

Westbrook College of Health Professions
Graduate Program Progression Policies
6.15.14 (REVISED)

I. Admissions

A. PREAMBLE: The Westbrook College of Health Professions (WCHP) promotes diversity in its student body and non-discrimination in its policies. This effort is supported by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Diversity, whose goal is “to promote a welcoming and inclusive campus environment that embraces individual differences regardless of race and ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religious conviction, socio-economic status, gender or gender identity.”
(<http://www.une.edu/studentlife/multicultural/index.cfm>)

B. AN APPLICANT TO ANY GRADUATE PROGRAM IN WCHP MUST:

1. Hold at minimum a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. College or University or the equivalent from any non-U.S. institution. (*Some exceptions apply*)
2. Have a cumulative undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) for all credits earned or for the last 60 credit hours. This standard may be waived if the applicant demonstrates exceptional quality in other elements of the individual graduate program’s admission standards.
3. Meet any other standards established by the graduate program the student is applying to enter, if applicable. (Technical standards, criminal background check)
4. Meet the minimum required TOEFL score (if non-English speaking) (*embed link here*).
5. Provide a transcript and letter of good academic and professional standing if enrolled in a professional program in a similar discipline from that Program’s Director or Department Chair.
6. Comply with the University’s Immunization Policy prior to matriculation.

C. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT AN APPLICANT:

Provide documentation of volunteer and/or job-shadowing experience in settings represented by the profession of interest. (Preparation for any professional degree is enhanced by an increased familiarity with the unique roles and responsibilities of that profession.)

II. Academic Standards

A. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Graduate education is demanding and exacting. In campus-based and on-line programs, students are expected to be present, prepared for class, and actively engaged as evidenced by critical thinking and meaningful participation. Absences can and do occur, but students should inform their instructors in advance if they know they will be absent. Each program is responsible for clarifying expectations and requirements when absences occur.

B. GRADING:

All programs in the Westbrook College of Health Professions use the following scale to determine grades:

A	94-100	B-	80-83	D	64-69
A-	90-93	C+	77-79	F	<64
B+	87-89	C	74-76		
B	84-86	C-	70-73		

NOTE: Fractional numeric grades are rounded at the discretion of the instructor

NOTE: Standards for Pass in Pass/Fail courses are determined by each program.

C. GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA):

Equivalent quality points assigned to grades are as follows:

A	4.0	B-	2.75	D	1.00
A-	3.75	C+	2.5	F	0.00
B+	3.5	C	2.0		
B	3.0	C-	1.75		

D. GRADE STANDARDS:

1. A minimum GPA of 3.0 (both cumulative and per semester), or “Pass” in each Pass/Fail course, is required for good standing in any graduate program in WCHP. Falling below that standard at any time will result in a referral to the Student Development Committee (SDC) for review, and could result in probation. Failure to return to good standing in the time specified by the program may result in dismissal from the program.
2. A course grade of “C-“ or below in a graded course or “Fail” in a Pass/Fail course, will result in an immediate referral to the SDC for review and may result in a delay in the student’s progress, placement on probation, and/or additional consequences and specific requirements as recommended by the SDC and documented per the process outlined in Section III.B.
3. Students who earn a grade of “C+” or “C” in any course or “Fail” in a pass/fail course will be referred at a minimum for Academic Advising
4. If it is determined to be appropriate for a student to retake a course, a grade of “B” or better, or “Pass” in a Pass/Fail course is expected, and failure to achieve this standard may result in dismissal from the program.

(See section “III. Student Progression” for procedural details)

E. CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS:

Students enrolled in WCHP are expected to conduct themselves according to the following policies, procedures, guidelines, and expectations. Students are responsible for seeking clarification of any aspect of the conduct code about which they have questions, especially in the event of receiving written notice of conduct concerns and/or violations. It is expected that students will:

1. Read and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in the *UNE Student Handbook* ; access: [UNE Student Handbook](#)
 - a. Content: Policies and procedures, including the University Conduct Code, which governs the conduct of all UNE students.
 - b. Context: Applies to all on-campus and UNE-sponsored off-campus activities, including clinical observations, clinical practica, and community service.
2. Become familiar with the Code of Ethics for their chosen profession, and to uphold these standards in all relevant settings (E.1.b. above):

a. Nurse Anesthesia:

<http://www.aana.com/resources2/professionalpractice/Documents/PPM%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>

b. Occupational Therapy:

<http://www.aota.org/consumers/ethics/39880.aspx>

c. Physical Therapy:

[APTA Core Ethics Document](#)

d. Physician Assistant:

http://www.aapa.org/your_pa_career/becoming_a_pa/resources/item.aspx?id=1518&terms=Code%20of%20Ethics

e. Social Work:

<http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

f. Public Health

<http://www.apha.org/NR/rdonlyres/1CED3CEA-287E-4185-9CBD-BD405FC60856/0/ethicsbrochure.pdf>

3. Adopt the following standards of professional behavior, applicable to students across all health professions. Students are expected to progressively develop these skills and abilities during their course of study and to endeavor to maintain these standards in all on-campus and UNE-sponsored off-campus activities, including clinical and fieldwork experiences and relevant community service.

These specific professional behaviors include the demonstration of:

a. Communication Skills- communicate effectively (i.e. verbal, non-verbal, reading, writing, and listening) for varied audiences and purposes.

b. Interpersonal Skills – interact effectively with patients and clients, families, colleagues, other health care professionals, and community members.

c. Cultural Sensitivity– be aware of, respect, and acknowledge cultural differences.

d. Problem Solving – recognize and define problems, analyze data, develop and implement solutions, and evaluate outcomes.

e. Use of Time and Resources – manage time and resources effectively to obtain the maximum possible benefit.

