

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

This policy describes the grading requirements for successful completion of a course of study at Acacia University at the Master's and Doctoral levels.

### **Master's Programs**

Students in the Master's programs at Acacia University must maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (CGPA). Faculty and program advisors monitor the progress of each student. If the student does not make satisfactory academic progress during a course (falls behind in assignments, displays unsatisfactory attendance, or appears to be having personal challenges), the instructor will contact the student to schedule an individual conference to assess needs. A 3.0 CGPA or higher represents satisfactory academic progress. If the GPA falls below 3.0, the professor or program advisor will engage in academic advisement with the student. If the GPA is below 3.0 for two successive semesters, the student is placed on academic probation and is required to undergo more frequent monitoring and advising by the instructors and program advisor.

Master's courses at Acacia are not self-paced. Students are expected to keep up with the posted course schedule of lessons and assignments. Professors grade course activities and assignments on a weekly basis, using our published rubrics to score all assignments and assessments. Assessments may on occasion be electronically scored to provide immediate feedback. Students may access their grades for assigned lesson material, discussions, quizzes, and assignments for each lesson at any time during the course, using the Learning Management System (LMS).

### **Doctoral Program**

Doctoral courses, like Master's courses, are not self-paced. They adhere to the same rigorous timetable as other graduate courses within the University. The grading standards in the doctoral programs are more stringent, however. Grades of C and lower are not acceptable in the doctoral program, and courses with these grades do not count toward the degree. If a grade of C or lower is earned, the course must be retaken the next time it is offered, and the student must complete it with a grade of B or higher.

If a student receives two C grades or lower, they are placed on academic probation, and they must retake both courses and earn at least a B before registering for another course in the program of study. If a student receives three grades of C or lower at any time during the doctoral program (even if courses are retaken and higher grades are earned), the student will be dismissed from the University for unsatisfactory academic performance. Each course can be retaken only once. If a grade of B or higher is not achieved upon completion of a repeated course, the student will be dismissed. Retaken courses are subject to the normal doctoral tuition rate. Retaken courses appear with an “(R)” on the student’s transcript.

Satisfactory academic progress in the doctoral program is monitored by faculty program advisors, who meet with advisees at least two times each academic year to discuss the pace of courses, grades, and academic progress. Online participation, effort, and timeliness are reviewed and discussed with each student. Program goals and outcomes are reviewed and discussed so that the program advisor can determine student progress in the program. Notes of insufficiencies are recorded in the comments section of the student’s records. Program advisors indicate areas of support needed and regularly check the transcript to monitor GPA. If a student maintains a 3.0 GPA or higher and has not expressed academic concerns, it is assumed that there is satisfactory academic progress.

In addition to the quantitative scoring of student performance, each course has a qualitative component based on timeliness, professionalism, progress, and effort based on a participation and effort rubric that contributes 10% to the final course grade. Satisfactory progress (good standing) is maintained when doctoral students earn a program GPA of 3.0 (grade of B) or higher on a 4.0 grade scale. Students who do not earn at least a B in every course during an academic session will be placed on academic probation the following session and be required to repeat the course. Academic probation will not exceed two sessions. If, during the following two sessions, the student’s grade average is still unsatisfactory, the student will be notified of the recommendation for academic dismissal. At that time, the student may appeal by submitting a letter to the Provost, who will convene a hearing of the case. The decision of the Provost is final.