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Handbook Edition
This version of the handbook (1.1) was published October 2021. The policies herein are applicable to
students who matriculated Summer/Fall 2021 and onward, until which time significant changes to policy
warrant a new handbook edition.

Other Student Handbooks and Policies
Besides this publication, students will find themselves presented with other handbooks and policies covering
academic expectations, terms of use, etc. No one policy document supersedes others. In instances when policy
documents seem to contradict each other, Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS) will assist
students in parsing the nuances of the policies and, when warranted, update policy accordingly.

Fidelity/Updates/Changes
Although the degree and academic requirements in place normally will not change within any given academic
year, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health policies are reviewed and updated regularly.
Columbia Public Health reserves the right to make changes at any time with good cause. Should updates be
made to this handbook, notice of such changes will be appropriately communicated to the Columbia Mailman
community and cataloged below. If you note an error, broken link, etc., please bring it to the attention of
Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS).
Offices Supporting Student Success

Office of Education

The Office of Education (OE) is the center of the student experience, overseeing all learning and student support services. The Office of Education includes the Offices of Educational Initiatives (OEI), Careers and Practice (OCP), Student Affairs (OSA), Enrollment Management (OEM), Diversity, Culture, and Inclusion (ODCI), as well as Online Education. The Vice Dean of Education oversees OE, serves as the senior education officer of the Columbia Mailman School of Public Health, and advises the Dean on all academic matters including new educational programs and initiatives. Working with the School’s senior leadership and academic departments, the Office of Education provides leadership for all aspects of the development, delivery, assessment, and strategic growth of the School’s doctoral, master’s, non-degree, and executive education programs, while providing students the skills and experiences necessary to succeed as future public health professionals.

Organizational Chart

- **Educational Initiatives**
  - msphoei@columbia.edu
  - MPH Core and Certificates coordination
  - Educational quality oversight
  - Evidence-based pedagogy & inclusive teaching practices
  - Faculty and TA training
  - NYS and CEPH compliance
  - Educational program initiatives development support.

- **Careers & Practice**
  - msphoc@columbia.edu
  - sphfof@columbia.edu
  - Lifetime advising/support
  - Resume development and interview preparation
  - Career fairs and networking
  - Practicum requirements
  - Volunteer and service-learning opportunities
  - Interprofessional education

- **Student Affairs**
  - msphoa@columbia.edu
  - Individual student support and non-academic advising
  - Volunteer/leadership opportunities
  - Social and alumni networking events
  - Student organizations
  - Graduate Student Assoc.
  - Disability accommodations

- **Enrollment Management**
  - sphfinaid@columbia.edu
  - Financial aid, literacy, and wellness; debt management
  - Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS); incl, registration, degree audits, satisfactory academic progress
  - Graduation application and degree conferral

- **Diversity, Culture & Inclusion**
  - msp hodci@columbia.edu
  - Programs for students, staff, and faculty alike to create an inclusive and equitable working and learning environment.
  - DEI-related learning opportunities and workshops for faculty, staff, and students
  - Collaborative mentorship initiatives such as RISE and Outlist
Community Standards

Students have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by all Columbia University and Mailman School community standards; especially as they relate to academic integrity, policies, procedures, and personal and professional conduct. To ensure they are familiar with the complete array of community standards, **students must review and affirm to having reviewed the following:**

- The Student Handbook (this document)
- The Community Standards and Conduct handbook

Students "sign" the Columbia Mailman School's Affirmation of Community Standards by completing the respective Orientation & Transition modules. By doing so, students re-affirm to abide by all community standards, which were implicitly agreed upon when students enrolled at Columbia Public Health. **Violations of community standards – even those that arise from one's lack of awareness or understanding – may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for the offending student.**

Academic Integrity

A violation of academic integrity compromises the intellectual foundation of the institution. To violate that principle is one of the most serious offenses a student can commit at Columbia University. Irrespective of any disciplinary outcome, **faculty members reserve the right to assign grades as they deem appropriate.** The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) partners with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SCCS) when investigating matters of alleged academic misconduct. The Community Standards and Conduct Policy details Columbia Public Health's expectations for academic integrity, the process by which the School addresses alleged academic misconduct, and the potential sanctions for students found in violation of the Code of Academic Integrity, which include but is not limited to dismissal from the institution.

Conduct as an employee, a leader, or when completing practicum

We expect the highest level of professionalism when students are in the role of employee (e.g., teaching assistant, research assistant, etc.), student-leader, or in the field during their practicum. A student must be in good academic standing to hold any of these roles, this includes one’s grades as well as upholding good conduct outlined throughout the student handbooks and community standards pages.

Commitment to an Inclusive Community

Columbia’s Office of University Life: Sexual Respect Initiative

Columbia University's Office of University Life serves as a primary place of engagement for issues of campus-wide concern and, importantly, as a focal point for student interests, supplementing the current resources within the University’s undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools. The mission of Office of University Life is to further the academic and community experience of students, faculty, and staff at Columbia.

University Life launched the Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative to address concerns of community, citizenship, and sexual respect within the Columbia community. The Initiative complements the University’s ongoing efforts to prevent gender-based misconduct, strengthen the response to such misconduct when it occurs, and enhance our campus climate; additionally, it supports learning and reflection on the link between sexual respect and membership in the University community.

All students new to Columbia University or starting new programs are required to engage with the Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative. Through the initiative, students will explore multiple participation options – workshops; film and discussion events; online videos and reflections; and others. Students may also choose to work either individually and/or with student groups to create other unique
options to satisfy this requirement. More information on the specifics of the requirement will be provided early in the fall semester.

We expect all students will embrace the Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative as part of what it means to be a Columbia University student. Students who do not complete this requirement will be considered not in good standing with the Columbia Public Health and have registration holds put in place.

**Columbia Public Health’s Self, Social, and Global Awareness**

Self, Social, and Global Awareness (SSGA) is conceptualized as the beginning of a larger, integrated component of the School’s curriculum that reflects our mission to be aware of and understand structural inequities and to develop strategies to eliminate them. All students are required to participate in SSGA either on the date designated for their degree program or in make-up sessions offered by the Office of Diversity, Culture, and Inclusion.

**Communication with Students via Email**

**Student Email Communication Policy**

All Columbia Public Health students are to follow the email policies set forth by Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) Information Technology. Students are expected to check their CUIMC email on a frequent and consistent basis. *A student’s failure to read University communications in a timely manner does not absolve that student from knowing and complying with the content of such communications.*

**Email at CUIMC**

Affiliation with the Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) requires the use of a CUIMC email account (a.k.a., Exchange or Office 365). Students’ email addresses are designated as yourUNI@cumc.columbia.edu; yourUNI@columbia.edu auto-forwards to your CUIMC email. **CUIMC prohibits the forwarding of your Exchange email to any non-Columbia email address** (e.g., Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.) due to information security concerns and to ensure compliance with HIPAA regulations and CUIMC IT policies and guidelines. CUIMC email access will change to an alumna email uni@caa.columbia.edu approximately 90 days following students’ expected date of graduation. More information on accessing and forwarding to an alumna email will be sent in the weeks leading up to one’s graduation.

**CUIMC-IT Support**

IT support for students – whether it be email or computer support – is managed by CUIMC-IT. Resources for students also include email set-up, licensed software, device encryption or printing. Details can be found by visiting the **CUIMC-IT webpage** or by visiting the student support tech-bar located on the 2nd floor of the Hammer Science Building.

**In Cases of Inclement Weather, School Closing, Emergencies**

- Students are strongly encouraged to enroll their mobile numbers with the University’s **Emergency Notification System**.
- Major announcements will be placed on the [www.publichealth.columbia.edu](http://www.publichealth.columbia.edu) homepage.
- The Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) maintains a hotline for the medical center campus – (212) 305-7300 – and Columbia Public Health information will also be kept up to date there.
- If the School is open, you should assume your classes are being held unless you hear otherwise directly from your instructors or from the Office of Student Affairs.
- You should communicate directly with your instructors if you cannot attend class.
Degree Requirements

Building on a legacy of academic excellence, Columbia Public Health degree programs educate and train the public health leaders of tomorrow. Our programs blend a theoretical understanding of science and society with a thorough exploration of current issues in public health. The following sections detail key features and requirements. All degrees meet the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) criteria.

Continuous Enrollment
Degree seeking students must be continuously enrolled per their academic plans and are expected to complete all degree program requirements within no more than five years* from their date of matriculation. Only a formal leave of absence will “stop the clock” on the five-year limitation. Leaves of absence must be approved by and coordinated through the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) or Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS). Students absent without leave must complete an application for readmission before being considered for a return to their studies. For more information, please refer to the readmission section of the handbook.

*Doctoral students are held to the maximum time toward degree as specified by their respective departments.

Grade Point Average (GPA)
Columbia Public Health uses a letter grade system to evaluate students on a 4.0 scale. Students are expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of no less than 3.0000. (SSOL calculates GPA out to four decimal places. The School will use this number when determining students’ satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and will not round up. For brevity, GPA throughout this document and elsewhere may be cited with fewer or no decimal points.) Columbia Public Health will not confer degrees of students whose GPA is below 3.0

*Most doctoral programs require their students to achieve grades of B+ or better for required coursework, which translates to an overall GPA requirement of greater than 30. Doctoral students should check with their departments regarding minimally acceptable GPA.

Completion of Academic Plans and Co-Curricular Requirements
Most degree programs at Columbia Public Health are designed to be completed at a full-time pace. Students are expected to follow their academic plans as prescribed, which have been designed for the timely completion of students’ degree programs. Students can expect to spend full days on campus engaging in coursework, seminars, collaborative free periods, and other activities. Classes run Monday through Friday (and some on Saturdays) from early morning (~8:30 a.m.) through the evening (~8:30 p.m.). In addition, students often meet regularly outside of classes with their peers to complete academic group projects. Student must also complete additional, co-curricular requirements (e.g., seminar/lecture attendance, etc.), which are made explicitly clear in other sections of this handbook and/or in a student’s department handbook.

Only the Executive HPM, PTM MHA, and Online MS in Epidemiology programs are specifically designed with evening and/or weekend classes for working professionals.

Learning Hours In and Outside the Classroom
New York State equates one (1) course credit to approximately three (3) hours/week of coursework in and outside of the classroom on average across the 14 instructional weeks of a given semester. Students in two-year degree programs take on average no less than 12 credits/semester, which amounts to 42+ total hours of coursework/week. Students in one-year programs take closer to 18 credits/semester and can expect 54+ hours of coursework/week.
Limiting Extra-Curricular Commitments During Students’ First Semester
In order to ensure students’ academic success in their full-time programs and due to the rigors that often accompany the first semester of a new degree program, students are strongly advised against extra-curricular work commitments during their first semester of studies. Students should not expect accommodations for extra-curricular commitments while engaged in a full-time academic program. In subsequent semesters of one’s program, course schedules may be more flexible, and therefore compatible with part-time work.

