aid warning status for one term. Students who are placed on Financial Aid Warning status will continue to receive aid but must meet the SAP policy at the end of the warning period to remain eligible for aid.

Appeals Process

Students who do not meet the SAP policy at the end of their warning period will not be eligible for financial aid for the next semester. Students whose financial aid eligibility is suspended may submit an appeal to the Financial Aid office **within 7 days of the start of the new semester for which the student plans to attend**. Reinstatement of financial aid is never automatic. Appeals should include documentations of extenuating circumstances explaining why the student was not meeting SAP. The appeal must also explain what has changed in the student’s situation that would allow the student to meet SAP in future terms.

Examples of extenuating circumstances are death in the family, medical condition, natural disasters. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and cannot be appealed. **Students will be informed of the decision via email.**

Financial Aid Probation

If the appeal is approved, the student will be placed on a Financial Aid Probation status. Student’s aid eligibility will be reinstated during the probation period; however, students must meet the conditions outlined in the appeal decision to maintain eligibility for financial aid.

Changes in Federal Policy on Retaking Courses

The US Department of Education has published a new guideline on students who are retaking courses. Effective July 1, 2011, a student who fails a course may repeat the same course (and receive aid to pay for the course) regardless of the number of time the course was attempted and failed. A student may receive aid for repeating a previously passed course only once.

Scenario 1:

Student receives a grade of F, repeats the course and again receives a grade of F. If the student repeats the course for the third time financial aid will pay for all three attempts.

Scenario 2:

Student receives a grade of F, repeats the course and receives a grade of D. In both attempts, the course is eligible for financial aid. If the student repeats the course one more time to get a better grade, financial aid will pay for the third attempt.

Scenario 3:

Student receives a grade of D, repeats the course and receives a grade of F. Financial aid will pay for both attempts but if the student attempts the course for the third time, financial aid will only pay for the first 2 attempts, NOT the third attempt since the student had previously passed the course once.

An adjustment on the student's enrollment status and cost of attendance may be required if the student takes a class that is not eligible for financial aid.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students need to check the course room and Blackboard email at least once daily during the course duration. If a student must be absent for a number of days, this should be cleared with the course professor. Students who have not attended the registered course by the first Friday of any course, and who have not notified their instructors of the reason for their absences, are subject to automatic withdrawal. Students who begin a course, but are subsequently absent or have not posted assignments for 10 consecutive calendar days without notification to the University, are subject to automatic withdrawal.

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

All Concordia University students are expected to meet a minimum computing standard as outlined at: <http://kb.cu-portland.edu/Computing+Standards>. Students are expected to have access to either a laptop with wireless capabilities or a personal desktop computer with Internet access; and Microsoft Office or comparable software. High-speed Internet connection is strongly recommended.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

Concordia University is committed to providing the best education possible and seeks to improve its course and program offerings through careful review. One valuable factor that is considered in course and faculty evaluation is student-completed course assessments. All classes are assessed at their completion. Assessments are completed online and are confidential. These assessments are considered by the Dean as hiring decisions are made and course modifications are implemented. Student attention to the course assessments when the web-link is received is greatly valued by the institution.

CHANGE OF PROGRAM

Students wishing to change their program of study must first contact the Director of Student Services for consultation regarding impact to course of study and projected graduation date. A signed change of program form is required for all program changes.

TUITION ASSESSMENT

Concordia University's Tuition Assessment Policy is based on the term in which classes occur, not on the actual dates of individual classes. Each class is assigned to one of three terms. Because many classes do not meet regularly throughout an entire term, it is important for students to know which term their classes are in so that they know when a tuition refund is available.

Refer to the published Academic Calendar for Tuition Assessment dates for Summer, Fall, and Spring terms. Students enrolled in the MBA program should contact Student Accounts for Tuition Assessment dates for their terms.

CONCURRENT COURSE INFORMATION

Many of Concordia University's online programs are designed to be offered in a specific sequence and build on learning in a logical order. However, simultaneous enrollment in two courses may be allowed as approved by the Program Director.