

Academic Standards and Regulations

It is the responsibility of the student to become familiar with and keep informed about the policies and regulations of the university and the School of Graduate Studies as well as with the special requirements of his or her own academic program area. While the faculty and administration of Southern will assist a student whenever possible, regulations will not be waived nor exceptions granted because a student is ignorant of regulations or claims that information was not provided by an adviser. Southern Connecticut State University, through its offices and/or appropriate committees, may suspend or dismiss any student from the university for reasons of scholarship, aptitude, conduct, or health. It is also the responsibility of the student to determine requirements of state and federal government agencies for professional certifications.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

The integrity of scholarship is the cornerstone of the academic and social structure of the university. It is the expressed policy of the university that every aspect of graduate academic life, related in whatever fashion to the university, shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. Violations of academic honesty are grounds for a failing grade and may result in dismissal from the School of Graduate Studies.

MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Minimum requirements for a master's degree for students who come to the program with appropriate and complete undergraduate preparation are given below. Students must consult the individual program descriptions for requirements that go beyond those of the School of Graduate Studies.

1. All master's degree programs at Southern require the successful completion of one or more of the following individual capstone experiences: A thesis, a comprehensive examination, or a special project. The capstone experience is the culminating academic event for students enrolled in a master's degree graduate program. It requires students to demonstrate their ability to organize and synthesize knowledge and apply skills developed throughout their academic program. The student, with the approval of the graduate program adviser, may change from one option to another until the thesis proposal is accepted by the Dean of Graduate Studies or until the first comprehensive examination is taken. The determination of the capstone experience is by the faculty of the academic department.

- **THESIS.** The master's thesis is a capstone experience of the master's degree candidate and offers evidence of the student's original research and the results of that research. There are five types of theses that may be completed: (1) investigative or experimental, (2) historical or descriptive, (3) interpretive, analytical
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or critical, (4) creative, and (5) qualitative. (See Graduate Studies *Thesis Proposal Guidelines and Thesis Guidelines* for further details.) A thesis proposal must be approved by the thesis adviser, department chairperson, and the Graduate Studies Dean prior to the preparation of a final thesis. All theses must meet the form, style, and other requirements outlined in the *Thesis Guidelines*. The thesis must be directed by a member of the Graduate Faculty. The master's degree is conferred after successful completion of a minimum of 30 credits including the thesis. Final theses must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies by July 10, 2009 for August graduation; November 6, 2009 for December graduation; and April 2, 2010 for May graduation. The theses are published through ProQuest Information and Learning. The master's degree is conferred after successful completion of a minimum of 30 credits including the thesis.

- **SPECIAL PROJECT.** The special project provides an opportunity for graduate students to complete an academically rigorous project that contributes in some meaningful way to the student's discipline and professional community. The special project involves the integration and application of discipline-specific knowledge, concepts, theory and skills in the development of a tangible product (a.k.a., deliverable), accompanied by a written report describing the process and results of the product's development. Students choose to complete a special project to demonstrate the ability to make independent use of and apply information and training, and to furnish objective evidence of their aptitude in their chosen field of study. A special project in the major field may be required at the discretion of the graduate program. The special project must be directed by a member of the Graduate Faculty. The master's degree is conferred after successful completion of a minimum of 36 credits including the special project.
 - **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION.** The comprehensive examination in the major field is set by the graduate program concerned and may be scheduled any time after at least two-thirds of the planned program have been completed. A candidate who fails the comprehensive examination may petition the graduate program adviser for a second examination if there are extenuating circumstances. If the petition is not granted, the student will be dismissed from the program. Failure in the second examination results in dismissal from the program and exclusion from further candidacy. The master's degree is conferred after successful completion of a minimum of 30 credits.
2. Complete satisfactorily the number of graduate credit hours required on the planned program of graduate studies with a "B" (3.0) or higher quality point average. All courses completed for graduate credit must be passed with a minimum grade of "C" (2.0). No graduate program may include fewer than 30 credits. Some graduate programs require minimum grades of "B" or higher. Courses completed with a grade of less than "C" will not be counted toward the planned program course requirements but the grade will be calculated in the program and overall graduate grade point average. Students who earn grades of less than "B" in courses may not delete those grades or courses from their programs.
 3. Complete satisfactorily all additional program degree requirements as defined in the particular graduate program.
 4. Complete and submit an application for graduation within the time limits established in the Academic Calendar on the SCSU website. Graduation is not automatic upon completion of degree requirements. Students who do not apply for graduation will not graduate. Graduate students who wish to participate in the Graduate Commencement hooding ceremony in May must notify the School of Graduate Studies in writing no later than February.
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5. Pay all accounts owed the university. records and diplomas of students owing money to the university will be held until the account is cleared.

