

7. Removal/Withdrawing/Leave of Absence Policy

The Dean of the Graduate School may remove a graduate student from class or a program for “appropriate reasons.” These may include but are not limited to poor academic performance (cumulate GPA below a 3.0) (see good standing below); a grade of F in a single course; a serious academic integrity offense; behavior that is considered dangerous to others or self.

Students removed from a class or program will be notified in writing. Within three days of receipt of this notice, the student may request an appeal before the Graduate Standards Committee comprised of the Dean (Chair of the committee) three members of the Graduate Council, and a graduate student from a program other than the student’s, who is appointed by the Dean.

If the Graduate Standards Committee rules in favor of the student, the student may continue the class or program. If the committee supports the decision to remove the student, the student may appeal in writing to the Provost within three days of the receipt of the Graduate Standards Committee’s decision. The Provost’s decision is final and a finding against the student will result in an Involuntary Separation from Converse University and its graduate programs.

A. Good Standing

In order to maintain good standing in the Graduate School and to maintain the GPA necessary to graduate with an advanced degree from Converse University, a graduate student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0. The only exception to this is in the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) programs, where the state policy of candidates maintaining a 2.75 GPA to qualify for certification supersedes the Converse policy. However, middle and secondary MAT candidates must maintain a 3.0 GPA in content classes to remain in good standing and graduate, regardless of cumulative GPA.

If a student falls below a 3.0 cumulative GPA, he or she has a semester to bring the GPA back to 3.0 or above. After this semester, the student may be dismissed from the program, by the dean, with the approval of the graduate advisor. If the advisor feels the student should be given additional time to raise the cumulative GPA, the advisor may design an academic contract, in conjunction with the student, and approved by the appropriate dean (The Graduate School or School of the Arts). The contract must outline in detail the steps that must be taken and the goals that must be met to remain in the program. Failure to file an academic contract will result in the student being dismissed from the program after two semesters below a 3.0.

B. Withdrawal from the Graduate School

It is very important that graduate students who intend to withdraw from all graduate work for a semester do so officially. If students do not, they may end up with a semester of all F’s, which will greatly lower their cumulative GPA and may make it difficult for students to resume their studies at a later date.

Withdrawal from the Graduate School is done through the Registrar and the form must be turned in to the Registrar’s Office. There is a one-page form, which needs to be filled out and signed by the student by the date for withdrawal in the semester the student withdraws. This form is available in the Graduate School Office (Ezell Hall) or the Registrar’s Office (Wilson Hall). A copy of the form will be sent to the Graduate School, Financial Aid, Registrar, Student Billing and to the Graduate Advisor. Sometimes a student who withdraws may also need to file a Leave of Absence (see below).

C. Leave of Absence and Program Extensions

If a graduate student in good standing feels he or she needs to take a break from his or her program, he or she should apply to the appropriate dean (Graduate School or School of the Arts) for a **leave of absence**. This may be done by e-mail and a letter will be placed in the student's file. This will make it easier for a student to resume studies after time off.

Students should keep in mind that graduate degrees at Converse are to be completed in 5 years from the date they are started. If a student takes a leave of absence and will go beyond five years to complete a program, that student must file a request for a **program extension**. Program extensions specify a semester by which a program must be completed. Applications for Program Extensions should be made via e-mail to the appropriate dean.