Academic Standards

Academic Obligations

All students are expected to be diligent in the pursuit of their courses of study in order that both they and the State receive maximum benefit from the educational opportunities provided. Each student is responsible for his or her enrollments and timely adds, drops and withdrawals following campus policy.

Students are expected to satisfy the academic demands required by their instructors in such ways as they may set forth, in order to satisfy the instructor that they are performing their assignments in a proper manner.

Instructors are expected to give first priority to meeting their scheduled classes and other assigned responsibilities, including keeping regular office hours for student conferences.

In classroom settings, instructors have the authority and responsibility to establish rules, maintain order, and to dismiss students from a class session for violation of the rules or misconduct. Violations or misconduct warranting more than a single dismissal from a class session should be referred by the instructor to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (805-756-2794) for disciplinary action.

Expected Academic Progress (EAP) Policy

Expected Academic Progress is defined as making appropriate degree progress each academic year by earning a certain percentage of degree applicable units that meet major, support, general education, concentration, and free elective (if applicable) requirements that are directly associated with the student’s declared major.

Expected Academic Progress (EAP) is monitored for all students every spring quarter. Students who fall behind in their EAP will be designated as having an EAP deficiency and may be required to meet with their academic advisor. Although this designation will not be noted on their transcript, students will be expected to make up this deficiency.

Those students who are required to meet with their advisor are expected to review and discuss their academic progress, and to create a reasonable academic plan to help get the student back on track. Attending summer session, either at Cal Poly, a community college, or another regionally accredited institution may be suggested. Should the student decide to attend another institution, he or she must confirm that the courses they decide to take at that institution will apply to their Cal Poly degree requirements upon transfer.

If the student continues to have an EAP deficiency, their department or college may have a hold placed on their registration for the next term or place them on Administrative Academic Probation (see the section on Administrative Academic Probation).

Those students who have a demonstrated need to attend Cal Poly on a part-time basis for at least three consecutive quarters may be considered exempt from the EAP policy. These students will be required to submit an EAP Exemption Request through their advisors in order to be evaluated for exemption.

In addition to the university’s EAP policy, the College of Engineering has additional requirements. Please see the College of Engineering Advising Center for details.

I. Native EAP Policy

Every full-time undergraduate student is required to make reasonable academic progress toward completion of the bachelor’s degree. EAP is monitored for all Cal Poly students in order to help them graduate in a timely manner.

Students entering Cal Poly as first-time freshmen and who are enrolled in four-year degree programs (e.g., BA, BS, BFA) are expected to graduate in twelve quarters.

Normally, this will not include summer terms, as summer is considered an opportunity to make up for any lack of progress in prior quarters or to bank progress for future quarters.

To maintain Expected Academic Progress, the following standards should be met by the end of each respective year:

First year: Completion of at least 20% of the total number of units required for the degree.

Second year: Completion of at least 45% of the total number of units required for the degree.

Third year: Completion of at least 75% of the total number of units required for the degree.

Fourth year: Completion of at least 100% of the total number of units required for the degree.

Example: A student enrolled in a four-year degree program requiring 180 total units would need to complete no fewer than 36 units by the end of the first year, no fewer than 81 units by the end of the second year, no fewer than 135 by the end of the third year, and no fewer than 180 by the end of the fourth year.

To determine the standards for programs requiring more than 180 total units, multiply the total units required by .20, .45, .75, or 1.0 for each respective year. Students enrolled in a five-year degree (e.g., BArch, BLA) or blended programs must also demonstrate Expected Academic Progress and should consult with their major department for specific requirements.

Benchmark Courses: In addition to monitoring the number of required units completed, some departments
may identify specific benchmark courses that should be completed by the end of each respective year. Students should check with their advisor for such requirements.

**Degree Applicable Units:** Departments rely on data derived from each student’s Degree Progress Report (DPR) to verify that the expected number of units completed constitute degree-applicable units (units that advance the student toward degree completion). In tallying these units for the purpose of monitoring EAP, degree-applicable credits earned from Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and accredited baccalaureate-level transfer work will be included.

**Concentrations:** If the student’s major requires a concentration, units taken for the concentration are included in assessing the EAP. The concentration should be declared no later than reaching 90 units (junior standing).

