

# Academic Policies

## Policies and Procedures

### Registration

The Office of the Registrar is the central administrative office responsible for registering students, maintaining the permanent academic records, administering the Regents' Testing Program Policies and test registration, performing degree audits, enforcing the academic policies of the university and generally ensuring that students' academic issues are dealt with accurately and professionally. In addition, the Registrar's staff handles transfer evaluations and Veteran's Affairs. Requests for data from the computerized student record system are approved by this office.

All registration at Kennesaw State University is conducted over the web at : [www.kennesaw.edu/registrar](http://www.kennesaw.edu/registrar)

The registration process consists of three different phases:

- **Priority Registration**—open to currently enrolled students who are not on probation.
- **Final Registration**—open to new students, students who are on academic probation but eligible to return and readmitted students.
- **Late Registration- and drop/add**—open to all students eligible to enroll for the given semester.

NOTE: See the academic calendar, which lists specific registration dates, at [www.kennesaw.edu/registrar](http://www.kennesaw.edu/registrar), the *Schedule of Courses*, or page 3 of this catalog.

### Graduate Course Auditing Policy

Auditing of courses will be permitted for regularly enrolled graduate students, as well as on a space-available basis for those who hold a graduate degree from Kennesaw State. Auditing of courses is not allowed in MBA for Experienced Professionals, Master of Science

## 36 Academic Policies

in Conflict Management (MSCM), the Master of Science in Information Systems (MSIS), the Master of Science in Applied Computer Science (MSACS) programs, or any of KSU's Master of Education (MEd) programs. Students must have completed all prerequisites necessary for the course to be audited and are expected to complete all course requirements as noted on the course syllabus. A student may audit no more than 6 credit hours of graduate course work in a given term.

The permission to audit form, available in the Office of the Registrar, must be submitted before the end of final registration. The form must be signed by the Graduate Program Director of the program offering the course to be audited. Audited courses count at full value in computing the student's course and fees load. The student's name will appear on the official class rolls of the courses audited, as well as the student's approved schedule of courses. No credit is granted for audited courses, and students are not permitted to change to or from an auditing status except through the regular procedures for schedule changes.

The grade for auditing is V (visitor), and this grade will at no time be changed to a W on the basis of the auditor's attendance in the course. The grade of V will have no effect upon the student's grade-point average, and students will not be permitted to have the audit grade changed at any future date. Audited courses will not count toward degree completion for any of KSU's graduate programs.

### Full-Time Load

The basic unit of all college classes is the "semester credit hour." The full-time load for a graduate student is 9 semester hours.

### Candidacy

The minimum requirements for admission to candidacy in any degree program shall be the successful completion of 9 semester hours of graduate credit in a degree program at KSU with a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 and a grade of "C" or better in each course

presented for candidacy. Individual degree programs may establish additional requirements for candidacy (e.g., interview or examination).

### Residency Requirement

To receive a graduate degree from Kennesaw State University, a student must complete at least 27 semester hours of program requirements at KSU. All of these 27 hours must be completed after the student has been admitted to the degree program. Students in the MAcc or WebMBA must complete 24 hours.

### Time Limit

All requirements for a master's degree must be completed within six years, beginning with the first registration in graduate-level classes following admission to the degree program. Extension of time may be granted only on conditions beyond the student's control. Only courses in which credit has been earned within six years of the date of graduation will be counted for degree credit.

### Transfer Credit

Graduate work taken at other Commission of Colleges (COC) regionally accredited institutions must be evaluated and approved by the program director and/or graduate committee of the respective program in order to satisfy degree requirements at KSU. Such transfer credit cannot be for courses over five years old and must satisfy the six-year rule above to count towards degree credit; cannot exceed 9 semester hours (6 semester hours for the MAcc and the WebMBA), and cannot reduce residency requirements. No grade below B may be accepted. Transfer grades are not used in calculating semester, summer term, or cumulative grade-point averages. Individual degree programs may have additional specific requirements or limitations for transfer credit.

Refer to the program descriptions in this catalog for additional information.