NOTE: Well in advance of graduation, students who will graduate with a master's degree that includes teacher certification must check with the appropriate teacher certification liaison in the School of Education about the Connecticut State requirement for subject knowledge testing called PRAXIS II.

SIXTH YEAR DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

Programs leading to the Sixth Year Professional Diploma of Advanced Study provide opportunities for experienced and qualified candidates to pursue a planned program of advanced graduate work beyond the master's degree and to develop additional competency in an area of specialization.

Requirements two through five above, which govern the master's degrees, apply also to the Sixth Year Professional Diploma. Applicants to sixth year programs must hold a master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university with a grade point average of at least 3.0. Requirement one is optional at the discretion of the Sixth Year Program Director.

All requirements, including any transfer credit, must be completed within a period of six years immediately preceding the awarding of the Sixth Year Diploma. Credits accepted in transfer must have been completed with a "B" (3.0) or higher grade and must be approved by the graduate program adviser. Transfer credit for the Sixth Year must have been taken after the master's degree was earned and within the past six years. The sixth year planned program of studies requires at least 30 graduate credits with a minimum of 15 credits in 600-level courses as approved by the department in which the student is enrolled.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Minimum requirements for completion of the doctoral program are outlined in the section entitled "Educational Leadership" under "Programs, Courses and Faculty" in this catalog.

TIME LIMITATION TO COMPLETE PROGRAMS

All requirements for a graduate degree at Southern must be completed within a period of six years prior to the granting of the master's degree or sixth year diploma. The six year period begins with the semester in which the first graduate course is completed and applied to the program and not with the date of acceptance. Graduate courses more than six years old at the time of graduation do not count toward meeting degree requirements. This includes transferred courses. If time for completion of courses on a planned program extends beyond six years, the student assumes the risk of having to meet new requirements. This means that both courses and planned programs have, at best, a six year validity.

Students enrolled in the doctoral program have seven years to complete the degree.

An extension of the time to complete degree requirements may be granted if there are compelling extenuating circumstances. To obtain an extension, a student must petition his or her graduate program adviser prior to the expiration of the course or program. The graduate program adviser then forwards the petition, with a recommendation, to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The student and the adviser will be notified in writing of the approval or disapproval of the petition. An extension of more than one year is rarely granted.

When an approved program expires, the student must reapply to the School of Graduate Studies and plan a new program of study, if readmitted by the academic depart-

ment. Courses that do not meet the six year validity period cannot be applied to a new program of study unless revalidated by examination. Some graduate programs permit revalidation, others do not. If the academic department has a revalidation process, the student's current state of knowledge and proficiency in the content, methodology, and skills of each course must be determined and certified by the graduate coordinator. School of Graduate Studies policy does not permit revalidation of more than half of the expired coursework on a planned program. Revalidations must be approved and sent to the School of Graduate Studies before the student is readmitted.

JOINT DEGREE PROGRAMS

Students who apply for a joint degree must meet the admission and graduation requirements of each program. Students are also required to be matriculated concurrently in each program. Joint degrees are awarded only when all requirements for each program are met.

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Any student whose native language is not English must present a TOEFL score of at least 550 paper based /213 computer based /80 or above on internet based exam, or the ESL 109 certificate with a minimum grade of "C" (2.0) unless he or she has received a bachelor's or master's degree from an accredited institution in the United States. The student may also be required to pass an English proficiency examination prior to initial registration. Those students whose scores indicate that they are not prepared for graduate study that is conducted in English will not be permitted to register for graduate work until proficiency in English is demonstrated.