**Minors:** Minors are optional at Cal Poly and are not a part of a student’s EAP. Depending on the student’s major, courses taken for the minor may or may not represent degree-applicable units (see “Maximum Units” below). Students who decide to pursue a minor should declare their minor no later than the end of their junior year. Minors must be completed within the EAP requirements identified (i.e., maximum number of units and quarters allowed for the degree). No minor will be awarded after the baccalaureate degree requirements have been met.

**Maximum Units:** Students graduating on time (this would be 12 quarters, excluding summers, for students enrolled in four-year degree programs) have no cap on the number of units they may complete at Cal Poly. Students who do not graduate on time may complete no more than 24 Cal Poly units above the number required for the degree. Exceeding the allowable 24 units may result in a hold being placed on the student’s registration or the student being placed on administrative academic probation. The student will be required to submit a Degree Completion Plan to the major department before he or she is allowed to continue their education at Cal Poly. The Degree Completion Plan may only include degree applicable units as the student will not be allowed to take non-degree applicable classes during this period. In tallying the Maximum Units, only Cal Poly units will be included. Credit earned from AP, IB, and transfer work will not be used in the Maximum Units calculation.

**Failure to make reasonable academic progress** as prescribed by this policy may result in a hold being placed on the student’s registration or the student being placed on administrative-academic probation. Notification that a hold has been placed or being placed on administrative-academic probation will be sent to the student’s Cal Poly email address. Continued failure to meet EAP standards may result in disqualification from the University.

**Exemptions:** Students who have to comply with an externally imposed set of degree progress standards (e.g., athletes following NCAA regulations) may continue to follow those guidelines. Other students for whom the Expected Academic Progress policy represents undue hardship may appeal for exemption through their advisors. Such appeals should be supported with documentation as appropriate (e.g., a physician’s note).

**II. Transfer EAP Policy**

Every full-time undergraduate student is required to make reasonable academic progress toward completion of their bachelor’s degree. EAP is monitored for all Cal Poly students in order to help them graduate in a timely manner. Ideally, those who enter Cal Poly as upper division transfer students and who are enrolled in four-year degree programs (BA, BS, BFA) are expected to graduate in two years (six quarters). However, EAP policy does allow students three years (nine quarters, excluding summer quarters) to complete their degree requirements at Cal Poly, should they still have remaining lower division requirements after they are admitted as junior transfers.

To maintain Expected Academic Progress, the following standards should be met by the end of the specified year of study at Cal Poly (note that these standards are based on the assumption that all upper division transfer students enter with at least 90 degree-applicable units and are General Education (GE) certified for lower division GE not specified by the major):

- **First year:** Completion of at least 55% of the total number of units required for the degree.
- **Second year:** Completion of at least 80% of the total number units required for the degree.
- **Third year:** Completion of 100% of the total number of units required for the degree.

Example: A transfer student enrolled in a four-year degree program requiring 180 total units would need to have completed no fewer than 99 degree-applicable units by the end of the first year, no fewer than 144 degree-applicable units by the end of the second year, and no fewer than 180 degree-applicable units by the end of the third year of study.

To determine the standards for programs requiring more than 180 total units, multiply the total units required by .55 or .80 or 1.0 for each respective year. Students enrolled in five-year degrees (e.g., BArch, BLA) or blended programs must also demonstrate Expected Academic Progress and should consult with their major department for specific requirements.

**Benchmark Courses:** In addition to monitoring the number of degree-applicable units completed, some departments may identify specific benchmark courses that should be completed by the end of each respective year. Students should check with their advisor for such requirements.

**Degree Applicable Units:** Departments rely on data derived from each student’s Degree Progress Report (DPR)
to verify that the minimum number of units completed constitute degree-applicable units (units that advance the student toward degree completion). In tallying these units for the purpose of monitoring satisfactory progress, degree-applicable credit earned from Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and accredited baccalaureate level transfer work will be included.

Concentrations: If the student’s major requires a concentration, units taken for the concentration are included in assessing the EAP. The concentration should be declared as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second quarter of study at Cal Poly.

Minors: Minors are optional at Cal Poly and are not a part of a student’s Expected Academic Progress. Depending on the student’s major, courses taken for the minor may or may not represent degree-applicable units (See “Maximum Units” below). Students electing a minor should declare the minor as soon as possible and no later than the end of the first year of study at Cal Poly. Minors must be completed within the EAP requirements identified (e.g., maximum number of units and quarters allowed for the major). No minor will be awarded after the baccalaureate degree requirements have been met.