Minimum Credits/Residency
Per-Credit Degree Programs: DrPH, MS, PTMHA
Per-credit tuition rate programs are generally completed as prescribed in their respective departments’ handbooks to achieve the minimum required credits as noted below. Students have some flexibility in determining how many credits they will register for in a given semester and must therefore be mindful of how their number of registered credits/semester impact their student status (i.e., half, part, or full-time). Ultimately, a student’s status is determined by the number of credits one has registered for at the close of a semester’s change of program period, the timing of which precedes the production date of the semester’s second billing statement.

Students are responsible for their own registration and resulting status, as well as the fees associated with that status. E.g., students who choose to register for twelve or more (12+) credits in a semester are considered full-time and incur additional University fees associated with that status; students who are registered anywhere from 6-11.5 credits generates as half-time status; those who register for less than six (<6) credits are ineligible for Federal Student Aid. Certain student services are only available on an opt-in basis for less than full-time students; fees for other services are automatically assessed to full-time students and require a student to opt-out to avoid the fee. Students should refer to the Columbia University Student Financial Services website for more details on fees associated with these services.

Students are responsible for monitoring their student accounts for these fees when their registration fluctuates between full-time and below full-time status.

International students in per-credit programs must register at full-time status for all but their final semester of study. Requests for exceptions to this policy can be made to the International Students and Scholars Office.

BIOSTATISTICS
Master of Science
- Clinical Research Methods track: 30 credits
- Patient Oriented Research degree: 30 credits
- Pharmaceutical Statistics track: 35 credits
- Public Health Data Science track: 36 credits
- Statistical Genetics track: 36 credits
- Theory & Methods track: 36 credits
Doctoral programs: see departmental guidelines

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES
Master of Science: 36 credits
Doctoral programs: see departmental guidelines

EPIDEMIOLOGY
POPULATION AND FAMILY HEALTH
SOCIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
Master of Science: 30 credits
Doctoral programs: see departmental guidelines

HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT
Part-time Master of Health Administration (PT MHA): 45

Flat Tuition Rate Programs: Exec HPM, MHA, MPH
RESIDENCY UNITS
A student who has entered into a flat-rate degree program has committed to paying the full tuition associated with that degree. Flat-rate programs are designed to be completed in a prescribed number of consecutive semesters of residency as tracked by units (RUs). The total tuition of a given degree is
apportioned equally across the required semesters/RUs. The table below indicates the typical progression through flat-rate programs. Students who must deviate from these timelines must first consult with Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS) or they will be automatically registered for their appropriate RU each term. Deviations from a flat-rate academic plan may incur additional fees and/or increase the total, expected cost of a flat-rate degree.
# CREDIT AND RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAMS</th>
<th>Min Credits</th>
<th>Cumulative Max Credits</th>
<th>Fall I</th>
<th>Spring I</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Fall II</th>
<th>Spring II</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Columbia MPH</td>
<td>52*</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>Fees only**</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+1 MPH</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>MPH Core</td>
<td>Partner School</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>Fees only^</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated MPH</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>Fees only^</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPH as Part of a Dual Degree Program</td>
<td>42^^</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>Fees only^</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time MHA</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
<td>Fees only**</td>
<td>1 RU</td>
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<tr>
<td>HPM Executive MPH/MHA</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>½ RU</td>
<td>½ RU</td>
<td>½ RU</td>
<td>½ RU</td>
<td>½ RU</td>
<td>½ RU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some degree/certificate combinations may require more than 52 credits as minimum
**Students may take summer courses for no additional tuition but must pay applicable fees. Credits earned in a summer term apply toward one’s degree cumulative maximum
^Tuition obligations achieved in Fall/Spring; some departments require summer classes
^At least 33 credits must be taken while in residence at Columbia Public Health

## CREDIT MAXIMUMS, CONSEQUENCES OF EXCEEDING

Students are limited to a maximum, cumulative number of credits covered under the flat tuition rate. All academic plans are designed to be completed as indicated above in order to keep students on pace toward fulfilling their graduation and residency requirements. Students are responsible for reviewing their academic plans prior to registering for a new semester in order to avoid a situation where one must take required courses that would put one’s cumulative credit totals above the maximum. Students who enroll for credits in excess of their cumulative maximum will be billed for those credits at the per-credit rate. Students who desire to make changes to their program, department, and/or certificate must request official approval. Depending on the timing of these changes, students may need to take additional credits, which may force an overage situation, which may incur additional costs.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR CREDITS/SEMESTER

Flat tuition rate degree program plans are designed with maximum credits/semester in mind based on best practices, good pedagogy, and balance across required semesters of residency.

- Columbia MPH, 4+1 MPH and Full-Time MHA students must obtain approval from their academic department to exceed 18 credits/semester
- Accelerated and Dual MPH students must request approval to exceed 21 credits.
- Executive HPM students must request approval to exceed 11.5 credits
Applied Practice Experience (Practicum)

**Master of Science**

Some MS degree programs require students to complete an applied practice experience requirement. In most cases, this requirement takes the form of a one-term practicum prior to graduation. All MS students who must meet a practical experience requirement need to obtain approval from a faculty advisor and a field supervisor for a field assignment. Clearance for graduation requires completion of fieldwork to the satisfaction of both the advisor and supervisor. Review departmental handbook for additional details.

**MPH and MHA**

All MPH and full-time MHA students are required to complete an applied practice experience. Students must be in good academic standing in order to begin their practicum. Two-year MPH/MHA students generally complete this requirement during the summer between their first and second years. Students in the accelerated, dual, and 4+1 MPH programs work with their advisors to identify practicum timing best suited for their particular program and circumstances. Specific practicum requirements vary by program/department and, in some cases, by certificate.

The practicum must be skills and competencies-based, planned, supervised, and evaluated. This process includes completing a scope of work and obtaining approval from a faculty advisor, a departmental practicum director, and a field supervisor before starting to work on a field assignment; and the successful completion of fieldwork to the satisfaction of both the advisor and supervisor, evidenced by the students’ practicum completion/evaluation form and the field supervisor’s evaluation. For MPH students, their advisors assess each student’s competency attainment in practical and applied settings through the review of practical, applied work products that were produced for the site’s use and benefit. Review of the student’s performance must be based on at least two practical, non-academic work products, and on validating that the work products demonstrate the student’s attainment of the designated competencies. Clearance for graduation requires evidence of the satisfactory completion of this requirement.

Each academic department offers information/overview sessions on their specific practicum requirements. Additionally, the Office of Careers and Practice will prompt students to engage with information sessions throughout their first year. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in all recommended sessions and office hours to support students’ practicum search, planning, and evaluation. Attendance at the following sessions are mandatory for students whose practicum is outside the US and/or requires IRB approval:

- Introduction to Summer Practicum and IRB for Students
- Safety and Security for International Practicum

Columbia Public Health strictly follows the policies set forth by Columbia University Global Travel for students traveling abroad for their practicum work.

**Inter-Professional Education: MPH**

All MPH students are required to complete Inter-Professional Education (IPE) in conjunction with students from the other professional schools at the Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC). Several activities meet this requirement such as the CUIMC-wide “IPE Day”), and e-Introduction to IPE. These activities will be announced to all students throughout the school year. Questions regarding the IPE requirement should be directed to the Office of Educational Initiatives.

**Integrative Learning Experience/Culminating Experience**

Depending on your department, this experience can be called your culminating experience, capstone, or thesis. However, all meet the CEPH criteria requirements for the Integrated Learning Experience (ILE).
Students are required to demonstrate their ability to synthesize and integrate knowledge acquired in the classroom and from other learning experiences; and to show that they can apply those principles, concepts, and skills to their chosen area of public health practice. MPH students complete an ILE that demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies. In consultation with faculty, students select foundational and concentration-specific competencies appropriate to their educational and professional goals. The ILE may take many forms, but regardless of which form this experience takes, each student produces a high-quality written product that is appropriate for their educational and professional goals. A faculty advisor is assigned to evaluate this product’s rigor, quality, and whether selected competencies have been attained.

Departments dictate the specific requirements of the ILE, which may include, but is not limited to, the following:
- Expanded practicum experience requiring participation in a practicum seminar and an additional integrative paper
- Capstone course which includes a high-quality written product
- Master’s essay or research project

**Degree-Specific Requirements**

In addition to the general degree requirements detailed above, students in specific subsets of degree programs may have other requirements to complete.

**Master of Public Health (MPH)**

**Details Specific to the MPH Core**

Students will be pre-registered for their entire first fall semester’s coursework – known as the MPH Core, it includes:
- Six (6), credit-bearing studios: 15 credits total
- Integration of Science and Practice (ISP) I&II*: 3 credits total fall and spring
- Personal Leadership in Public Health*: 1.5 credits in the first spring semester

No component of the MPH Core curriculum may be waived or fulfilled by transfer credits. Students must achieve a grade of **B- or better in the ReMA studio**; those who do not will be referred to the Academic Standards Committee for review and potential remediation/reconsideration of degree candidacy. Students are strongly discouraged from extra-curricular work commitments while in the first semester of the Core.

The Core Curriculum, in combination with the Integration of Science & Practice course, Leadership course, and Interprofessional Practice opportunities, meet the MPH [foundational competencies established by the Council on Education for Public Health](https://www.ceph.org) (CEPH).

*Accelerated and Dual MPH students take ISP and Leadership in the fall semester only for a total of 3 credits. 4+1MPH students’ progression through the MPH Core may vary based on the partner school’s MOU with Columbia Public Health.*

**Details Specific to the Columbia MPH**

The Columbia MPH includes an additional credential – the certificate – that provides training in a second, more focused area of expertise complementing a student’s discipline. Please go to the Certificate Requirements webpage for information about certificates, including required coursework and contact information for certificate lead faculty.
Details Specific to the Accelerated MPH
The MPH from Columbia Public Health as part of the Accelerated degree program does not include a certificate. Some Accelerated students may elect to take coursework in addition to the MPH Core during their Fall term; they should contact their department advisor to identify a course that does not conflict with the Core. The sequence of some departmental coursework requires registration in a summer term. While the flat tuition rate billed in the fall and spring semesters fulfills Accelerated students’ tuition obligations, requisite fees are charged to all students taking summer coursework.

Accelerated MPH students’ degrees are conferred in October – the conferral period for students who conclude their programs in a summer term – but students are invited to participate in the Spring commencement exercises so long as they have successfully completed at least 36 credits by the conclusion of the Spring semester.