SEMESTER COURSE LOAD

The maximum load for a graduate student during the fall or spring term is 15 hours, and 9 to 12 credits is considered a full load. Courses audited do not count toward minimum graduate hours required for classification as a full-time student. Registration for more than 15 hours during any semester may be granted to students who have achieved an average of 3.25 or better in at least nine hours of graduate work. The student must present the School Dean with a completed "Petition for an Irregular Schedule" that has been signed by his or her adviser. There is an over-registration fee of \$449 per credit for registration of more than 15 credits.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

Continuous enrollment requires that every graduate student maintain at least six credits toward his or her degree program every calendar year (a minimum of three credits in the fall and spring terms respectively) from the time of acceptance by the School of Graduate Studies until completion of all requirements for the graduate degree. Students enrolled for thesis may take fewer than six credits per calendar year but must pay the continuous enrollment fee. Graduate students who have completed all courses must remain continuing students until all degree requirements have been met. Students must register for a course each semester or pay the \$40.00 fee to maintain continuous enrollment. Payment of the \$40.00 fee each semester for this status permits use of the library and computer facilities and access to faculty advisers. Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment status must complete the Continuous Enrollment Form, available at www.southernct.edu/grad, and pay the \$40 fee for each semester not registered. Students who fail to pay the Continuous Enrollment fee will be unable to register for courses. Any student who fails to pay for two consecutive semesters of Continuous Enrollment will be automatically withdrawn from the program and the School of Graduate Studies. Students who pay the continuous enrollment fee but are not enrolled in a course(s) are not eligible for financial aid. In extenuating circumstances, a student may petition for exception to the continuous enrollment policy. The petition

must be made in writing by the student to the Dean of Graduate Studies. If the petition is approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies, a letter to that effect will be sent to the student with a copy to the adviser, and the approved petition will be placed in the student's permanent file. NOTE: The period of exception is counted as a part of the six-year period allowed for completion of degree requirements. Students who are admitted to the School of Graduate Studies and who do not register for courses within one year of acceptance are automatically withdrawn from the University.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate program advisers may approve up to six undergraduate credits in courses at the 300 and 400 level completed at SCSU to fulfill the requirements for the master's degree. Such coursework must be taken after a student is accepted to a graduate program and must not be of a remedial nature. This is typically done when a comparable graduate course will not be offered in the near future. Advanced undergraduate courses may be applied to master's degree programs only, not to sixth year programs. Undergraduate courses are numbered 100 through 400. Graduate level courses are numbered 500 and higher. Graduate students enrolled in undergraduate courses are billed at the graduate rates.

GRADUATE COURSES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

A senior in good standing, with at least a 3.0 QPR, may take graduate courses for graduate credit to meet undergraduate requirements or to apply graduate courses to a master's degree at a later time, with the presentation of a completed "Petition for Irregular Schedule." The petition must have the signature of the student's adviser before it is presented to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies for approval. The petition must also be consistent with departmental stipulations regarding course eligibility. No more than nine semester hours in graduate courses may be earned by an undergraduate student toward a graduate degree at Southern. Graduate courses taken to meet undergraduate requirements may not be used as part of a future graduate program. Undergraduate students are limited to one graduate course per semester. Part-time undergraduate students enrolled in a graduate course are billed at the graduate rates.

GRADING SYSTEM

The Graduate School uses a system of letter grades that have been assigned numerical "quality points".

LETTER GRADE	QUALITY POINT EQUIVALENT	RELATION TO PERFORMANCE
A+ _____	4.0	Superior Performance
A _____	4.0	
A- _____	3.7	Expected Performance
B+ _____	3.3	
B _____	3.0	
B- _____	2.7	Passing but below Graduate Standards
C+ _____	2.3	
C _____	2.0	
C- _____	1.7	Unacceptable
D+ _____	1.3	
D _____	1.0	
F _____	0.0	

P _____	None	Pass in pass/fail courses
S _____	None	Pass in course taken under pass/fail option
Z _____	None	Audit

In addition, the following codes are used to indicate unusual situations.

