

TAPS

TASKFORCE ON ACADEMIC PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

PROPOSAL FOR NEW SUSPENSION PRACTICE & PROCESS

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Taskforce on Academic Probation and Suspension (TAPS) was convened to review the academic suspension policies and practices. The committee's foundational philosophy was that the University of Northern Iowa's process of academic alert, probation, and suspension should support student success and completion. With that in mind, the goal was to determine if our current policy supports that goal and to consider alternative practices. TAPS reviewed institutional data to understand student suspension impacts, reviewed suspension lengths from peer institutions, and explored alternatives to suspension.

KEY FINDINGS

- Since 2012 there have been, on average, 116 students on suspension at any given time.
- 77% of students who are suspended never returned to UNI.
- Minority students, students with financial need, and male students have notably higher rates of suspension.
- ACT, Regent Admissions Index numbers, and high school performance are weak predictors of suspension but trend in the expected direction.
- Students who are readmitted early are encouraged to take advantage of resources in the Office of Student Success & Retention. Despite strong evidence that those resources increase student success, many of those students do not follow through and currently there is no way to ensure their participation.
- The UNI suspension period of one year is longer than most of our peer institutions. Seven of the nine peer institutions we identified had suspension lengths of one semester. The other Regent universities are split; ISU suspends for one semester and UI for two.

PROPOSED CHANGES

- 1. Reduction of first-time suspension to one semester.**
- 2. Changing early readmission to include mandatory enrollment in an Academic Recovery Program.**

RECOVERY PATHWAY

CARR will continue as the committee for early readmission with two changes to the committee's charge. First, due to the reduction of suspension to one semester, CARR would only see students applying for immediate readmission. Second, CARR's approval for readmission will be conditional on the student accepting entry to the Recovery Program. CARR's charge will change from granting an exception to the suspension rule due to extenuating circumstances, and the new role will be to determine eligibility and gauge the likelihood of success prior to recommending students to enter the Recovery Program. Students will know through the application process that they are applying to the Recovery Program as the sole pathway to avoid a regular semester suspension. Students who do not wish to participate in the Recovery Program will sit out for the one semester period and return through regular readmission.

The Recovery Program will be operated through a success planning course designed for students on probation. There are several advantages to structuring the program around a class:

- A credit-bearing class provides a positive incentive for students to engage in the process because a high grade will help raise their GPA, moving them off the suspension/probation track sooner. Inversely, it also provides an incentive to do the work required in the course because failing the class will likely result in students returning to suspension the next semester.
- The class structure can be used to ensure the required actions for success are carried out over the period of a semester.
- Research has supported the effectiveness of credit-bearing success courses for students in poor academic standing¹.
- The credits will count toward the maximum 15 credits allowed for students on Academic Probation.

The course design will be 2 credit hours, 16 weeks, with regular grading. Meetings will include one hour each week in class and a one hour arranged meeting each week with a designated success coach. The success coach who meets with students will also be an embedded peer mentor for the class session each week. Content will be based on the motivational interviewing model², and will provide students with a space to practice concepts from class. Content for the class meetings will focus on learning strategies³ and use a framework of mental contrasting and implementation intentions⁴. This will allow instructors to move the content beyond what is currently covered in POSTSEC 1055: Strategies for Academic Success course, and go deeper into theories and approaches focused on changing behaviors. Course design and instruction will be through Student Success & Retention and will be administered by Undergraduate Studies.

¹ McGarth S. and Burd G (2017). A Success Course for Freshmen on Academic Probation: Persistence and Graduation Outcomes. *NACADA Journal*, 31(1):43-52.