Transfer credit is not permissible for any part of the MBA for Experienced Professionals or the Master of Science in Conflict Management programs.

### Course Load

Full-time enrollment for graduate students is 9 semester hours. Graduate students in good standing may enroll for 12 semester hours in any semester. In order to enroll for more than 12 semester hours, students must obtain approval from their graduate program director.

### Course Repetitions

Graduate students may repeat for credit no more than two graduate courses, one time each. Only courses in which students previously earned a grade below B may be retaken for credit. Students who have received 9 credit hours of grades below B are not eligible to retake a class and will be dismissed from further graduate study at Kennesaw State University.

All grades received for work attempted at KSU are calculated in the cumulative grade point average. Grades for repeated courses are considered as work attempted and do not replace grades already received. Individual degree programs may establish more stringent requirements. Students enrolled in KSU's executive programs (MBA-EP, MSCM, and MSACS) may not repeat courses for credit toward a degree.

### Withdrawal from Courses

Students may withdraw from one or more courses any time before the last three weeks of the semester. To withdraw they should complete an official withdrawal form in the Office of the Registrar. Students who officially withdraw from courses before mid-semester will receive a "W" in those courses and receive no credit. They will not, however, suffer any academic penalty. Students who officially withdraw after mid-semester (and before the last three weeks of the semester) will receive a "WF," which will be counted as an "F" in the calculation of their grade point average. Exact withdrawal dates will be published in the official academic calendar and are subject to approval by the Board of Regents. Students who simply stop attending classes without officially withdrawing usually are assigned failing grades.

The only exceptions to these withdrawal regulations will be for instances involving unusual circumstances, that are fully documented.

Students will receive refunds only when they withdraw from all their classes and only by the schedule outlined in the University System refund policy.

### Grading System

Any graduate student is required to maintain a 3.0 grade-point average. The university is organized on the semester system, with two semesters extending 15 weeks (plus exams) and summer term extending approximately eight weeks. The semester hour is the unit of credit in any course. The following grading system is used:

Grade	Grade Point
A Excellent	4.0
B Good	3.0
C Fair	2.0
D Poor	1.0
F Failing	.0

**I**—Incomplete grade (I). The grade of "I" denotes an incomplete grade for the course, and will be awarded only when the student has done satisfactory work up to the last two weeks of the semester, but for nonacademic reasons beyond the student's control, is unable to meet the full requirements of the course.

The grade of "I" must be removed by the end of the next semester or term. The grade of "I" will not be included in the calculation of the student's scholastic average at the end of the semester in which the grade of "I" is received. Upon completion of the outstanding requirements within the specified time limit, a final grade of A, B, C, D or F will be assigned in the course on the basis of the student's total performance, and the grade will then be included in the calculation of the student's cumulative grade point average. If the outstanding work is not completed by the end of the following semester or term, then the "I" will be changed to an "F" and calculated into the student's cumulative grade point average. An "I" cannot be removed by reenrolling in the course.

## 38 Academic Policies

**W**—This symbol indicates that the student was permitted to withdraw from the course without penalty with the approval of the program director and registrar within the first 28 working days (including registration days) of the semester. Withdrawals without penalty may be permitted after the official withdrawal period in hardship cases only with approval of the registrar. A course in which the grade of “W” has been assigned will not be included in calculating the student’s scholastic average.

**WF**—This symbol indicates that the student was permitted to withdraw from a course after the first 28 working days of the semester. The dropping of a course under these circumstances is equivalent to failure and will be included in the calculation of the student’s scholastic average.

**S**—This symbol indicates that credit has been given for completion of degree requirements other than academic course work. The use of this symbol is approved for thesis hours, student teaching, clinical practicum, internship and proficiency requirements in graduate programs.

**U**—This symbol indicates unsatisfactory performance or progress in an attempt to complete degree requirements other than academic course work. The use of the “U” is approved for thesis hours, student teaching, clinical practicum, internship and proficiency requirements in graduate programs.

**V**— This symbol indicates that the student was given permission to audit the course and is not included in the calculation of the scholastic average. Students may not transfer from audit to credit status or vice versa.