Maximum Units: Transfer students graduating on time (in 9 quarters, excluding summers, for transfer students enrolled in four-year degree programs) have no cap on the number of units they may complete at Cal Poly. Transfer students who are NOT on track to graduate on time may complete no more than 24 Cal Poly units above the number required for the degree. Exceeding the allowable 24 units may result in a hold placed on the student’s registration or the student being placed on administrative-academic probation. A Degree Completion Plan must be submitted to the major department before they will be allowed to continue their education at Cal Poly; such transfer students may enroll only in degree-applicable units. In tallying the Maximum Units, only Cal Poly units will be included. Credit earned from AP, IB, and transfer work will not be used in the Maximum Units calculation.

Failure to make reasonable academic progress as prescribed by this policy may result in a hold being placed on the student’s registration or the student being placed on administrative-academic probation. Notification that a hold has been placed or being placed on administrative-academic probation will be sent to the student’s Cal Poly email address. Continued failure to meet EAP standards may result in disqualification from the University.

Exemptions: Students complying with an externally imposed set of degree progress standards (e.g., athletes following NCAA regulations) may continue to follow those guidelines. Other students for whom the Expected Academic Progress policy represents undue hardship may appeal for exemption through their advisors. Such appeals should be supported with documentation as appropriate (e.g., a physician’s note).

Academic Probation and Disqualification

The quality of academic performance is considered in the determination of a student's eligibility to remain enrolled. Uniform standards for academic probation or disqualification, and for administrative-academic probation or disqualification, are in effect at all campuses of the California State University. Undergraduate students may be placed on academic probation and later be disqualified, or be placed on administrative-academic probation and later be disqualified, when they do not meet these standards.

Students who have been placed on academic probation, administrative-academic probation, or who have been notified of their disqualification may request review of such action by the dean of the college taking the action. Students who have been disqualified for inadequate progress or performance are not readmitted until presentation of satisfactory evidence that they have improved their chances of academic success. The request for readmission is referred to the dean of the college in which the student wishes to enroll.

Students on academic probation may not participate on intercollegiate teams nor may they hold positions of leadership in student organizations or student government groups. These include, but are not limited to, such groups as: athletic teams, debate teams, drama casts, judging teams, ASI councils, boards and committees. Such students may not hold an office in a student organization, nor may they be editors, managers, or hold similar positions on student publications. However, students on academic probation may participate in such activities as club membership, intramurals, and music that do not include travel and the official representation of the University.

Certain groups may have set higher standards than the minimum for specific positions or areas of responsibility that require considerable commitments of time and energy.

An undergraduate student becomes subject to academic probation or disqualification under the conditions shown below. For minimum scholarship standards applicable to graduate and post-baccalaureate students see the Graduate Programs section.

I. Academic Probation

An undergraduate student is automatically placed on academic probation when the grade point average drops below 2.0 (C). The grade point average applies to the current term (unadjusted for any subsequent grade forgiveness), the Cal Poly cumulative, or the higher education cumulative. The student is advised promptly, by email or other means, of being placed on probation. It is the student’s responsibility to check his/her campus email account regularly.

Note: For first-time freshmen with Cal Poly coursework only, academic probation in their first quarter of attendance will also equate to subject to disqualification (see below).
II. Academic Disqualification

A. An undergraduate student is subject to disqualification when any of the following is true:

1. The student’s Cal Poly cumulative, or higher education cumulative grade point average is below 2.0.
2. The student is on academic probation for two consecutive quarters.
3. The student has been on academic probation for four non-consecutive quarters.

An undergraduate student who is subject to disqualification may be disqualified at the discretion of his/her college.

B. An undergraduate student will be disqualified when either of the following is true:

1. The student has been on academic probation three consecutive quarters.
2. The student has been on academic probation three or more non-consecutive quarters and has a current Cal Poly cumulative or higher education cumulative grade point average that is below 2.0.

III. Notice of Disqualification

Students who are disqualified at the end of a quarter are notified before the beginning of the next consecutive regular quarter. Students disqualified at the beginning of a summer enrollment break are notified at least one month before the start of the fall quarter.

The Office of the Registrar will notify the student by email. It is the student's responsibility to check his/her campus email account regularly.

