5.4.1 Program Discontinuation and Reinstatement: Policy

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Summary

Defines policy and procedures by which a degree program can be discontinued, and for subsequent reinstatement to active student status, where allowed.

Rationale

Students may voluntarily decide to leave a degree program to which they have been admitted and in which they are registered, or Stanford University may determine that a student will not be allowed to continue in that program. In either case, in the event that the student subsequently wishes to return to registered and enrolled status and reinstatement was not precluded at the time of separation, the student may file a request for reinstatement. Reinstatement decisions are at the discretion of the department or degree program.

Authority:
- Committee on Graduate Studies (policy)

Applicability:
To all matriculated graduate students and the programs in which they are enrolled.

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1. Circumstances In Which A Degree Program Will Be Discontinued

Failure to Register or to Be Placed on Approved Leave

The Office of the Registrar will discontinue the academic program of any student who fails to be either enrolled by
the study list deadline or approved for a leave of absence by the start of the term. In addition, the Office of the Registrar will discontinue the academic program for students who do not return within the time period indicated on an approved leave of absence, or for whom other arrangements to continue the leave are not approved. Students whose program is discontinued for failure to enroll must apply for reinstatement through the Graduate Admissions Office in order to return (see discussion of reinstatement, below).

**Voluntary Termination of Degree Program**

Students who wish to terminate study in a graduate program should submit a properly endorsed Request to Permanently Withdraw from Degree Program form to the Student Services Center. This form authorizes the Registrar to close the student’s degree program and cancel the authorization to register. It must be received by the Student Services Center prior to the start of the quarter in which authorization to register is cancelled.

Students should discuss their plans with their department student services officer and advisor. International students holding F-1 or J-1 visas should discuss whether filing this form will affect their visa status.

Students may also discontinue a program by selecting that option on the Graduate Program Authorization Petition (Grad Auth) when they are adding a new program. (See GAP 5.1, Changes and Additions of Degree Programs.)

**Dismissal for Academic Reasons**

The principal conditions for continued registration of a graduate student are the timely and satisfactory completion of the university, department, and program requirements for the degree, and fulfillment of minimum progress requirements. Stanford University defines procedures for dismissal of graduate students who are not meeting these conditions; these procedures vary based on whether the dismissal occurs before or during degree candidacy (see GAP 5.6, Dismissal for Academic Reasons).

**Expulsion**

Expulsion from the University is the permanent termination of an individual’s status as a student, with the loss of all rights and privileges appurtenant thereto. If a Judicial Panel recommends expulsion from the University, the case will be automatically reviewed by the Provost. The Provost has the option of supporting the recommendation of expulsion or imposing lesser sanctions. A student who is expelled from Stanford University may not seek reinstatement (see the Office of Community Standards web site).

**2. Reinstatement Policies**

To return to graduate study after the discontinuation of a degree program, the student may be required to apply for reinstatement (if returning to the same degree program) or admission (if applying to a different program). Both applications require payment of a fee. In some circumstances, reinstatement may not be permitted, or may be permitted with conditions.

**Reinstatement after Failure to Register or Be Placed on Approved Leave, or after a Voluntary Withdrawal**
A completed and department-approved Application for Reinstatement in Graduate Study [6] must be received in the Graduate Admissions Office, along with necessary documents, on or before the first day of the term in which reenrollment is requested. After this date, the application will be processed for the subsequent term. Departments or programs may require earlier deadlines.

Students whose master's program or doctoral candidacy has expired must have extensions of their programs or candidacy approved by their departments before reinstatement may be approved.

Applicants for reinstatement who are not U.S. citizens or U.S. registered permanent residents must have a current visa status that allows for study at Stanford University. Applicants who require an I-20 (for F-1 visas) or DS-2019 (for J-1 visas) must submit the application and Financial Resources Certification form three weeks prior to the deadline to allow sufficient time for I-20 and DS-2019 processing. See the Bechtel International Center [7] web site for additional information on the processing of visas.

The decision to approve or deny reinstatement into the original degree program is made by the student's department or program. Departments are not obliged to approve reinstatements of students. Reinstatement decisions are made at the discretion of the department or the program and may be based on the applicant’s academic status when last enrolled, activities while away from campus, the length of the absence, the perceived potential for successful completion of the program, and the ability of the department to support the student both academically and financially, as well as any other factors or considerations regarded as relevant by the department or program.

Graduate students wishing to be reinstated to active student status in a new degree program must apply to, and be accepted by, the new degree program.

The process for admission to graduate study at Stanford is explained on the Graduate Admissions [8] web site, and is governed by the policy and procedures in GAP 2.1, Admitting Graduate Students to Matriculated Study [9].

Alternatively, a student may apply for reinstatement to the program in which they were originally enrolled, as described above, and then use the Graduate Program Authorization Petition (Grad Auth Petition, filed electronically in Axess) to apply to a new program (see GAP 5.1, Changes and Additions of Degree Programs [3]).

**Reinstatement after Dismissal for Academic Reasons**

In the circumstance where a student who had been dismissed for academic reasons wishes to return to the same degree program, and where reinstatement was not precluded at the time of the dismissal, the student should request reinstatement as described above (rather than to apply for admission). In this circumstance, the degree program may review such relevant information as coursework completed elsewhere or any other factors deemed to be appropriate for consideration. Conditions for reinstatement may be established at the discretion of the program.

The decision to approve or deny reinstatement is made by the department or program to which the student is seeking reinstatement. In addition, the department or program retains the right to condition reinstatement on certain academic conditions as it deems appropriate.

**Reinstatement after Expulsion**

Students who have been expelled from Stanford University are not permitted to apply for reinstatement.

**Reinstatement to a Program That Is No Longer Offered at Stanford**
If the student is eligible to be reinstated and is seeking reinstatement to a degree program that is no longer offered by Stanford University, the student should contact the department or program that offers the most similar degree to inquire about admission into the new degree program. The decision to grant admission into this new degree program rests with the department or program.

Related Content:
Related Policies
- GAP 2.1, Admitting Graduate Students to Matriculated Study [9]
- GAP 3.1, Registration, Enrollment and Academic Progress [10]
- GAP 5.1, Changes and Additions of Degree Programs [3]
- GAP 5.6, Dismissal for Academic Reasons [4]

Related Bulletin Sections
- Program Discontinuation and Reinstatement [13]

Related Information and Forms
- Request to Permanently Withdraw from Degree Program [2] (pdf)
- Application for Reinstatement in Graduate Study [6] (pdf)
- Graduate Admissions [8]
- Office of Community Standards web site [5]

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