### Grade-Point Average

The grade-point average (GPA) is the average grade made by the student on all graduate course work for which he/she has enrolled. It is calculated by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the total number of semester hours attempted. Courses carrying S, U, W, or I grades are not included.

### Grade Appeal Procedure

Any student has the right in any course of instruction to appeal a final grade in a course for

either, or both of the following reasons. (1) The student believes that the instructor has violated his/her stated grading policy. (2) The student believes that his/her final grade in a course is unfair because of retaliation or the instructor’s discriminatory practice(s) based on race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, handicap, or national origin. In such cases the following procedures will be applied. Each faculty member must specify his/her grading policy at the first of the semester. He/she may change his/her grading policy for cause after that time, but he/she must do so uniformly, with ample notification to students, if at all possible.

#### I. Grade Appeal Procedure When There is an Allegation of a Violation of Stated Grading Policy, But No Allegation of Discriminatory or Retaliatory Action

- A. If a student believes that his/her final grade in a course is unfair in terms of the instructor’s stated grading policy, he/she should first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the student remains dissatisfied with his/her final course grade, he/she may immediately appeal to the department chairperson for discussion and possible resolution.
- B. If a student remains unsatisfied with his/her final course grade, he/she may file a written appeal with the dean of the appropriate college within sixty days from the end of the semester in which the final course grade was assigned. If the instructor involved is a department chair, the written appeal should be filed with the dean of the college. If the instructor involved is a college dean, the written appeal should be filed with the dean of undergraduate studies or dean of graduate studies (based on the status of the student who has initiated the appeal).
- C. If the dean of the college or his/her designee (or the dean of undergraduate/graduate studies or his/her designee) believes that the student has not shown that the professor violated his/her stated grading policies he/she must so inform the student in writing within

- one month (thirty days) of his/her receipt of the student's written appeal.
- D. Alternatively, if the dean of the college or his/her designee (or the dean of undergraduate/graduate studies or his/her designee) believes that the student may have reasonable cause for an appeal based on the issue of a violation of stated grading policies, then he/she must appoint a school hearing committee consisting of three faculty/administrative faculty members and two students. The committee selection process must begin within one month (thirty days) of his/her receipt of the student's written appeal. The members of the committee should be selected in a manner determined by the dean of the college or his/her designee (or the dean of undergraduate/graduate studies or his/her designee).
  - E. The committee shall meet and elect a chair from among the five members. The chair will conduct the committee meeting(s). The chair may participate in all deliberations, but will not vote except in the case of a tie.
  - F. The committee may draw up its own rules of procedure, and the committee is not bound by any formal rules of legal proceedings and may hear any information that may be of value in determining the issues involved.
  - G. Each party has the right to obtain a non-attorney adviser to assist him/her in the preparation and presentation of his/her case to the committee. The committee shall determine whether it meets with the parties, their respective advisers, and any witnesses in one meeting or in a series of meetings. The members of the committee shall decide who shall be present at any meeting of the committee with the understanding that whenever the student or faculty member is present his/her adviser has the right to be present also.
  - H. A hearing committee has the right to decline to make a decision in a case that a student presents to the committee, when it regards the complaint as frivolous and irresponsible on the basis of evidence that the student presents to the committee. Such a decision must be communicated in writing to both parties in the case, the dean of the applicable college (or the dean of undergraduate/graduate studies) and the department chairperson within five business days from the committee's decision. The chair of the hearing committee shall act to make certain the written report is delivered to the proper persons. In such circumstances, the committee may want to recommend that the student talk to one of the university counselors.
    - I. All decisions will be based only on the issue of whether the professor violated his/her grading policies (see section A above), be based on a majority vote, and be rendered according to the principle of the preponderance of evidence.
    - J. The hearing committee will be expected to produce a written report summarizing the testimony, indicating and explaining its decision, and making recommendations, if desirable, to either or both parties. Copies of the written report will be submitted to both parties in the case, the dean of the applicable college (or the dean of undergraduate/graduate studies) and the department chairperson within five business days from the completion of the meeting(s). The chair of the hearing committee shall act to make certain the written report is delivered to the proper persons.
    - K. If, after the receipt of the committee's report, or, when no school hearing committee is appointed, after a student receives the written decision of the dean of the college, the student remains unsatisfied with his/her final course grade, a student may file a final written appeal to the dean of undergraduate/graduate studies or his/her designee (based on the status of the student who initiated the appeal). If the instructor involved is also a dean of a college, then either the dean of