² <https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Motivational-Interviewing-in-Advising-Working-with-Students-to-Change.aspx>

³ McGuire, S. Y. (2015). *Teach students how to learn: Strategies you can incorporate into any course to improve student metacognition, study skills, and motivation*. Sterling, VA: Stylus

⁴ <https://www.psych.nyu.edu/gollwitzer/OettingenGollwitzer.pdf>

TASKFORCE MEMBERS

- Patrick Pease, Office of the Provost, CARR
- Jade Horning, Student Affairs, Student Success & Retention
- Joyce Morrow, Office of the Registrar
- Kristin Moser, IR&E
- Kristin Woods, Student Affairs, Student Success & Retention
- Peter Neibert, Senate
- Terri Lasswell, CADH
- Matt Kroeger, Enrollment Management
- Deedee Heistad, Undergraduate Studies
- Gayle Rhineberger-Dunn, CARR
- Brenda Buzynski, Enrollment Management
- Heather Asmus, Academic Advising & CARR

CONSULTATIONS

- Committee on Admission, Readmission, and Retention (CARR)
 - 10-26-18
 - Unanimous approval of the program and voted to move it forward for Senate consultation
 - Plan to implement the program starting in January 2019
- Deans' Council
 - 10-30-18; unanimous support with minor constructive feedback

Committee on Admission, Readmission And Retention (CARR) (4 yr) (Proposed New Wording)

The Committee on Admission, Readmission and Retention (CARR) considers the admission, readmission, and retention of undergraduate students to the University of Northern Iowa. The Committee develops and follows a set of procedures for determining student readmission after suspension that includes consideration of academic success and retention with or without additional intervention strategies. Further, the Committee follows admissions policies as provided by the Board of Regents State of Iowa and the Undergraduate Academic Standing and readmission policies housed in the University of Northern Iowa Programs and Courses Catalog. The Committee is chaired by a representative from Academic Advising. Committee membership consists of one faculty member from each of the academic colleges and a representative from the each of the following offices: Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Student Success & Retention, Student Support Services, Dean of Students, and Enrollment Management. A member from the Learning Center and Financial Aid can serve as requested by the Committee.

Committee on Admission, Readmission And Retention (CARR) (4 yr) (Changes Tracked)

The Committee on Admission, Readmission and Retention (CARR) considers the admission ~~and~~, readmission-, and retention of undergraduate students to the University of Northern Iowa ~~as well as their retention in the University. The~~. The Committee develops and follows a set of procedures for determining student readmission after suspension that includes consideration of academic success and retention with or without additional intervention strategies. Further, the Committee ~~participates in the~~ administration of the ~~follows~~ admissions policies as provided by the ~~State~~ Board of Regents ~~and the~~ State of Iowa and the Undergraduate Academic Standing and readmission policies housed in the University of Northern Iowa Programs and Courses Catalog. The Committee is chaired by a representative from Academic Advising. Committee membership consists of one faculty member from each of the ~~administration of the~~ undergraduate ~~academic standing policy and readmission of undergraduate students according to~~ colleges and a representative from the each of the ~~principles adopted by~~ following offices: Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Student Success & Retention, Student Support Services, Dean of Students, and Enrollment Management. A member from the ~~University faculty and~~ procedures developed Learning Center and Financial Aid can serve as requested by the Committee. ~~The Chair is elected by members of the members of CARR to serve a two year term and must be a voting member of the Committee. A committee member may serve as chair for as many terms as desired.~~

Undergraduate Academic Standing Policy from Catalog (Proposed New Wording)

Academic Suspension

A student on Academic Probation who fails to earn a UNI semester GPA of 2.0 will be placed on Academic Suspension. Academic Suspension is for a minimum period of one academic semester and is permanently noted on the student's official academic transcript. Once suspended, a student will not be allowed to re-enroll at the University of Northern Iowa until he/she has been academically reinstated.

Readmission after Suspension

Academic Suspension is for a minimum period of one regular academic semester. Only with strong justification, demonstrated potential for future success, and an agreement to enter the Academic Recovery Program (ARP) would a student be readmitted prior to sitting out for a semester.