Details Specific to the 4+1 MPH
The MPH from Columbia Public Health as part of a 4+1 degree program does not include a certificate. Students take courses at Columbia Public Health toward the completion of the MPH Core curriculum while they “study away” from their partner school for the fall semester of their senior year. The 4+1 students return to their partner school for their final, undergraduate semester. They then matriculate for two, consecutive semesters of residency (plus a summer term when applicable) to complete the +1 portion of the program.

Students earning the 4+1 MPH generally have their degrees conferred in October – the conferral period for students who conclude their programs in a summer term – but students are invited to participate in the Spring commencement exercises so long as they have successfully completed at least 36 credits by the conclusion of the Spring semester.

Details Specific to the MPH as Part of a Dual Degree
The MPH from Columbia Public Health as part of a dual degree program does not include a certificate. Application for admission to a dual degree program is made independently to both Columbia Public Health and the partnering school. Students must declare their dual degree candidacy and be admitted to their partner schools prior to their enrollment at Columbia Public Health. Students should make clear their desire to pursue a dual degree at the time of application.

Degrees for both programs must be conferred at the same time. Please consult with your department advisor to confirm your expected degree date, which will vary by program.

Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) and HPM Executive Programs
Requirements for all MHA Students
All Master of Health Administration (MHA) students take a core management curriculum. The Department of Health Policy & Management (HPM) pre-registers MHA students for all of their required coursework.

Details Specific to the Full-Time (FTM) MHA
The Full-Time MHA requires a minimum of 56.6 credits to be completed across four, full-time semesters accounted for by residency units (RUs). The Full-Time MHA specifies a range of “Program Points” (i.e., 0-18 credits) allowed each semester under the flat-rate tuition/RU.
Details Specific to the Part-Time (PTM) MHA

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS
The PT MHA requires a minimum of 46.5 credits toward the degree. Tuition is charged per registered credit for each semester in the program. Part-time is defined here as taking no more than 11.5 credits per semester.

MAINTAINING LESS THAN FULL-TIME STATUS
The PT MHA Program is intended to be completed sequentially and uninterrupted across seven semesters (including summer terms), with students taking a prescribed number of classes/credits per semester. The prescribed academic plan for the PT MHA program is designed to keep students on pace toward their graduation requirements while keeping students at less than full-time status. Students who wish to register for 12 or more credits in a semester must receive approval from HPM and the Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) team. Twelve or more credits is considered full-time, and full-time students incur additional University fees associated with that status.

PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE
PT MHA students fulfill their practicum requirements by integrating their current role in the healthcare sector with a project required in their Strategic Management course.

Details Specific to HPM Executive Programs (MHA/MPH)
The HPM Executive Programs (MHA/MPH) each require a minimum of forty-five (45) credits to be completed across six semesters which are accounted for by residency units (RUs). The Executive MHA/MPH specifies a range of “Program Points” (i.e., 0-12 credits) allowed each semester under the flat-rate tuition/RU. Students who enroll for credits in excess of the allowed maximum will see those additional credits billed at the per-credit rate for that semester. Likewise, students are limited to a maximum, cumulative number of sixty (60) credits covered under the flat-rate tuition. Students will be billed at the per-credit rate for credits in excess of the cumulative maximum. Credits may not be “banked” from one semester to the next (i.e., registering for less-than the maximum allowed credits in one semester does not equate to being able to exceed the maximum in a subsequent semester). The prescribed academic plan for EXEC Program students is designed to keep students on pace toward their graduation requirements while observing these maximums. Students are responsible for managing their course loads to remain within the maximum credits allowed each semester and cumulatively.

MAINTAINING LESS THAN FULL-TIME STATUS
The EXEC Program is intended to be completed sequentially and uninterrupted across six semesters (including summer terms), with students taking a prescribed number of classes/credits per semester. The prescribed academic plan for the EXEC Program is designated to keep students on pace toward their graduation requirements while keeping students at less than full-time status. Students who wish to register for 12 or more credits in a semester must receive approval from HPM and the Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) team. Twelve or more credits is considered full-time, and full-time students incur additional University fees associated with that status.

PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE
EXEC Students fulfill their practicum requirement by integrating their current role in the healthcare sector with a project required in their Strategic Management course.
Master of Science (MS)
Details Specific to the Online MS in Epidemiology
The Online MS in Epidemiology is a part-time program requiring a minimum of thirty (30) credits toward the degree, including a credit-bearing course culminating in a master’s thesis. Tuition is charged per registered credit.

MAINTAINING LESS THAN FULL-TIME STATUS
The Online MS in Epidemiology is intended to be completed sequentially and uninterrupted across five semesters (including summer terms), with students taking a prescribed number of classes/credits per semester. The prescribed academic plan is designed to keep students on pace toward their graduation requirements while keeping students at less than full-time status. Students who wish to register for 12 or more credits in a semester must receive approval from the Department of Epidemiology and Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS). Twelve or more credits is considered full-time, and full-time students incur additional University fees associated with that status.

All Other MS Programs
Master of Science programs vary by the department offering the degree. Students should reference their department-specific handbooks for MS degree requirements and expectations.

Doctoral Degree Programs
Details Specific to the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)
Students enrolled in the DrPH program will be pre-registered to the required DrPH Core Curriculum that spans the student’s first three semesters. This shared cross-departmental Core Curriculum complements the scientific research and practice skills embedded in the unique strengths and foci of the five departments offering the degree. These DrPH programs meet all of the competencies required by the Council on Education for Public Health.

DrPH Core Curriculum
- PUBH P9070: Case Studies in Public Health Practice and Leadership I (1.5 credits)
- PUBH P9071: Case Studies in Public Health Practice and Leadership II (1.5 credits)
- PUBH P9040: Seminar in Managerial and Organizational Behavior (1.5 credits)
- PUBH P9050: Seminar in Strategic Management (1.5 credits)
- PUBH P9060: Essentials for Teaching and Communication (1.5 credits)

In addition to the DrPH Core, students will also have to complete both the Applied Practicum Experience (ALE) and Integrative Learning Experience (ILE). More information about the ALE and ILE will come from your department.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
The PhD, while conferred by the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (GSAS), is administered by the Columbia Public Health department offering the degree. Students should reference their department-specific handbooks for degree requirements and expectations. Students should also work closely with their advisors and Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS) to navigate Columbia University, School of Public Health, and GSAS policies and procedures as they pertain to registration and one’s dissertation.

Graduation
The Columbia Mailman School of Public Health awards degrees three times a year – October, February, and May – in accordance with Columbia University’s conferral schedule. Candidates for Public Health degrees
must file an electronic application, which is validated by their department liaison. Students will receive notification when the application becomes available in the months prior to the application due dates.

| Graduation application due dates (or following business day if a weekend) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **August 1** | October conferral |
| **December 1** | February conferral |
| **February 1** | May conferral |

Applications received after the due dates may not be considered for the respective conferral date.

Students unable to complete their degree requirements by the conferral date for which they have applied, must file another application for the next conferral period. Additionally, students who previously filed and did not graduate, due to an outstanding requirement, must meet all requirements before another application for graduation will be accepted.

**Commencement Ceremony**

Columbia Public Health hosts a graduation ceremony in Spring, typically the day before the University-wide commencement on the Morningside campus. Graduates from all three conferral dates are encouraged to attend this event. Information regarding commencement activities, including the graduation ceremony, is published to the [Public Health Commencement](#) website.

**Outstanding Requirements at the Time of Expected Graduation**

Students are expected to complete all requirements toward their degrees within the number of semesters/residency units prescribed by their particular degree program. Those who do not must remain continuously enrolled until which time their degrees are conferred. As a result, students may incur additional tuition and/or fees.

**Continuous Registration Fee**

Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) will automatically continue students’ registration every fall and spring semester until which time all outstanding requirements have been completed or the maximum time toward degree completion has expired. The registration fee ($500/semester) gives students part-time status for the additional term(s), as well as access to University resources needed to complete outstanding deliverables; it does not constitute eligibility for additional coursework, financial aid, or University housing.

*Additional fees, such as the student activity fee and the CUIMC IT fee, may also be incurred when students are enrolled in the continuous registration fee.*

**Grace Period**

Students are afforded a grace period – until the close of the change of program period of the semester following one’s expected date of graduation* – before the automatic activation of the $500 continuous registration fee. After the close of the change of program period, students may not deactivate their continuous enrollment and must defer their degree conferral until the next University conferral period (or later).

Students may avoid the continuous registration fee by completing remaining deliverables in time for all grades to be submitted prior to the close of the change of program period or by formally withdrawing from one’s degree program. The continuous registration fee will be applied each fall and spring semester until one’s degree is conferred or until the maximum time toward degree completion has expired. Students who reach their maximum time limit will be withdrawn from degree candidacy.

*Subsequent semesters do not include summer terms.*
Requests for Transcripts and Certifications
The amended Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 prohibits the release of a student's educational record without the written consent of the student. For certain exceptions and further restrictions, consult Essential Policies for the Columbia Community. Students should visit the Office of the University Registrar for information on obtaining transcripts.
Registration Policies and Procedures

Student Status
There are 3 levels of status students may have while enrolled for classes at Columbia Public Health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Flat Tuition Rate</th>
<th>Per-Credit Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time</td>
<td>• Residency Unit (RU) maintains full-time status irrespective of registered credits&lt;br&gt;• Automatically enrolled in the Columbia Student Health Insurance Plan, unless one has comparable coverage and waives out; cannot waive the Health and Related Services Fee</td>
<td>• Register for at least twelve credits (12+) per semester&lt;br&gt;• Automatically enrolled in the Columbia Student Health Insurance Plan, unless one has comparable coverage and waives out; cannot waive the Health and Related Services Fee&lt;br&gt;• International students must maintain full-time status except in their final semester*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-Time</td>
<td>• Executive HPM only – Residency Unit (½ RU) maintains half-time status; students must obtain department approval to register for more than 11.5 credits/semester</td>
<td>• Register for between six and less than twelve credits (6-11.5) per semester&lt;br&gt;• Students in programs with required, summer coursework may be certified as half-time&lt;br&gt;• PT MHA students status is based on number of credits/semester not the &quot;Part-Time&quot; in the program name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time</td>
<td>• Continuous registration following required residency places a student in part-time status</td>
<td>• Register for less than six credits (&lt;6) per semester&lt;br&gt;• Ineligible for Federal Student Aid&lt;br&gt;• May elect to enroll in the Columbia Student Health Insurance Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To confirm which tuition rate affiliated with your program, please see the Degree Requirements section. Requests for exceptions to this policy can be made to the International Students and Scholars Office.