undergraduate/graduate studies or a committee appointed by him/her will render the written decision. In that case, and only in that case, a student may file a final written appeal to the vice president for academic affairs or his/her designee. The appeal must be made in writing within ten business days of the student's receipt of the decision of the dean of the college or the dean of undergraduate/graduate studies or the decision of the school hearing committee. The dean of undergraduate studies/graduate studies or the VP for academic affairs will issue a written decision to both parties in the case, the dean of the applicable college (or the dean of undergraduate/graduate studies) and the department chairperson within one month (thirty days). His/her decision is final. No further appeals are available.

- L. Nothing in this grade appeal process prohibits the parties from settling this matter at any stage with the assistance of mediation through the Office of the University Ombud (770-423-6112). Mediation may also address issues other than violation of stated grading policy. However, any attempt to settle the matter through mediation does not affect time deadlines for this grade appeal process.

## **II. Grade Appeal Procedure When there is an Allegation of Discriminatory Action or Retaliation**

- A. If the student believes that his/her final grade in a course is unfair because of (1) retaliation by an instructor because of the student's prior report of discrimination or harassment, or because of the student's cooperation in any investigation, or (2) discriminatory practice(s) based on race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, handicap, or national origin, the student should first discuss the matter with the instructor. The student should contact

the Office of the University Ombud (770-423-6112) to arrange a facilitated discussion (a neutral third party would be present) with the instructor if the student is not comfortable discussing the allegation with the instructor by himself/herself.

- B. If a student remains unsatisfied with his/her final course grade, he/she must contact the appropriate EEO officer (currently the vice president for student success and enrollment services) and submit his/her allegation in writing to that office within one month (thirty days) of when the student met with the instructor to discuss the alleged retaliation and/or discrimination. The EEO officer (or his/her designee) must notify the instructor in writing of the allegation of discrimination and/or retaliation and of the pending investigation within one week of receiving the complaint in writing from the student.
- C. If the EEO officer (or his/her designee), after investigation, finds that the student does not have reasonable grounds for complaint he/she shall so notify the student and the instructor in writing within sixty days. The student may then pursue grade appeal procedures based on a violation of stated grading policies, if appropriate, by meeting and discussing the issue with his/her instructor and subsequently, if necessary, with others as specified in section I (above) if the student began this grade appeal process within 60 days from the end of the semester in which the final grade was assigned. In that case, all deadlines for the new grade appeal will begin as of the date of the EEO officer's (or his/her designee)'s written communication notifying the student that he/she does not have reasonable grounds for a discrimination and/or retaliation complaint.
- D. If the EEO officer (or his/her designee), after investigation, finds the

student may have reasonable cause for complaint he/she shall so notify the student and the instructor in writing within sixty days. The EEO officer (or his/her designee) will then contact the chair of the university senate. The chair of the senate will be responsible for establishing an ad hoc committee of three faculty/administrative faculty members and two students to hear the discrimination complaint and make recommendations. The names and contact information of the five members of the ad hoc committee shall be communicated by the chair of the senate to the EEO officer (or his/her designee). If, as part of his/her complaint, the student also alleges that the faculty member has violated his/her stated grading policy, the ad hoc committee must hear and make recommendations on that issue concurrently.