An undergraduate student placed on Academic Suspension may be readmitted only after completing the *Application for Readmission from Academic Suspension* and receiving formal reinstatement from the Committee on Admission, Readmission, and Retention. Readmission prior to sitting out a semester is contingent on the Committee's recommendation, and the student's acceptance of entry into the ARP. The *Application for Readmission from Academic Suspension* can be completed and submitted online at <https://registrar.uni.edu/>. As a condition of reinstatement, a student will be subject to stipulations designed to increase academic success. A student who does not agree to these conditions will be denied early readmission or have her/his course schedule canceled for the semester.

A student who is readmitted after suspension, either through admission to the ARP program or after sitting out for one semester, will be placed on Academic Probation following Suspension beginning with the semester immediately following his/her return to UNI. A student readmitted after suspension must earn a minimum UNI semester GPA of 2.0 for each semester after being readmitted until his/her UNI cumulative GPA reaches 2.0 or higher. While on Academic Probation following Suspension, the student will be limited to 15 credit hours for a semester.

A second Academic Suspension will be for two regular semesters (summer sessions excluded). Students suspended for a second time may apply for early readmission through the Committee on Admission, Readmission, and Retention only after having sat out for a minimum of one regular semester. A third Academic Suspension is considered permanent. Only the most extenuating circumstances would warrant consideration for readmission from Academic Suspension a third time.

Undergraduate Academic Standing Policy from Catalog (Changes tracked)

Academic Suspension

A student on Academic Probation who fails to earn a UNI [semester GPA](#) of 2.0 will be placed on Academic Suspension. [Academic Suspension](#) is for a minimum period of one ~~calendar year~~[academic semester](#) and [is permanently](#) noted on the student's official academic transcript. [Once suspended](#), a student will not be allowed to re-enroll at the [University of Northern Iowa](#) until he/she has been academically reinstated.

Readmission after Suspension

Academic Suspension is for a minimum period of one ~~calendar year~~[regular academic year](#)~~has elapsed~~[semester](#). ~~Only the most extenuating circumstances would warrant consideration for readmission before the minimum of one regular academic year has elapsed~~[Only with strong justification, demonstrated potential for future success, and an agreement to enter the Academic Recovery Program \(ARP\) would a student be readmitted prior to sitting out for a semester.](#)

An undergraduate student ~~who has been~~ placed on [Academic Suspension](#) may be readmitted only after completing the [Application for Readmission from Academic Suspension](#) and receiving [formal reinstatement](#) from the Committee on Admission, Readmission, and Retention. [Readmission prior to sitting out a semester is contingent on the Committee's recommendation, and the student's acceptance of entry into the ARP.](#) The [Application for Readmission from Academic Suspension](#) can be completed and submitted online at <https://registrar.uni.edu/>. As a condition of reinstatement, a student ~~may~~[will be](#) subject to stipulations designed to increase academic success. A student who does not agree to these conditions ~~may~~[will](#) be [denied readmission](#) or have her/his course schedule canceled for [the semester](#).

A student who is readmitted after suspension, [either through admission to the ARP program or after sitting out for one semester](#), will be placed [on Academic](#) Probation following Suspension beginning with [the semester](#) immediately following his/her return to UNI. A [student readmitted](#) after suspension must earn a minimum UNI [semester GPA](#) of 2.0 for each semester after being readmitted until his/her [UNI cumulative](#) GPA reaches 2.0 or higher. While on Academic [Probation following](#) Suspension, the student will be limited to ~~4~~[15](#) credit hours [for a](#) semester.

[A second Academic Suspension will be for two regular semesters \(summer sessions excluded\). Students suspended for a second time may apply for early readmission through the Committee on Admission, Readmission, and Retention only after having sat out for a minimum of one regular semester. A third Academic Suspension is considered permanent. Only the most extenuating circumstances would warrant consideration for readmission from Academic Suspension a ~~second~~\[third\]\(#\) time.](#)