Expected Progression

Standard Registration
Students are expected to complete their degree programs without interruption and within no more than five years for master's degree candidates*. Only an official leave of absence will “stop the clock” on this deadline. Flat tuition rate programs are to be completed as prescribed per their respective academic plans. Continuous registration in the Part-Time Management (PT MHA) Program, the Executive (EXEC) Programs in Healthcare Management (MHA/MPH), and the Online MS in Epidemiology programs includes summer registration. All other per-credit programs do not require summer enrollment to be considered continuously registered^. Students must inform Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS) of any disruption to their continued registration; otherwise, they will be considered absent without leave and must be reinstated. Students not on a formal leave and not enrolled continuously will be withdrawn from degree candidacy and must apply for readmission.

*Doctoral degree candidates’ expected time to complete their programs are stipulated by their respective departments; timeframes vary but average ~7-9 years

*In some cases Summer registration is required in order to complete the academic program as prescribed but it is not required for continuous enrollment.
Late Registration
Students are expected to register for and enroll in courses prior to the first day of class. Registration holds may sometimes delay a student's registration, but the onus is on the student to resolve any/all holds preventing one's registration by no later than the payment due-date of the second billing statement of the semester. After this deadline, students must work directly with Student Academic Records and Standards to determine next steps, which may include a leave of absence until the hold(s) can be resolved.

Registration Holds
Students should periodically check SSOL to ensure their student record is accurate and that no holds are in place. If a hold is present on a student's account, it will likely prevent the student from taking any registration action (e.g., adding or dropping a class, change of grading options, etc.). Only the office that put the hold in place may release the hold, and contact information for the specific office(s) will be listed alongside the hold. Lifting a hold may take more than 24 hours to process, so students should reconcile their holds well in advance of registration appointments.

Registration for Dual Degree Candidates
Enrollment in a dual degree program requires special attention and planning to ensure that all academic and tuition payment requirements are met according to students' specific academic plans. At Columbia Public Health, Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) works directly with dual degree students to map academic plans, assist with registrations and cross-registration, and to ensure students' successful progression through the dual degree program. Dual degree students are strongly advised to consult with their academic advisors and the financial aid offices at Columbia Public Health and their partner schools each term to ensure they are meeting the academic and tuition requirements for their designated degrees. Students are only eligible to participate in Dual Degree programs if they were admitted to Columbia Public Health as a dual degree candidate; dual degree status cannot be added after enrollment at Columbia Public Health.

Academic Calendar
The academic calendar should be reviewed regularly, as students are responsible for all information therein and are held accountable to its dates and deadlines. Students will find required information in the calendar related to both academic and financial deadlines, due-dates, and important occasions at Columbia Public Health. Change of program (add/drop) periods, University observed holidays, and graduation application submission dates are also in the academic calendar.

Change of Program Period
The change of program periods in the fall and spring semesters run from the first day of classes through the Wednesday or Thursday of the second week of instruction. Summer change of program periods are shorter and vary by summer terms 1 and 2. Specific dates can be found on the academic calendar. A late registration fee is charged to students who do not register for classes prior to the start of the change of program period. No adjustment of tuition will be made for individual courses dropped after the last day of a change of program period.

Students should review change of program and late registration dates before making any modifications to their schedules, as fees may apply.
Registration Procedures
Before You Register
Please check Student Services Online (SSOL) for holds before registering. Students with holds on their accounts will see brief descriptions of the holds and the contact information for the offices issuing the holds. Students should first contact the issuing office to resolve a hold. Unless listed as the issuing office, the Office of Student Affairs cannot lift another office’s hold. Please contact StARS should you have further questions.

Helpful Hints for Registration via SSOL
• View your registration appointment times by clicking on Registration Appointments in SSOL.
• View the Public Health course directory for class listings. We do not recommend using the Columbia University directory for Public Health course information, as the most comprehensive and up to date information is located through the Public Health course directory. You can also find course evaluations for each course offered in the semester.
• Students should review their respective academic plans (using Stellic) to ensure they are taking classes necessary to complete their degrees as prescribed.

Adding or Dropping a Class
Students should carefully review their degree requirements and credit policies prior to adding or dropping classes. The processes by which students adjust their class schedules change as the semester progresses. Below you will find a guide to that progression. Students should direct registration questions to their department contacts and/or Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS).

Change of Program Period
During the change of program period, students may adjust Columbia Public Health classes in their schedules via SSOL as they would during their registration appointments. No adjustment of tuition will be made for individual courses dropped after the close of the change of program period.

After Change of Program Period
Following the change of program period, students must obtain approval to either add a course to their existing schedule or drop a course already on their schedule. From the close of the change of program period through the “Deadline to make changes - Full semester”, students use the Post Change of Program Period Add/Drop tool in SSOL to request approval for these changes. The Office of the University Registrar created a student user guide (pdf) for the Post Add/Drop tool in SSOL. Requests will be electronically directed to students’ department contacts and StARS for review. Students will be notified via email if approval to add/drop is granted and must return to SSOL to complete the transaction.

Registration Form Requests
Once the above options close, students will need to complete a registration form and obtain approval from both their faculty advisor/department contact and Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) to add/drop courses. Program changes must be emailed to StARS from a student’s @columbia account to verify authenticity. Please also make note of the dates in the academic calendar after which courses may no longer be dropped without the notation of Unofficial Withdrawal (UW) on one’s transcript. StARS reserves the right to permit late adds/drops.

Courses can be dropped only through the procedures described above, and only StARS may assign the designation of UW to a course. Failing to attend class or providing unofficial notification to the instructor does not constitute dropping a course. Students who stop attending class without dropping or officially withdrawing will be assigned a grade by the instructor.
Withdrawing from all Classes in a Semester
Registered students, who decide to withdraw from all classes in a semester, must contact Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS) to initiate the withdrawal process. None of the processes described in Adding or Dropping a Class (above) will allow students to drop all classes and fully withdraw from the University. Students who plan to return to their studies must also initiate a Leave of Absence with StARS or the Office of Student Affairs (OSA). Please see the LOA Section for more details.

Registration Resources

Stellic
Columbia Public Health utilizes the third-party platform Stellic as a resource for students to forecast and manage their academic plans; for faculty to utilize as an advising tool; and for staff to approve adjustments to academic plans and audit a student's record for graduation. Students will be oriented to Stellic in their semester of matriculation, and additional resources and policies pertaining to Stellic will be made available to students at that time.

Cross-Registration
One of the advantages of attending Columbia University is the ability to integrate one’s educational experience at Columbia Public Health with coursework from other schools at the University. Depending on degree requirements and in consultation with one’s advisor, Columbia Public Health students are encouraged to take appropriate courses from across the University. Cross-registration must be completed during the change of program period and cannot be done via SSOL. MPH students may not cross-register during their first semester (the MPH Core). Undergraduate courses and language courses never count toward Columbia Public Health degrees.

Please note the divergence of procedures for cross-registration at Teachers College versus all other Columbia schools and programs.

- Complete a Columbia Public Health Registration Form electronically or print/fill/scan.
- Get email approval from your academic advisor or departmental contact to apply the cross-registered course to your degree program. (Your academic advisor's/departmental contact’s signature goes on the "Term Program Approved By" line of the registration form.)
- Obtain permission from the school that offers the course(s) for which you are cross-registering. It is important to note that the process of obtaining permission to enroll in a course as a cross-registrant is overseen by the other school not by Columbia Public Health. Permission might rest with the instructor and/or the student affairs office at the school sponsoring the course(s). It is important to contact the school about its individual process and how you will demonstrate permission to enroll in this course.
- Forward your permission – whether email correspondence or online form – and completed Columbia Public Health Registration Form, as well as any other email correspondences used in lieu of signatures, to Columbia Public Health Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) and cc the same academic advisor or departmental contact who gave you permission cross-register. StARS will submit the form to Registrar’s Office on your behalf during the add/drop period.
- Ensure proper registration of course(s) on Student Services Online (SSOL). Remember: StARS does not submit cross-registration forms to the Registrar until the add/drop period begins. If registration is not visible on SSOL 48 hours later, contact StARS.

Continued on next page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross Registering at Columbia University</th>
<th>Cross Registering at Teachers College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students should keep faculty updated throughout the cross-registrations process, as faculty often can give students access to course materials in CourseWorks or similar platforms prior to the completion of the cross-registration transaction.</td>
<td>• Once visible as registered in SSOL, wait approximately another 24-48 hours for information to transfer to Teachers College (TC). Students should keep faculty updated throughout the cross-registrations process, as faculty often can give students access to course materials in CourseWorks or similar platforms prior to the completion of the SSOL/TC registration transaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The transaction is complete when registered course(s) can be reviewed on SSOL and accessed via CourseWorks or similar platform, except for courses whose faculty refrain from using any digital learning management systems (uncommon). Please be sure to review with faculty how they conduct their class and provide course content. (Students can neither add nor drop non-public health courses via SSOL.)</td>
<td>• The transaction is complete when registered course(s) can be reviewed on MyTC, except for courses whose faculty refrain from using any digital learning management systems (uncommon). Please be sure to review with faculty how they conduct their class and provide course content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If unable to login or if course content is not visible, contact the Teachers College registrar for assistance, as Columbia Public Health does not have access to the TC system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measures for Academic Success

Good academic standing is most simply defined as remaining continuously registered, making progress toward completing all degree requirements as prescribed by one’s program and department, and keeping a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better. **Students must be in good academic standing to receive their degrees.** Good academic standing should not be conflated with satisfactory academic progress (SAP). While achieving SAP is a necessary component of maintaining one’s good academic standing, a student may be considered not maintaining good academic standing for reasons separate from SAP.

**Academic Advising**

Students are assigned academic advisors by their departments upon admission and are strongly encouraged to meet regularly with their advisors. Faculty advisors are assigned to ensure informed choices, reasonable uniformity within areas of concentration, and optimal utilization of Columbia University and Mailman School of Public Health resources. Academic advisors are listed in the General Information section of students’ Academic Profile in SSOL. If the listing indicates “None on file” or if a student wishes to change advisors, students should reach out to their respective departmental contacts.

**Grading System at Columbia Public Health**

The below policies apply only to Public Health courses. Students who cross-register for classes at other Columbia University schools should refer to the policies of the other schools. Columbia Public Health does not dictate a standard grading scheme, and **faculty ultimately have discretion in setting their grade ranges.**

**Letter Grades**

Columbia Public Health uses a letter grade system. Grades are: A, B, C, with + and - as applicable, and F. Only A-C and F grades are factored into students’ GPA. Grades are defined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>Reserved for highly exceptional achievement.</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent. Outstanding achievement.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Excellent work, close to outstanding.</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Very good. Solid achievement expected of most graduate students.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Acceptable achievement. Minimum GPA <strong>required</strong> for a master's degree.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Relatively acceptable achievement when balanced with excellent/good grades that will maintain a GPA of 3.0 or greater.</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Below what is generally expected of graduate students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Persistent marks at this level and below will result in action up to and including removal from the degree program.</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unacceptable performance; no credits earned.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Minimally Acceptable Performance**

**Students with GPAs less than 2.5** following their first semester at Columbia Public Health will have their records reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee and **will be considered for removal from the degree program.** Students with GPAs between 2.5 and 3.0 will be reviewed by way of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) audits at the conclusion of each semester.
Be proactive and reach out to TAs, faculty, OSA, your department liaison, and other supportive services if you are concerned about your academic performance. The Offices of Student Affairs (OSA), Educational Initiatives (OEI), and StARS monitor student performance, and intervention efforts are put in play when a student is identified as not meeting academic expectations.