N _____	None	Student never attended.
Q _____	None	Student must register again.
R _____	None	No grade reported.
W _____	None	Officially withdrawn.
WF _____	None	Officially withdrawn with failing grade.
WP _____	None	Officially withdrawn with passing grade.
X _____	None	Grades withheld for non-payment

Students who earn grades of less than “B” may not delete those grades or courses from their programs. However, additional courses may be added to the program for the purpose of raising the grade point average.

Some graduate programs require minimum grades of “B” or higher. Courses completed with a grade of less than “C” will not be counted toward the planned program course requirements but the grade will be calculated in the program and overall graduate grade point average. Students who earn grades of less than “B” may not delete those grades from their programs.

GRADES/TRANSCRIPTS

Semester grades are available to students through Southern Web Services. All students can log into the system with their PIN and view their final grades. Semester grades are available for a time prescribed in the semester Schedule of Classes calendar. For official documentation of grades, requests must be made for University transcripts in writing on forms available in the Registrar's Office or a letter may be sent to: Registrar's Office, Wintergreen Building, Southern Connecticut State University, 501 Crescent Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1355. Requests for transcripts should include the following information: full name; address; social security number; dates of attendance at Southern; complete name and address of recipient including zip code, institution, and department. At the student's request, transcripts may be held for completion of courses in progress until final grades are posted for the current semester.

QUALITY POINT RATIO

The quality points for each grade are multiplied by the number of credits for the course. Total quality points for all courses are added and the sum is divided by the total number of course credits attempted. The result is the student's quality point ratio (QPR). The grades of “I,” “P,” “Q,” “S,” “W,” “WF,” “WP,” and “Z” carry no quality points and the credits for these courses are not considered in the total credits attempted. These grades, therefore, have no effect on the QPR.

GRADE APPEALS

In all cases, the awarding of grades is the responsibility of the instructor. A student who believes that an instructor has made an error concerning a grade for a course must initiate a complaint by the end of the semester following the period in which the grade was awarded. The student should first contact the instructor involved and attempt to resolve the matter. If it is impossible for the student to contact the instructor or if a resolution cannot be reached, the student will need to discuss the complaint with the department chairperson. If the student, chairperson, and instructor are unable to reach an agreement, the department chairperson may then decide to convene an elected committee of at least three department members. This committee shall, in consultation with the instructor, student, and appropriate counselor (consulted only in cases where

a withdrawal is an issue), decide the merits of the complaint. If the department chairperson decides not to convene the committee, the student may appeal this decision to the appropriate academic dean.

For additional information, students are advised to confer with the appropriate academic dean.

PASS-FAIL OPTION

With the approval of their graduate program advisor, matriculated students who have completed at least nine credits of graduate work with a "B" (3.0) or higher average are eligible to register for certain categories of courses on a pass-fail basis. The application form, which is available in the Office of Graduate Studies, must be accepted by the Registrar prior to the beginning of the fourth week of the semester.

REPEATING A COURSE

A course may be taken more than once but, unless specifically noted otherwise, credit may be offered only once toward degree requirements. If a course is repeated, both grades will appear on the permanent record and will be used in determining the cumulative QPR.

INCOMPLETE COURSES

The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is given for work that was passing but which could not be completed due to circumstances beyond the student's control. An "Incomplete" may not be given to enable a student to do additional work to raise a deficient grade. If the instructor deems the reason the student has requested an "Incomplete" is valid, the instructor will determine whether requirements for completing work will be accomplished by:

- A. Completing the work in a manner satisfactory to the instructor not more than 30 days into the next semester, in which case a grade of "I" is assigned.
- B. Reregistering for the course in the next semester, in which case the student is assigned a "Q".

Option A or B must be selected at the time the instructor agrees that circumstances warrant an "Incomplete." Once an option is selected it may not be changed. The instructor will record an "I" or a "Q" on the grade sheet. If a student fails in his responsibility to complete the work within the time period the grade will automatically be changed to an "F." A "Q" may not be changed at a later date. No credits are awarded for a grade of "Q." It is counted as an audit.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Only matriculated students who have completed at least nine credits of graduate work and have attained at least a "B" (3.0) average are eligible for independent study. The application form, which outlines policies and guidelines, is available in the Office of Graduate Studies. A completed form must be presented to the Registrar's Office for scheduling before a student can register for independent study.