- E. Prior to the hearing the EEO officer (or his/her designee) will arrange that the ad hoc committee shall meet and elect a chair from among the five members. The chair will conduct the hearing. The chair may participate in all deliberations, but will not vote except in the case of a tie.
- F. The hearing committee may draw up its own rules of procedure, and the committee is not bound by any formal rules of legal proceedings and may hear any information that may be of value in determining the issues involved, but minimum due process shall include the right of both parties to be notified in writing at least ten business days in advance of the date, time, and place of the hearing; the right of the faculty member to be informed in writing of the specific nature of the complaint against him/her and of the evidence and/or witnesses on which it is based; and the right of both parties to present evidence and witnesses on their behalf and to question witnesses. The EEO officer (or his/her designee) shall act to make certain these due process rights are met. The EEO officer (or his/her designee) will attend the hearing as an observer. The EEO officer (or his/her designee) is not a party to the case, nor is he/she an advocate for either party. The EEO office shall retain all records associated with the complaint, his/her investigation, the hearing, the committee's written report, and the president's written decision for such length of time as required by Georgia law.
- G. Both the faculty member and the student have the right to a non-attorney adviser to assist in preparing and presenting his/her case before the committee. Those present during the hearing will be the members of the ad hoc committee, the EEO officer (or his/her designee), the parties to the complaint, one non-attorney adviser for each party, and such witnesses as are necessary. Each witness shall be present only when his/her presence is necessary to present information and/or answer questions. No other persons shall be present unless agreed upon in writing by the chair of the committee, both parties, and the EEO officer (or his/her designee).
- H. All decisions and recommendations will be based on a majority vote, and be rendered according to the principle of the preponderance of evidence. Only the five members of the ad hoc committee should be present during deliberation except that the EEO officer (or his/her designee) may be present to answer policy questions.
- I. The hearing committee will be expected to produce a written report summarizing the information presented, indicating and explaining its decision, and making recommendations, if desirable, to either or both parties. Copies of the written report will be submitted to both parties in the case, the EEO officer (or his/her designee), the chief legal officer for the university, and the president of the university within five business days from the completion of the hearing. The chair of the hearing committee shall act to make certain the written report

is delivered to the proper persons. The opinions and recommendations of the ad hoc committee are advisory and in no way bind the president to the recommended actions.

- J. After consideration of the ad hoc committee's written report, the president shall make a decision and communicate it in writing within five business days to the student, the instructor, the EEO officer (or his/her designee), the chief legal officer of the university, and the head of the department in which the instructor teaches. If the instructor is the head of a department it shall be communicated to the dean of the appropriate college. If the instructor is a dean it shall be communicated to the vice president for academic affairs.
- K. Should the aggrieved student remain dissatisfied with the president's decision, further redress may be sought through internal channels by applying to the Board of Regents for a review of the decision, pursuant to the Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Article IX, p. xxvii.

### **Expectations for Satisfactory Graduate Level Student Performance**

Graduate students are expected to earn grades of at least B in most of their course work for their degree. Although graduate students may occasionally earn a grade below B, the university expects those instances to be few in number. For graduation, a graduate student must have earned a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.0 in all graduate course work at Kennesaw State University and a grade of C or better in each course presented to meet degree requirements. (See Academic Regulations for non-degree students in the College of Education.)

Earning grades below B in graduate courses will result in the following consequences:

#### **I. Academic Warning**

Upon earning a grade lower than B in at least two credit hours of graduate course work, the student will receive a letter of warning and be

advised of the consequence that will result if additional grades lower than B are earned in graduate courses at Kennesaw State University.

Upon earning a grade lower than B in at least six credit hours of graduate course work, the student will be given a letter of warning.

Upon earning a grade lower than B in nine or more hours of graduate course work, the student will be dismissed from further graduate study at KSU and will not be eligible for readmission as a graduate student.

#### **II. Academic Probation**

Whenever a graduate student's cumulative grade-point average drops below 3.0, that student will be placed on academic probation and be advised of the significance and potential consequences of this action. While on probation, the student will not be permitted to apply for admission to candidacy, take comprehensive exams, or obtain a graduate degree. Graduate students can have their probationary status removed by raising their cumulative grade-point average to at least 3.0.