**Remediation and/or Reconsideration**

Each student’s individual circumstances are taken into consideration when evaluating what remediation, if any, may be required in order for a student to return to good academic standing. The Offices of Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) and Educational Initiatives (OEI) consult with faculty and others to present a summary of possible next steps to the Academic Standards Committee. Thereafter, students will be informed of their individual remediation plan.

Students’ remediation plans and continued success in their degree programs are contingent upon a marked improvement in their cumulative GPA. Students whose GPAs are far below what is generally expected of graduate students (i.e., less than 2.5 GPA) will be considered for removal from their degree programs; alternatively, a student may be encouraged to take a leave of absence for at least one semester and complete a remediation plan while not enrolled at Columbia Public Health. Please remember the Office of Student Affairs – specifically, Student Support Services – is staffed to support students through challenging circumstances and help them return to a place of success at Columbia Public Health. Should you have any pressing questions or concerns, please contact msph-osa@columbia.edu.

**F Grades**

Students who receive an F grade usually may not repeat the failed class unless it is a requirement for the completion of one’s degree program. In cases when the failed course is required, the student must re-register for the course and obtain a satisfactory grade. The F grade remains on the student’s transcript even after the course is retaken for a passing grade. In instances when a student fails a pre-requisite course, the student may not begin the subsequent course until re-sitting the failed course for a passing grade.

Repeating a course may require a student to take additional credits beyond what is allowed under the flat-rate tuition or a student may need to re-take the failed course in an additional semester; costs associated with these circumstances are the responsibility of the student. **Students who earn more than one F grade – whether in a single semester or across multiple semesters – may be terminated from their degree program.**

**Pass/Fail Grading Option**

The pass/fail grading option (P/F) is not available for required courses. Some courses, at the discretion of the instructor and according to course content, are graded only on a pass/fail basis. The P/F option may also be elected by students in selected courses with permission of the instructor and the student’s advisor. This option is designed to permit registration for credit in courses relevant to but outside of a student’s primary area of study. For applicable classes, students may change their grade option up to the deadline dates indicated in the academic calendar. P grades do not factor into students’ GPA. If you receive an F grade for course that is P/F, it will count towards your GPA (for more information, please visit the F grades section). Students may not exceed nine (9) credits total of Pass grades.

**Auditing (R)**

Auditing a course generates the same tuition charges as it would if the course was taken for a grade or P/F; credits assigned the notation of R count toward one’s cumulative maximum credits allowed under flat-rate tuition programs. **R credits shall neither apply toward degree requirements nor factor into one’s GPA.**
(Degree seeking students may take no more than six (6) credits worth of Rs and must petition their faculty and StARS to do so, as students do not have access within SSOL to select R as a grade option.). Requests for auditing a course must also be reviewed and approved by the home department of the course.

**Other Transcript Notations**

**Unofficial Withdrawal (UW)**
Students may drop a class without notation on their transcripts up to the deadline dates indicated in the academic calendar. After these deadlines, the notation of UW is assigned to students whose names appear on the grade sheet but who have never attended or have discontinued attendance prior to the due date of substantive work. The course instructor, in consultation with Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS), will determine what constitutes substantive work for a particular course and apply the definition consistently within a given class. The assignment of a UW is not a foregone conclusion, and a letter grade based on completed work may be assigned instead. **Fully withdrawing from one’s degree program requires intervention by StARS or OSA.**

**Incomplete Notation (IN)**
Incomplete Notations (INs) are extensions intended to be used sparingly and only when a student has met the participation expectations of a course and if the faculty has determined that remaining coursework can reasonably be completed in the few weeks immediately following the deadline for submitting grades. Students must consult with the instructor, obtain signatures, and submit a Request for Incomplete Form to Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS) prior to the conclusion of the term. INs recorded in SSOL without a completed Request for Incomplete Form on file with StARS are changed to UWs.

The dates by which student Incomplete Notations must be reconciled are published in the Academic Calendar and reproduced below. Faculty in consultation with students are responsible for determining an appropriate deadline for IN coursework anytime between the end of the term and the end of the IN notation period. In rare circumstances, extensions to the Incomplete Notation period may be granted by StARS in consultation with the faculty member. Extensions must be requested before the end of the Incomplete Notation period. Extensions are not guaranteed. If a student holds an IN for a course that is a pre-requisite for a subsequent course, the student may not begin the subsequent course until the IN is resolved. INs unresolved by their deadlines will convert to the final letter-grade earned with missing materials accounted for, which may be an F.

Students should carry no more than one IN at a time. If more are needed, the student should be in immediate contact with StARS, prior to the end of the term. Two or more INs on a students transcript will likely prevent them from progressing into their practicum or additional coursework until the INs are resolved.

Students who carry INs beyond their semester of expected graduation must maintain continuous registration with the School until they resolve their INs. In general, students may not take leaves of absence after their final semester to avoid this continued registration. Dual degree students may be exempt from this requirement depending on whether they return to their partner school following their residency at Columbia Public Health.

**LENGTH OF INCOMPLETE NOTATION PERIOD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester of Incomplete</th>
<th>Deadline for Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Week 6 of the subsequent Spring semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Week 5 of Summer A term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Week 7 of the subsequent Fall semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Credit Pending (CP)
Assigned in courses which regularly involve research or projects extending beyond the end of the term. Until such time as a passing or failing grade is submitted, satisfactory progress is implied. The designation of CP may also be used in instances when a grade is in dispute or during the investigation of alleged academic misconduct. CPs and INs are not interchangeable, and students may not request a CP.

Grade Notification
Students may view their grades in SSOL. Students’ academic records are also available to their faculty advisors and the Offices of Enrollment Management (OEM) and Student Affairs (OSA) for counseling/advising purposes.

Grade Grievance Procedures
The following four steps represent the complete process of grade grievance. The majority of cases will be resolved informally in steps one and two. Those remaining unresolved after these initial steps can proceed to steps three and four.

- **Step One:** Questions about a course grade should be discussed first with the course instructor. If the grade questions remain unresolved after discussing with the faculty member, proceed to Step Two.
- **Step Two:** Questions about a course grade should be discussed with the program head or department chair, if necessary.
- **Step Three:** In the case of a serious, unresolved disagreement between a student and instructor concerning grades, the student must submit an official email of complaint to the Office of Student Affairs. In general, only grades of B- or below will be considered for this process, and students must have met the basic requirements of the course in question (as outlined in the course syllabus). The Dean of Students (or designee) will make an initial determination of the merits of the case and whether to trigger a committee.
- **Step Four:** If after the initial determination, a formal inquiry is moved forward, the Dean of Students will bring the case before the Academic Standards Committee to review. The committee will decide whether the grade warrants a change either to a higher grade, a lower grade, or if the grade should remain the same. The Office of Student Affairs will notify the student of the committee's decision and the student will have five (5) business days to respond to the decision. If the student does not agree with the decision, the student may appeal to the Dean of Students who will then review the case with the Academic Dean. The decision of the appeal is final.

Termination Due to Persistent Poor Academic Standing
Students who find themselves in poor academic standing in more than one semester may be terminated from their degree programs. A student terminated from their degree program will receive an official letter from the Academic Standards Committee (via email) and shall meet with the Dean of Students to discuss further options. If the student disagrees with the decision of termination, the student may appeal to the Vice Dean for Education within fifteen (15) business days of meeting with the Dean of Students. The Vice Dean for Education will review the appeal and may consult with other colleagues in this review. The decision of the appeal is final and will be sent to the student and the student's department within thirty (30) business days of the appeal request.
Adjustments to Academic Plans

Transfer of Credit

MS and DrPH

Master of Science (MS) and Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree programs do not accept transfer credits.

MPH and MHA

- Transfer credits cannot have been counted or awarded towards another degree or credential.
- Transfer credits must be from classes in which a student received a letter grade of B+ or better.
- Transfer credits in no way reduce the number of residency units required for the degree, and all other degree requirements remain in effect.
- The Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) team gives final approval of whether transfer credits may be counted toward one’s degree program.
- Transfer credits must be from an accredited school or program in public health.

Master of Public Health (MPH)

- A request to transfer credits must be made via email to one’s academic advisor or department coordinator. Requests must also be accompanied by adequate documentation, which may include an official transcript, course syllabus, etc.
- A request to transfer credits may be submitted only after a student’s first semester of study at Columbia Public Health but must be submitted before a student’s final semester of study.
- If approved, a maximum of nine (9) credits may be transferred toward the Columbia MPH and a maximum three (3) credits for the Accelerated MPH.
- **Transfer credits may not be applied toward the Core curriculum.**
- MPH students completing their degrees as part of a dual degree or the 4+1 program may not transfer credits beyond those already allowed per the stipulations of the respective programs.
- Questions should be emailed to one’s academic advisor and/or **Student Academic Records & Standards.**

Master of Health Administration (MHA)

- Additionally, transfer credits may be from another accredited, masters-level degree school or PhD program approved by the MHA program advisor.
- A request to transfer credits must be submitted in writing and accompanied by a course syllabus; the syllabus must be approved by the MHA academic advisor, and it is within the advisor’s discretion to determine whether the course meets the standards of the MHA curriculum.
- Additionally, a request to transfer credits must be accompanied by an official transcript from the institution at which the credits were earned.
- A request to transfer credits should be made prior to a student’s first semester of study.
- If approved, a maximum of six (6) credits may be transferred toward the MHA.
- Questions and requests should be emailed to the **Director of MHA and Executive Programs (HPM).**

Changes after Matriculation

Prior to matriculation, change requests should be made to ph-admit@columbia.edu.
**Dual Degree Candidacy**
Students must declare their dual degree candidacy and be admitted to their partner schools *prior* to their enrollment at Columbia Public Health.

**Declaring or Switching Certificates**
*Columbia MPH students only.*
Students who still need to declare a certificate or who are interested in switching certificates must do so during Certificate Open Enrollment. The Office of Educational Initiatives (OEI) holds certificate information sessions prior to the open enrollment during which students will receive information on where to learn more about and how to apply to different certificates. Look to Transmission and CourseWorks announcements for details on dates, times, and locations. Students may always explore the certificates at any time. Questions about certificates should be directed to OEI.