TRANSFER CREDIT

The amount of graduate work transferable to a graduate degree program from other colleges or universities is limited to a maximum of nine credits or 25 percent of the total credits required for the graduate degree, not including prerequisites. Many graduate programs have more restrictive policies. Courses applied to a previously earned degree, diploma, or certificate are not transferable. In order to be transferred, a course or courses must meet the following criteria:

- A. graduate level from a regionally accredited institution authorized to grant graduate degrees
- B. passed with a grade of "B" (3.0) or higher; (pass/fail courses may not be transferred)
- C. within the six year limit at the time of graduation
- D. recorded on an official transcript from the granting institution
- E. included on the planned program by the graduate program adviser
- F. not used toward another degree

Students must submit an official transcript showing proof of completion of the course(s) to be transferred. Credit hours only, not grades, may be transferred. No transfer credit will be posted until the student has been accepted into a graduate program and has successfully completed at least one semester at Southern. The QPR is computed for grades earned at Southern only.

Transferred courses cannot be revalidated if beyond the six year limit for inclusion in a graduate program.

WAIVER OF REGULATIONS

Students who wish to deviate from School of Graduate Studies regulations and procedures must present a written petition to the graduate program adviser. He or she will review the petition and forward it, with a written endorsement, through appropriate department and academic school procedures, to the Dean of Graduate Studies who will make the final decision.

DISMISSAL AND PROBATION

Any matriculated student who attempts nine or more credits that results in a cumulative quality point ratio of less than 3.0 in an academic program is automatically on probation. If, after attempting an additional nine credits, the QPR is still below 3.0, the student will be dismissed from the School of Graduate Studies.

A student whose QPR falls below 3.0 during the last semester of course work will be placed on probation and given one semester to raise the QPR to the 3.0 level required for graduation. If, after completing an additional semester of work, the QPR is still below 3.0, the student will be dismissed.

A student who is suspended may apply for readmission to the same program after the lapse of one semester. To be readmitted, the student must submit a petition to the graduate program coordinator describing why he or she will be successful if readmitted. The Graduate Program Coordinator will return the petition to the student with reasons for disapproval or will forward it to the Dean of Graduate Studies with a recommendation for approval.

The petition with the endorsement will be filed in the Office of Graduate Studies. If it is approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies, a copy will be sent to the graduate program adviser and the student. A petition that is not approved will be returned to the graduate program adviser with a letter stating the reasons for not approving the petition.

A readmitted student must achieve a minimum grade point ratio of 3.5 in the next 12 credits of coursework taken. Should the student fail to achieve 3.5, he or she will be dismissed from the School of Graduate Studies with no option for readmission.

Some academic programs set higher standards than those of the School of Graduate Studies for academic performance. Students matriculated in those programs are subject to the higher standards required in their programs.

The School of Education requires graduate certification students to maintain a 3.0 (B) grade point average. A student who, after acceptance to a teacher education program, obtains a grade point average of less than 3.0 will be placed on probation by both the School of Education and the School of Graduate Studies and will be ineligible for student teaching. The student will have one semester to raise the grade point average to 3.0 or higher. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the certification program.

ACADEMIC DISQUALIFICATION

Graduate education requires continuous evaluation of the student. This evaluation includes not only periodic objective evaluations such as grades, performance on comprehensive examinations, and acceptance of thesis or projects, but also subjective appraisal by the faculty of the student's progress and potential.

Continuation in a graduate program is contingent upon positive, ongoing faculty evaluation of the graduate student's grades, professional or scholarly attributes, and performance in real or simulated professional situations. A student may be suspended or dismissed from a graduate program for deficiencies in any of the foregoing.

In the event of alleged academic misconduct, the incident will be handled as outlined in the Southern Connecticut State University Student Handbook.