#### **III. Academic Exclusion**

If a graduate student earns nine credit hours of grades below B, or if a graduate student on probation earns a semester or summer grade-point average below 3.0, that student will be dismissed from further graduate study at KSU and will not be eligible for readmission as a graduate student. A student who wishes to appeal after the first exclusion must submit a letter describing the situation and stating the reasons for requesting the appeal to the appropriate graduate program director who will forward his/her recommendation to the dean of graduate studies. The dean of graduate studies will then notify the appropriate graduate program director, the office of the registrar and the student of his/her decision. The decision of the dean of graduate studies is final and students may not appeal a second exclusion.

#### **Graduation Requirements**

Each candidate for a master's degree must apply for graduation through the individual program director. A student may request in

absentia status by writing to the registrar prior to the graduation exercises.

Subject to the limitations and qualifications stated elsewhere in this catalog, the requirements for an advanced degree are as follows:

1. A Petition to Graduate will be accepted and may be filed during the semester preceding the final semester or summer term of enrollment but must be filed before the end of the first week of his/her final semester. This form may be obtained from the program director's office.
2. A student must complete a minimum of 27 hours of degree requirements at Kennesaw State University. Candidates for a second master's degree at Kennesaw State must earn a minimum of 18 additional hours in excess of any hours used toward the first master's degree (the exact number of hours will depend on specific degree requirements).
3. Degree candidates must have earned a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 calculated on all graduate courses attempted at KSU and a grade of C or better in each course presented to meet degree requirements. With the approval of the Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee, individual degree programs may establish additional graduation requirements (e.g., comprehensive exams, thesis).

### **Double Majors and Concentrations in a Single Degree Program**

In graduate programs with specific concentrations or majors (the MAPW, MPA, and MSIS programs), a student may qualify for an additional major or concentration (within the specified graduate program) by completing a minimum of 12 additional hours of appropriate course work beyond that required for the original concentration or major and by completing any special requirements of that major or concentration.

The earning of a second concentration or major will be confirmed by the Office of the Registrar, upon written request by the student, and only if the additional courses are

completed before any of the student's graduate credits will be more than six years old. Double Major/Concentration Request Forms are available from the program director. The grades in the additional hours must not cause the student's grade point average to fall below a 3.0. All grades must be "C" or higher.

### **Multiple Graduate Degrees**

A student may earn a particular master's degree at Kennesaw State only once. If a student wishes to complete a second master's degree program, he or she must meet all admission requirements in effect for the second degree and thereafter fulfill all requirements for the second master's degree.

Along with other requirements as specified by the degree program, the student must complete a minimum of 18 hours of appropriate course work beyond that required for the original masters degree (the exact number of hours will depend on specific degree requirements). Expectations for Satisfactory Graduate Level Student Performance, as outlined above, apply to all second master's degree students. Students who have completed a master's degree elsewhere must meet all admission requirements in effect for the second master's degree at Kennesaw State and thereafter fulfill all requirements for the second master's degree. The student must also meet the 27-hour minimum residence requirement at Kennesaw State with appropriate grades and course work. MAcc and WebMBA students must complete 24 hours to meet the residence requirement.

Each candidate for a second master's degree must apply for graduation. A student may request in absentia status by writing to the registrar prior to graduation exercises. An application for graduation will be accepted and may be filed during the semester preceding the final semester or summer term of enrollment but must be filed before the end of the first week of his/her final semester. This form may be obtained from the program director's office.

### **Academic Fresh Start for Readmission**

A currently enrolled student who has been previously enrolled in a graduate program at KSU, who discontinued graduate studies for at least six years, may petition in the Office of the Registrar for a onetime "academic fresh start" upon admission or readmission to a graduate program.

The student's adjusted grade point average will be readjusted after the end of the semester in which the petition was approved retroactive to the readmission term. Although the student's transcript will retain all previous graduate course attempts and grades, only courses completed and grades received after readmission will be considered in the final degree audit. In addition, only grades received after readmission will be considered in decisions regarding academic warning, probation, and dismissal.

### **Academic Fresh Start for Second Degree**

A student who returns to KSU for a second graduate degree may the Adjusted GPA (AGPA) restarted at the time of re-entry. In order to restart the AGPA, students must petition the Office of the Registrar.

### **Additional Academic Regulations**

Individual degree programs may impose additional academic regulations. Consult with the program director, department head or advisor for this information.