Certificate switches are not guaranteed and may have financial and academic implications. Some certificates have specific academic pre-requisites, require completion of a supplemental application, or can only combined in certain MPH degree departments.
Satisfactory Academic Progress

The following policy on satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is applicable to all students at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health (hereafter referred to as “the School” or “Columbia Public Health”). The policy is applied equally to students irrespective of whether a student receives Federal Student Aid (FSA). To comply with applicable regulations and for the sake of brevity, the School provides this single SAP policy which includes Federal regulations specific to students receiving FSA. Students are expected to filter out the sections of this policy which may not pertain to their specific circumstances and/or communicate any questions to the School’s Office of Enrollment Management (OEM).

When evaluating students’ academic progress, the School checks a qualitative measure (GPA), as well as their completion of coursework at the required pace of their program, within its maximum timeframe. These evaluation standards are discussed in more detail below. Students are considered not making SAP if they fall below any of the above-mentioned standards. Students who do not achieve SAP are at risk for losing their FSA eligibility; students whose academic progress falls far below the minimum standards may be terminated from their degree programs. A process for appealing SAP decisions is also discussed below.

Compilation of Federal Regulations (CFR)

34 CFR 668.16(e) – Administrative Capability
Columbia University has the administrative capability to adequately administer the Satisfactory Academic Policy (SAP) program.

34 CFR 668.32(f) – Student Eligibility
General Federal Methodology: All students applying for financial assistance are required to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for determination of their federal eligibility. Notification of the school’s academic requirements is made in person and via electronic and paper formats. These requirements are as strict as the school’s academic progress policy for students who are not receiving assistance under the Title IV and Higher Education Act programs.

34 CFR 668.34 – Student Assistance General Provisions
This policy sets reasonable satisfactory academic progress policy standards for determining whether an otherwise eligible student is making satisfactory academic progress in one’s educational program and may receive assistance under the Title IV, and Higher Education Act programs.

At least as strict…
Academic progress requirements at the Columbia Public Health are identical for all students, irrespective of their financial aid application or eligibility status or whether they receive Title IV aid.

Consistent Application
The Office of Enrollment Management ensures the consistent application of SAP standards to all Federal Student Aid (FSA) programs and FSA recipients within institutionally defined categories of students.

Regular Evaluations
Students are ultimately responsible for tracking and maintaining their own academic progress and ensuring they have met all University, School, and departmental requirements (both academic and co-curricular). It is understood that life circumstances may prevent some students from meeting these minimum standards, so
systems and services are in place to put students back in good standing. The Office of Enrollment Management (OEM) conducts SAP evaluations at the conclusion of each fall and spring term, and makes recommendations intended to return students to good academic standing. Students not making SAP should expect notifications from OEM in the immediate weeks following the deadline for faculty to submit grades (see the academic calendar). For certain programs requiring summer enrollment (e.g., Executive programs and the Part-Time Management program), an additional evaluation period may be conducted in mid to late August.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)**

The School uses a letter grade system to evaluate students on a 4.0 scale. Students are expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of no less than 3.0000. (SSOL calculates GPA out to four decimal places. The School will use this number when determining SAP and will not round up. For brevity, GPA throughout this document and elsewhere may be cited with fewer or no decimal points.) **The School will not confer degrees of students whose GPA is below 3.0.**

The School will notify students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 that they are not achieving SAP and will communicate this status to Student Financial Services for those students who receive Federal Student Aid (FSA). For students receiving FSA, not achieving SAP for the first time will place the student into a Warning status; financial aid will not be disrupted in the subsequent semester. The full implications of a financial aid warning are discussed in its own section of the policy below. Irrespective of whether they are FSA eligible, **all students whose GPA falls below 3.0 are subject to interventions from the School as noted below:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.0000 and above</td>
<td>Achieving SAP</td>
<td>No intervention as long as pace of completion is 100% (see following section).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9999 – 2.5000</td>
<td>Not achieving SAP</td>
<td>Formal warning. Meeting with department academic liaison (or their designee) to develop an academic plan for the remaining semester(s) of one's program to assist in returning to good academic standing. If a student persists at this level, a separation or termination or degree candidacy may occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4999 and below</td>
<td>Not achieving SAP</td>
<td>Formal warning. Meeting with department academic liaison (or their designee) to discuss whether it is prudent to separate from the School either temporarily (leave of absence) or permanently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Maximum Time Frame (Credits) and Pace of Completion**

The degree programs at the Columbia Public Health are intended to be completed as prescribed within their respective academic plans. The **time frame** within which students are expected to complete their degree programs is bookended by the minimum credits required for one's degree program and the maximum number of credits a student is allowed to attempt as a degree-seeking candidate. The **pace** by which students are expected to progress through their degree programs is a percentage value calculated by a student’s minimum required credits divided by the maximum number of credits a student is allowed to attempt as a degree-seeking candidate. Students whose pace of completion in any given semester falls under what is indicated in the table below are not maintaining satisfactory progress.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flat-rate degree programs</th>
<th>Minimum credits required/Maximum flat-rate credits</th>
<th>Credits allowed in excess of the flat-rate*</th>
<th>Maximum Time Frame (credits)</th>
<th>Pace of Completion (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Health Administration (MHA)</td>
<td>55/60</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive MHA</td>
<td>45/60</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Public Health (MPH)</td>
<td>52/60</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Time MPH</td>
<td>42/42</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Degree w/ MPH</td>
<td>42/45</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accelerated MPH</td>
<td>42/45</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+1 MPH</td>
<td>45/60</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per-credit degree programs</th>
<th>Minimum credits required for degree</th>
<th>Additional allowed</th>
<th>Maximum Time Frame (credits)</th>
<th>Pace of Completion (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part Time Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Health Administration (MHA)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Public Health (MPH) Employee-Learner (with OEM approval)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science (MS) Biostatistics: Clinical Research Methods; Patient Oriented Research; Pharmaceutical Statistics; Statistical Genetics; Theory &amp; Methods</td>
<td>30-36</td>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Health Sciences</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology; Population and Family Health; Sociomedical Sciences</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online MS (offered only within EPI)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For flat-rate degree programs, when circumstances warrant a deviation from one’s academic plan, the maximum time frame allows students approximately an additional semester’s worth of credits in excess of...
the cumulative maximum afforded under the flat-rate. For per-credit degree programs, the number of additional credits is based on the minimum credits required for the degree.

* Additional tuition charges may apply.

The School will notify students whose pace of completion falls below the threshold indicated in the above tables that they are not achieving SAP and will communicate this status to Student Financial Services for those students who receive Federal Student Aid (FSA). For students receiving FSA, not achieving SAP for the first time will place the student into a Warning status; financial aid will not be disrupted in the subsequent semester. The full implications of a financial aid warning are discussed in its own section of the policy below. Irrespective of whether they are FSA eligible, all students whose pace of completion falls below 100 percent are subject to interventions from the School as noted below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pace (percent)</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Well done!</td>
<td>No intervention as long as GPA is 3.0 or greater (see preceding section).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99 – ##</td>
<td>Variable based on degree program; see chart above</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formal notice. All instances in which students’ pace fall below 100% will necessitate an approved academic plan. Students in this range are expected to return to 100% pace prior to the subsequent SAP review period as indicated in the notice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>## and below</td>
<td>Variable based on degree program; see chart above</td>
<td>Not achieving SAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formal warning. Meeting with department academic liaison (or their designee) to discuss whether it is prudent to separate from the School either temporarily (leave of absence) or permanently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Effect/Treatment of “Atypical” Courses/Situations**

The Office of Enrollment Management (OEM), in conjunction with the School’s academic departments, audits students’ academic progress each semester to ensure students meet the benchmarks of their respective degree programs. In addition to GPA, pace of completion, and maximum time frame, other atypical courses and/or situations may affect one’s satisfactory academic progress. Below is a non-exhaustive list of the most common atypical courses and/or situations; their respective effects on SAP; and how students may resolve situations disruptive to SAP.

**Incompletes**

The implications of carrying INs into a new semester can be understood in terms of one’s pace of completion. Incompletes are not considered earned credits until a grade is submitted for the outstanding class(es), and they necessarily push a student’s pace of completion below 100 percent. Carrying any number of INs will incur some intervention by StARS. If a student holds an IN for a course which is a pre-requisite for a subsequent course, the student may not register for the subsequent course until the IN is resolved.

INs unresolved by their deadlines will convert to the letter-grade earned based on submitted materials, which may be an F. Faculty may elect to allow a UW in place of an F only if substantive work remains incomplete.

**Unofficial Withdrawal**

The implications of an unofficial withdrawal (UW) can be understood in terms of one’s pace of completion. UWs factor into a student’s attempted credit, which means that a student’s pace of completion will be below 100 percent if they receive a UW. Unlike INs, which ultimately resolve to a letter grade, UWs are a permanent fixture of a student’s transcript and can have longer lasting implications upon one’s SAP. Carrying
any number of UWs will incur some intervention by StARS. The SAP implications of a UW may only be rectified by retaking the course for an acceptable letter grade or by developing an acceptable academic plan with one’s department.

**Full Withdrawal from all Classes in a Term**
Students must take active steps in order to withdraw fully from a degree program, and this process may not be completed via SSOL. Simply not registering for classes does not equate to a withdrawal from one’s degree program. Similarly, if a registered student then decides to withdraw from all classes in a term, the student still has not effectively withdrawn from the degree program. **In order to fully withdraw, students must contact Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS).** The University Registrar determines the [refund rate](#) for full withdrawal; the School determines the deadlines for dropping classes without notations on one’s transcript. These deadlines are the same for fully withdrawing from a degree program as they are for dropping an individual class; the implications for SAP are also the same.

**Course Repetitions**
Students may not repeat courses for credit toward their degrees or to improve their GPAs, except in cases when a student has received an F or qualified for a UW in a required course. In these cases, the student must re-register for the course and obtain a satisfactory grade. The F grade or UW remains on the student’s transcript even after the course is retaken for a passing grade. While the new grade will not replace the F/UW grade on one’s transcript, StARS will informally recalculate a student’s GPA – for the purpose of determining SAP – without considering the F. (UWs do not calculate into GPA, but they do factor into the total credits attempted, which may impact a student’s pace of completion and/or maximum time frame.) Repeated grades count toward the maximum number of attempted credits toward the degree. Repeated courses may incur additional tuition and fees.

**Dual Degrees**
Columbia Public Health evaluates the satisfactory academic progress of students only while in residency at the School. All courses taken while in residency at the School will be considered when calculating a student’s GPA, pace of completion, and maximum time frame.