DISCIPLINARY DISQUALIFICATION

Southern Connecticut State University defines student misconduct as behavior that is in violation of regulations established by the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University, of University regulations, and of rules governing residence on University property. Graduate students, as citizens, are subject to all federal and state laws, in addition to all University regulations governing student conduct and responsibility. A student may be suspended or dismissed from the School of Graduate Studies for violating laws, rules, or regulations.

APPEAL OF DISMISSAL/STUDENT GRIEVANCES

Upon dismissal from an academic program and the recommendation of the School Dean, students also may be subject to dismissal from the University, from admission to matriculation in other academic programs, and from further course registration. Students should refer to the Southern Connecticut State University Student Handbook for detailed information on University policies and procedures regarding grievances.

APPLICATION FOR DEGREE/DIPLOMA

A student must apply for graduation by completing the application on the web at www.SouthernCT.edu/registrar/applyforgraduadedegree/. The degree application must be completed according to deadline dates that are published for each degree cycle which are prior to the beginning of the last semester of course work. (Check deadline dates with the Registrar's Office.) Any student who does not apply for graduation will not graduate. The transcript will show the courses and requirements completed but will not include the notation "DEGREE AWARDED" and the date of graduation. Students who fail to file by the prescribed time must file for the next application period.

Students must maintain an overall 3.0 QPR for courses in the planned program in order to be eligible to graduate.

GRADUATION

Degrees and diplomas are issued three times a year, in January, May, and August. There is no formal commencement exercise in January or August. Students completing requirements at the end of the fall or summer term may elect to participate in the next spring commencement ceremony. All diplomas are mailed to addresses indicated on

the diploma application. A graduate commencement with hooding ceremony is held in late May. Students must apply to participate in the commencement with hooding ceremony.

The awarding of a master's degree or a sixth year diploma is not an automatic process. Students must apply for graduation online at www.southernct.edu/registrar/table2 and submit it by the established deadline. The Registrar's Office processes all applications for graduation and notifies students of their eligibility to graduate. Any student who does not submit a "Graduate Degree Application" to the Registrar's Office by the established deadline will not graduate.

Students who have been cleared for graduation by the Registrar's Office are eligible to participate in the graduate commencement ceremony. Students who wish to participate in the ceremony must notify the School of Graduate Studies in writing by February.

Academic regalia for commencement are available through the Southern Barnes & Noble Bookstore.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL

Full-time and part-time students may withdraw from a full semester course prior to the 10th week of classes; for an eight-week course prior to the fourth week of classes. Such a withdrawal is recorded as a "W" on the transcript record. Each faculty member should provide formal evaluation so that each student will know his or her class standing prior to the end of the period for course withdrawals.

A student can withdraw from a course in the Registrar's Office, Wintergreen Building, prior to the end of the withdrawal period. It is understood that every student should confer with his or her instructor and academic adviser to ensure proper faculty advisement before withdrawing from a course. Students should check deadlines with the Registrar's Office.

Withdrawals after the nine-week period (or five-week period for eight-week courses) must be done with the consent of the instructor. Late course withdrawals are to be viewed as exceptions to the general policy. In a case where the instructor feels a late withdrawal is justified, the instructor should obtain and complete a Late Course Withdrawal Form available in the Registrar's Office. At this time the instructor will assign a grade of either "WP" (Withdrawn Passing) or "WF" (Withdrawn Failing). The Late Course Withdrawal Form must be approved and signed by both the instructor and the department chairperson. In the event that the instructor teaching the course is the department chairman, then the Academic School Dean must also sign the original form. The entire form will be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

If a student is denied a late course withdrawal, he or she may grieve that decision as the assignment of an allegedly improper grade in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Student Handbook.

No late course withdrawals will be allowed after the last scheduled class. No late course withdrawals will be allowed during the final exam period.

WITHDRAWAL FROM GRADUATE SCHOOL

Part-time or full-time matriculated graduate students who wish to withdraw completely from the graduate program must complete a "Graduate Student Withdrawal Form," which can be obtained from the Registrar's Office in the Wintergreen Building. The student's status is then changed to that of a non-matriculated student immediately or at the end of the semester, as requested by the student. If a student who has withdrawn wishes to resume graduate study, re-application to the School of Graduate Studies is required. This process is separate from withdrawal from courses in a given semester.