IV. Administrative-Academic Probation

An undergraduate or graduate student may be placed on administrative-academic probation by action of the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled for any of the following reasons:

A. Withdrawal from all or a substantial portion of a program of studies in two successive terms or in any three terms. (Note: a student whose withdrawal is directly associated with a chronic or recurring medical condition or its treatment is not subject to administrative-academic probation for such withdrawal.)

B. Repeated failure to make Expected Academic Progress (see the section on Expected Academic Progress) toward the stated degree or program objective, including that resulting from assignment of 15 units of NC, when such failure appears to be due to circumstances within the control of the student.

C. Failure to comply, after due notice, with an academic requirement or regulation which is routine for all students or a defined group of students.

When such action is taken, the student is notified in writing and is provided with the conditions for removal from probation and the circumstances which would lead to disqualification, should probation not be removed.

Academic Petitions

Academic petitions are handled through the academic affairs division of the University. The process of review may include the academic department, academic advising offices, administrative offices, and/or college dean's office. Typical academic petitions include, but are not limited to, transferring from one program to another, academic requirement or policy deviation requests, and admission/re-admission issues. Contact the appropriate office for specific academic petition procedures.

Academic Petition Appeals

Following a petition decision, and under limited circumstances, students may appeal to the Vice Provost for Programs and Planning or his/her designee. The right to an appeal is not guaranteed and an appeal is only granted if the student can show that one or more of the following exist:

1. A requirement or policy was incorrectly applied to the petition.
2. A requirement or policy is unclear or ambiguous.
3. There is new information that should be considered in the evaluation of the petition.
4. There are special circumstances warranting the granting of the appeal.

The granting of an academic petition appeal gives students the opportunity to present the merits of their petition to the Vice Provost. The Vice Provost’s decisions regarding appeals represent the University’s final decision on academic petitions. Contact the Office of Academic Programs at 805 756-2246 for more information on the procedures for filing an academic petition appeal.

Student Grievances

The University provides students with a variety of mechanisms to address student grievances or concerns. In all such matters, the University encourages students to attempt to resolve their grievance or concern at the source of the issue (i.e., with the professor, department chair or administrator, or college associate dean). The Dean of Students’ Office (805-756-0327) is available to any campus community member to assist with identifying and clarifying appropriate campus policies and procedures for addressing student grievances or concerns.

For general questions about grievances, contact the Dean of Students’ Office, 805-756-0327. The following list contains the offices or programs designated to address the more common student grievances at the University:

- **Grade Grievances** – The Fairness Board: Contact the Academic Senate Office, 805-756-1258 (See page 16 for more detail on the functions of this Board)
Eligibility for Intercollegiate Athletics

Eligibility for competition in intercollegiate athletics is regulated in general by the rules of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and specifically by current Conference and university regulations. The Director of Athletics is responsible for maintaining up-to-date intercollegiate athletics eligibility rules applicable to the University. The Faculty Athletic Representative has the responsibility for the interpretation of the NCAA, Conference, and university rules for determining student eligibility to represent the University in intercollegiate athletic events.

Eligibility for Student Activities

Students on either academic or disciplinary probation may not participate on intercollegiate teams nor may they hold positions of leadership in chartered student organizations or coded student government groups. Students on probation may participate in such student organizations and groups as members but they may not hold an office or represent the University or the Associated Students, Incorporated, in any official capacity.

Student Conduct and Discipline

It is expected that all Cal Poly students are enrolled for serious educational pursuits and that they conduct themselves so as to preserve an appropriate atmosphere of learning. It is also expected that all students who enroll at Cal Poly are willing to assume the responsibilities of citizenship in the campus community. Association in such a community is voluntary, and students may withdraw from it at any time that they consider the obligations of membership disproportionate to the benefits. While enrolled, students are subject to campus authority that includes the prerogative of dismissing those whose conduct is inimical to the aims of an institution of higher education.

While enrolled, students are subject to the regulations governing discipline stated in Education Code Section 66017 and in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, Sections 41301–41302, and to such rules and regulations as have been approved and promulgated by authority of the President. Copies of Title 5 California Code of Regulations 41301 and 41302, which deal specifically with student disciplinary regulations, are available to all students in the "Appendix" of this catalog. Other applicable regulations are contained in this Catalog, in the Campus Administrative Policies, the Standards for Student Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities, and in other official university publications, including the Cal Poly web site.