**Advanced Standing**
Advanced standing is not applicable for master’s students and, therefore, has no implication for SAP at Columbia Public Health.

**Transfers of Credits from Other Schools or Institutions**
Transfer credits do not impact the cumulative GPA, but they do count as both attempted and completed credits. Please note that not all programs accept transfer credits.

**Changes of Degree Program/Deviations from Academic Plan**
Only students making SAP will be allowed to change their degree program. Students who change programs are held to the same standards for quantitative and qualitative measures and maximum time frame as students who originally matriculated in the program.

**Emergency Declarations and/or University-Wide Changes**
In the event of a local, state, or nation-wide emergency, and/or when Columbia University deems circumstances necessary to implements a [pass/fail grading system](#) University-wide:

- Any courses graded as pass/fail will be counted in the total number of attempted hours used to determine students’ maximum time frame and pace of completion for their respective degree programs.
• Passing grades: When a course is successfully completed and given a grade of P, the credits are added to the total number of attempted and earned credits hours; however, P grades do not factor into the GPA calculation.
• Failing grades: When a course is not successfully completed and the student is given a grade of F, the F is treated no differently than under typical circumstances and will negatively impact a student’s progression and GPA.
• Any student who fails a SAP assessment as a result of a qualifying emergency will be allowed to submit an appeal.
• Any and all treatment of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) updates and changes will abide by existing statutory regulation on SAP, any temporary statutory relief provided by Congress, and any temporary guidance provided by the US Department of Education (ED).

**Immediate Impact**
For students whose return to good academic standing is reliant upon achieving a “target GPA” and are, in turn, stymied by P grades that do not factor into the GPA calculation:

- The Offices of Enrollment Management (OEM) and Student Affairs (OSA), in conjunction with the academic departments and their representative(s), will evaluate the circumstances of individual students whose qualitative measures (GPA) cannot be assessed numerically.
- Academic departments will make recommendations to the Academic Standards Committee as to whether a student would have reasonably met the “target GPA” necessary to achieve SAP.

**Residual Impact**
For students whose quantitative measures of satisfactory academic progress may be negatively impacted by the University-wide policy changes in response to COVID-19:

- While there may not be an immediate effect to the Spring 2020 term, students who fail the maximum time frame component of SAP in Spring 2020 – or a subsequent term – may require special consideration due to a prior disruption of their academic standing as a result of COVID-19 in the Spring 2020 and any other impacted term.
- Any student who fails or withdraws from a Spring 2020 course as a result of a qualifying emergency would not have this course count negatively toward their maximum timeframe calculation.
- Per the CARES act Section 3509, “an institution of higher education may, as a result of a qualifying emergency, exclude from the quantitative component of the calculation any attempted credits that were not completed by such student without requiring an appeal by such student.”
- Any student who, as a result of a qualifying emergency, fails or withdraws from a course for the Spring 2020 term would not have this course count negatively toward their pace of progression.

**Manual Adjustments due to System Limitations**
In cases in which there are any other limitations or nuance of a student’s academic records in any Columbia University or Mailman School of Public Health systems in use for the storage of academic records, such that what is reflected in the system(s) does not fully represent what Columbia Public Health is utilizing for the measuring of academic progress in accordance with its own academic policy, the Office of Enrollment Management will accept the decision of advisors in the student’s academic department and/or the Office of Student Affairs as overriding the data in the system(s) of record. This may include, but is not limited to, Executive MHA and MPH students in their first two semesters of registration, whose academic calendars differs from those of other degree programs; a student who re-registered for and passed a class for which a grade of F or UW was assigned the first time the student took the class, and the student’s GPA must be hand-recalculated; a student registered for sequential courses, which by necessity require the assignment of a CP until the student completes the entire series of courses; etc.
Status Definitions

Columbia Public Health School-Specific Definitions

The Columbia Mailman School of Public Health aligns its own satisfactory academic progress policies with those required under Federal regulations for students receiving Federal Student Aid (FSA). The School has made efforts to use terminology that applies to all students irrespective of whether they receive FSA, and this section is meant to provide clear definitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status (all students)</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Well done!</strong></td>
<td>GPA: No intervention as long as pace of completion is 100%. Pace: No intervention as long as GPA is 3.0 or greater.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pending and Formal notice</strong></td>
<td>Pace only: Student has completed less than 100% but greater than the acceptable percentage of the cumulative attempted credits based on one’s respective degree program as indicated in the Maximum Time Frame (Credits) and Pace of Completion section above. Students in this range receive a notice including steps and deadlines for resolving incomplete credits. Not resolving one’s pace as indicated in the formal notice will necessarily place a student in the “not achieving SAP” status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress</strong></td>
<td>Minimally, students with less-than-acceptable GPAs and/or pace, or students with multiple Fs and/or UWs are considered not achieving SAP. These students are given a formal warning and instructed to meet with their department academic liaison (or designee) to discuss whether it is prudent to separate from the School either temporarily (leave of absence) or permanently; and/or to develop an academic plan for the remaining semester(s) of one’s program to assist in returning to good academic standing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal warning</strong></td>
<td>This status is intended to align with the FSA definition of Warning (below). All formal warnings include language for students receiving Federal student aid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Federal Student Aid-Specific Definitions

Certain status definitions are, however, applicable only to students who receive FSA and who find themselves not making SAP. These FSA-specific definitions are as follows:

**Warning**

Columbia Public Health conducts its SAP reviews each fall and spring semester. Doing so allows the School to place students who receive FSA into a Warning status the first time they do not achieve SAP. Disbursement of FSA is allowed without disruption. Students will receive an email notifying them of this Warning status; the accompanying School-specific status, which may indicate School-level intervention; and the next steps for returning to and maintaining SAP.

Students in an FSA Warning status must return to SAP in the next semester of enrollment, or they will be placed in a Probation status (see below). It is possible for a student to not achieve SAP in one semester (Warning), return to SAP in the subsequent semester, and then be placed into a Waning status again in the third semester should SAP not be achieved.

**Probation**

A student will always first receive an FSA Warning prior to being placed into a Probation status. A student who does not return to SAP following the semester of FSA Warning will automatically be placed into a Probation status and the disbursement of FSA will be held until the student submits a successful SAP appeal. Students will receive an email notifying them of this Probation status; the accompanying School-specific status, which may indicate School-level intervention; and the steps for submitting an appeal and, ultimately, returning to and maintaining SAP. The process for completing an appeal is discussed in a following
section, and its intention is to develop an academic plan with students in order to put them on a trajectory toward the successful completion of their degrees.

Some academic plans may take more than one semester for a student to return to SAP. It is possible for students to remain in a Probation status for successive semesters, as long as they keep to their academic plans. Even in these cases, a student’s FSA will be held until the academic plan can be reassessed based on the student’s performance during the first semester of probation.

Students who are placed into an FSA Probation status and who do not complete the appeal process will not receive aid until they return to SAP and until the School conducts their next, scheduled SAP review.

**Provisions for a Financial Aid Warning Status**

Columbia Public Health conducts its SAP reviews each fall and spring semester. Doing so allows the School to place students who receive FSA into a Warning status the first time they do not achieve SAP.

**Appeals**

Students who have not met SAP standards in consecutive semesters are determined to be ineligible for Federal Student Aid (FSA) as a result of a Probation status. Students do have the opportunity and are strongly encouraged to appeal the decision to Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS). Columbia Public Health neither puts restrictions on who may appeal nor for what reason an appeal may be submitted.

The appeal process includes a meeting between the student, a representative from the student's department, and a member of the StARS and/or Dean of Student’s teams. (Should a student not be able to meet in person, this meeting may be conducted via a Zoom web-conference.) Prior to that meeting, students must prepare the following:

- A proposed academic plan for all remaining semesters
- A brief reflection upon the aggravating factors that led to the unsatisfactory academic progress and the steps to be taken to return to good standing by the conclusion of subsequent semester.

Any additional details pertaining to an appeal will be included in the email notification students receive informing them of their status.

**Academic Plans**

Students complete their academic plans with guidance from and/or stipulations set forth by their department. Departmental representatives review students’ plans with Student Academic Records and Standards. Academic plans may be recommended in many cases but are required of all students who appeal their SAP decisions.

Students with a successful appeal must meet the terms set forth in their academic plan in order to maintain federal aid eligibility.

**Restoring Eligibility**

Students may restore eligibility for FSA by successfully completing an appeal or by returning their SAP status to acceptable levels.
Notifications

Students who are not meeting SAP standards must be notified of this status, how it impacts financial aid eligibility, their right to appeal, instructions on the appeal procedure, and how the results of the appeal procedure may impact their eligibility.

Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) will notify all students who are not meeting SAP standards. This notification will be sent via email to the student’s @cumc.columbia.edu email account, which is consistent with the Columbia Public Health email policy. Students should expect notification approximately two weeks following the deadline for faculty to submit grades.
Separating from the School and/or University

Leaves of Absence and Reinstatement from Leave
All students who will not continue with their registration but who intend to return to their studies must apply for a formal Leave of Absence (LOA). Any request for a leave must be accompanied by a Leave of Absence form. All students must meet with their department, secure department approval, and return required forms to the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) or Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS).

While on leave, it is expected that students will remove themselves from the greater-Columbia University community and will not spend time on campus; therefore, students’ IDs will be deactivated until their LOAs formal end and they return to their studies. Students may not earn course credits during semesters while on LOA.

Leave of absence requests are generally approved for two semesters with a maximum of four semesters. Exceptions to these limits will be considered on a case-by-case basis though a petition to the student’s department and final approval by the Dean of Students. Students who do not re-enroll immediately after their period of leave must reapply to the school. Unless granted an exception in extenuating circumstances, students who exceed their maximum time toward degree completion – not including their semesters of leave – will have their degree candidacy terminated.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Voluntary Leave</strong></th>
<th><strong>Medical Leave</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Information</strong></td>
<td><strong>General Information</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A voluntary leave from the Columbia Public Health is granted to students who wish to take time away from their studies for a variety of reasons, including employment opportunities, personal or family circumstances, the desire to travel, or simply to gain perspective on their academic and career priorities. A voluntary leave of absence (LOA) is not designated for a student’s own health condition. Please see the Medical Leave of Absence policy for those scenarios.</td>
<td>A medical leave is granted to a Columbia Public Health student whose health interferes with the successful completion of one’s degree program. Students are urged to pay particular attention to the deadlines for requesting reinstatement. Students are required to check their Columbia email while on leave as this is the official means of communication used by the University. The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) should be consulted with any questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are urged to pay particular attention to the deadlines for requesting reinstatement. Students are required to check their @columbia email while on leave, as this is the official means of communication used at Columbia Public Health. Students should direct questions regarding their LOA to the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) and Student Support Services or Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS).</td>
<td>Students must consult with their department to initiate a leave and then provide medical documentation to support the request for a medical leave to the Office of Student Affairs. Medical leaves must be accompanied by an individualized assessment of the student’s particular healthcare needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While on leave, students must be actively engaged in a course of medical treatment that leads to recovery. <strong>In order to be reinstated, a student must apply by November 1 for spring term reinstatement and by June 1 for fall term reinstatement</strong> by submitting a letter to the Office of Student Affairs describing the steps the student has taken to address the issue. In addition, the student’s healthcare practitioner must submit a letter indicating the treatment, prognosis, and that the student is medically cleared to return to full-time study. The healthcare practitioner must be the licensed practitioner who has treated the student for the condition which occasioned the leave.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Academic Standing

If a student voluntarily begins a LOA on or before the **add/drop deadline**, any previously-registered-for-courses for the semester being left will be withdrawn from the student’s academic record and will not count toward required **residency units** (if applicable). If a leave begins **after** that deadline, courses will remain on the transcript, and the semester will count toward required residency units (if applicable). When students depart after the deadlines listed above, they must be aware that they will likely fall behind in credits necessary to continue toward **satisfactory progress**. Students should consult with the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) and the Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS) team to develop a reasonable academic plan that attempts to outline the completion of one’s degree considering the potential constraints of the degree requirements, allotted residency units, etc. Students **may not** earn course credits during semesters while on LOA. Please note that whatever academic standing students depart with at the onset of the LOAs, they will then resume upon return to their degree programs.

Students who are granted authorized incompletes in the last semester before their Personal Leave must complete the work of each course upon their return to campus by the next deadline to reconcile INs (~5-7 weeks from the start of the semester of return).

When students depart after the deadlines listed above, they must be aware that they will likely fall behind in credits necessary to remain in good academic standing. To determine whether or not they will fall behind, students should consult with their advisor, department, and StARS. Students should work with their department to create a reasonable academic plan to ensure completion of the degree. Students are not permitted to earn credits toward the degree while on medical leave from the University, as the purpose of the leave is to regain full health in order to return and resume full-time study. In some cases, healthcare practitioners may recommend that students take courses at home institutions as part of the recovery process. Those points will not, however, count toward the Columbia degree.

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## Financial Aid

For a student taking a leave for any reason, it is vital that students communicate with and direct all financial aid questions to the **Financial Aid Office**. A student who is away from their program for more than a semester may be required to begin loan repayments; therefore, it is important to schedule an exit interview with Financial Aid to discuss the options for a particular loan before leaving. A student who defaults on a loan will be unable to receive any further aid until appropriate payments are made. A student who owes money to Columbia University will be put on financial hold and will thereby not be able to register for classes; it is the student’s responsibility to be aware of any debts that could prevent registration.
**Housing**

Students who live in University housing must contact the Office of Housing Services when they determine they will be taking a leave, as they will have to vacate their on-campus housing assignment. Students taking a leave will not be penalized for breaking their lease. It is imperative that students follow the moving-out procedures set forth by the Office of Housing Services.

**Campus Involvement while on Leave**

Students are not permitted to audit classes, be involved in student groups or Columbia University affiliated activities, or otherwise spend time on campus during a leave. To reinforce this expectation, the student ID and swipe access are deactivated during the leave.

**Procedures (Voluntary Leave)**

To take a voluntary leave of absence, complete the following:

- Meet with your departmental advisor as soon as possible to discuss the leave. Also, coordinate with your department and OSA/StARS to determine the date of your withdrawal/leave.
- Complete and submit a Leave of Absence Request Form. Requests may be submitted to OSA and StARS; both offices can be reached via email at msph-osa@cumc.columbia.edu or in person on the 10th floor of ARB.
- If you are covered by a Columbia Health Insurance Plan, contact the insurance office at (212)-305-3400 to complete the process to ensure full coverage. If you have waived Columbia insurance, you must contact your own insurance provider for details for coverage.
- If you are an international student, you must immediately contact the International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) at (212) 305-8615 to discuss next steps related to your visa status. **Note: International students not taking a medical leave must leave the United States within 15 days of their withdrawal date.**

The Office of Student Affairs will email the student informing them that their request for a leave of absence has been approved. Students, who after one month have not received any refunds due, should contact Student Financial Services at (212) 342-4790 to inquire about the refund status.

**Procedures (Medical Leave)**

To take a medical leave of absence, complete the following:

- Make a formal request to the Office of Student Affairs in writing (electronic or hard copy).
- Submit supporting documentation from a licensed healthcare practitioner, in consultation with Student Health Services. Documentation is required before a leave can be granted.
- You may be asked to complete an assessment with a third-party evaluator covered by Columbia Public Health. Please consult with the Office of Student Affairs about this possible requirement.
- The Office of Student Affairs will email the student informing them that their request for a medical leave of absence has been approved. Students, who after one month have not received any refunds due, should contact Student Financial Services at (212) 342-4790 to inquire about the refund status.

**Reinstatement Deadlines and Procedures**

You must complete the following reinstatement procedure by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester of Intended Return</th>
<th>Deadline for Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>June 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>November 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>April 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All financial obligations to the University must be cleared before reinstatement. No student will be reinstated who has not met the following requirement:

Submit a letter to your department and the Office of Student Affairs requesting reinstatement. The letter should review the circumstances that led to the leave, describe in detail any relevant activities pursued while out of school, and explain why you now feel able to resume studies successfully. Students must also include an academic plan for successful completion of the degree program, which must be approved by the department and Student Academic Records and Standards.

Students not registered for two or more years must apply for readmission. Reinstatement is not guaranteed.

**Medical Leave**

*Reinstatement from Medical Leave*

Following is the procedure for requesting to return from medical leave only (students on other types of leave should follow the directions above). Students must complete all parts of the following reinstatement procedures by **June 1 to be eligible to return for the fall term or November 1 to be eligible to return for the spring term**. Please note that students on a medical leave may not be reinstated to attend a Columbia summer session. Also note that all financial obligations to the University must be cleared before reinstatement. In order to begin reinstatement, students must have a conversation with the Office of Student Affairs and must do the following:

- Submit a letter (by email or fax) to the Dean of Students in the Office of Student Affairs requesting reinstatement by the above deadline. The letter should review the circumstances that led to the leave, describe in detail any activities pursued while away, explain why you now feel able to resume studies successfully, and outline a plan for continued support.
- Submit a letter (by email or fax) to the Dean of Students from the medical practitioner(s) with whom you have been working by the above deadline. The letter should describe the treatment, progress made, and an evaluation of your readiness to return to full-time study at Columbia. The letter must also address the continued care plan recommended for your return so that you can be connected to the appropriate services upon return.

Once officially reinstated, you will receive a registration time so that you can sign up for courses for the coming term. Normally, students will be able to register in late August for the fall and in mid-January for the spring term. In any case, the student will be given registration times as soon as possible after their official reinstatement.

Students are urged to meet with Student Support Services/Office of Student Affairs during the first two weeks of the semester when they return and with their department, to ensure a smooth transition back to the campus community.

**Support upon Return to Campus**

In addition to the Office of Student Affairs, CUIMC provides several support resources:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Phone number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Health on Haven</td>
<td>212-305-3400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Services</td>
<td>212-854-2388 (Voice/TTY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the University Chaplain</td>
<td>212-854-1493</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questions**

- Students should direct any questions regarding their medical leave or reinstatement to Student Academic Records & Standards (StARS).
Withdrawal, Reinstatement, Readmission

Withdrawal
Registered students, who decide to withdraw from all classes in a semester or fully withdraw from their degree program, must contact Student Academic Records and Standards (StARS) via email (msph-osma@columbia.edu) to initiate the withdrawal process. A student may not fully withdraw from all classes online via SSOL, even during the add/drop period. Students should be mindful of the tuition refund schedule in the timing of their request to withdraw, as StARS will use the date of the emailed request to calculate a student’s refund. In most cases, ancillary fees will remain on your account, in addition to a $75 withdrawal fee. Students who plan to return to their studies must also initiate a Leave of Absence.

Reinstatement
Students who have taken formal Leaves of Absence should refer to the above section pertaining to reinstatement following a leave. Reinstatement is not guaranteed.

Readmission
Students who have been academically or disciplinary dismissed are not eligible for re-admission. Students who do not complete their degree within the maximum allowed timeframe (five (5) years for master’s students; approximately seven to nine (7-9) for doctoral) as per their respective department guidelines and who are not on an approved leave of absence will be academically dismissed from the school and therefore not eligible for re-admission.

Students who are reinstated will become subject to all current requirements. A program may require a student to retake examinations and/or courses as deemed necessary.

Students required to apply for re-admission include:
- Students not on a formal leave and not enrolled for one or more consecutive semesters but still within the allowed timeframe for completion of degree.
- Students whose Leave of Absence has expired,
- Students on a Leave of Absence for two years or more
- Students otherwise withdrawn from degree candidacy

To apply for readmission complete the online application by the following deadlines (or following business day if the deadline falls on a weekend):
- June 1 for Fall consideration
- October 1 for Spring consideration

Students’ academic records and readmissions material will be reviewed by their department, the Academic Standards Committee, and as appropriate the Admissions Committee. An interview (Zoom) may be required. Readmission may require that the student take new courses and meet updated academic requirements. Coursework taken more than five years prior to one’s application for readmission may not be used toward one’s degree requirements upon re-matriculation. Readmission is not guaranteed. Questions should be directed to ph-admit@columbia.edu.

Appeals Process Governing Degree Candidacy Termination
Academic assessment of students resides with the faculty. With the faculty, Columbia Public Health has developed academic progress guidelines for students. Appeals related to individual course grades (or graded assignments within a course) are governed by the Grade Grievance Procedures.
An appeal to a comprehensive, degree-based, academic progress evaluation (e.g., registration holds, limited registration, temporary suspension, etc.) should be directed to the Dean of Students within fifteen (15) business days of notification to the student of the academic evaluation. The appeal procedure is limited to assuring that the assessment was made impartially and according to procedures applicable to all students.

If a student is terminated from degree candidacy for any reason, the student will receive an official letter and have the opportunity to meet with the Dean of Students to discuss further options. This meeting will occur within fifteen (15) business days from receipt of the termination letter. If the student disagrees with the decision of termination, the student may appeal this decision in writing to the Vice Dean of Education within fifteen (15) business days of meeting with the Dean of Students (for a total of thirty (30) business days from receipt of the letter). The appeal procedure is limited to assuring that the academic assessment and termination were made impartially and according to procedures applicable to all students. The Vice Dean will review the appeal and may consult with other colleagues in this review. The decision of the appeal is final. Notification to the student and the student’s department will occur in writing within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the appeal request.