- f. Responsibility – be accountable for the outcomes of personal and professional actions and to follow through on commitments that encompass the profession within the scope of work, community and social responsibilities.
- g. Critical Thinking - question logically; identify, generate and evaluate elements of logical argument; recognize and differentiate facts, appropriate or faulty inferences and assumptions; and distinguish relevant from irrelevant information. Utilize, analyze, and critically interpret scientific evidence to develop a logical argument, and to understand how bias affects the decision making process.
- h. Use of Constructive Feedback – solicit and identify quality sources of feedback, reflect on and integrate the feedback, and provide meaningful feedback to others.
- i. Commitment to Learning – self direct learning and continually seek and apply new knowledge, behaviors, and skills.
- j. Health and Wellness – identify sources of stress and implement effective coping behaviors in relation to self, patient/clients and their families, members of the health care team and in life balance.

4. Facility-specific policies and procedures: Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures of host institutions for their clinical or field work placements and to act in accordance with those guidelines. (Students should refer to the relevant policies of the specific institution and/or consult with clinical preceptors or supervisors.)

5. Dress appropriately for the professional context and institutional setting, whether in a campus, community, or clinical setting. Usually this means “business casual” attire unless the clinical facility or fieldwork setting, or a specific event requires alternate attire. Nametags may be required or recommended in many settings. When in doubt, students should consult with their clinical instructor, site supervisor, or faculty member about specific dress code expectations or requirements at a particular facility or for a specific event.

6. Delivery of safe, competent care and related services, all of which underscore all aspects of professional practice. Specific standards of physical, social, and emotional safety are often defined within courses and clinical teaching sites. Accordingly, students are expected to demonstrate behaviors that uphold those standards. Failure to do may result in a referral for academic advising and/or a referral to the Student Development Committee. (See III.C.)

F: CONDUCT VIOLATIONS:

Improper, unethical, or unprofessional conduct may result in a referral to the Student Development Committee for review and recommendations. (This policy does not supplant the University Judicial Process, which states that “Any University employee or student may file a misconduct complaint against a University student if there is a reasonable, good faith belief that a violation has occurred.”) Depending on circumstances, a confirmed conduct violation may result in (a) remediation prior to progressing further in the program, (b) receiving a failing grade in a course, or (c) dismissal from UNE. In all cases, students will receive written notice regarding the nature of the conduct violation, its consequences, and any stipulated conditions for continuation in the program. All documentation related to conduct violations will become part of the student’s permanent record.

III. Student Progression:

In addition to course grades and clinical or field evaluations, student progression is monitored through three processes: (1) regular instructor evaluation of assignments and performance; (2) program level review through regularly scheduled Comprehensive Student Reviews; and (3) Student Development Committee (SDC) reviews as needed. Comprehensive reviews are the responsibility of the full faculty of each program. Each program also has an SDC, comprised of a minimum of three faculty members. Program Directors cannot serve on the SDC, but membership can include faculty from other college programs. The primary function of the SDC is to conduct reviews of student performance in order to assess whether a student can progress in a program, make a determination of student status, and make recommendations for action when a student has failed to maintain academic and professional standards, whether in class, clinical setting, or community.

A. EVALUATION OF ASSIGNMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The most sensitive and detailed assessment of student progress is that which is conducted on an everyday basis through the evaluation of assignments in the classroom and clinical performance. To enhance success, performance concerns should be addressed with the student by the instructor as soon as they arise and not held for mid-term reviews, or end-of term grades. This may also lead to involvement of the student’s advisor and/or the SDC as determined by the faculty member. (See II. D. for grade standards, and III. B.3.a.& b. for process)

B. COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT REVIEW:

At a pre-determined time or times in each semester, (but no later than mid-semester,) the faculty of each program will conduct a comprehensive review of student performance. Students’ standing will be noted as follows:

1. **Good Academic Standing:** Students who meet the minimum standards and requirements set by the program and UNE. Students in good standing may continue to progress without restriction toward graduation.
2. **Probationary Standing:** Students who remain on probation as a result of a prior SDC Review. Progress or concerns should be noted and discussed as needed at this time.
3. **Marginal Standing:** Concerns have been previously noted but were not of sufficient consequence to merit probation.

Any concerns newly identified by the Comprehensive Student Review may be referred for advising or to the SDC for resolution:

1. **Referral for Advising:** When initial or minor concerns are first noted by a faculty member *at or prior* to the Comprehensive Student Review, the respective faculty member will notify the student and the student's academic and/or field/clinical advisor(s) as appropriate to review the circumstances in person, and with the student. The content and action steps determined at any such meeting will be documented and shared with the student in writing within two business days.
2. **Referral to Student Development Committee:** If a resolution cannot be reached at the level of the advisor, or the concerns are substantial in nature, then the matter is referred to the SDC for a formal review. Significant concerns may include academic performance (e.g. falling below a 3.0 GPA for semester or cumulative, C- or below in course, or "Fail" in a Pass/Fail course) or professional conduct. (See below.)

C. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REVIEW

SDC reviews are intended to support students' academic progression, and are required in cases where a student is failing to maintain academic standards in the classroom or field placement, is accused of engaging in professionally inappropriate behavior, or is accused of violating academic integrity. An SDC review can be recommended by any faculty, including the student's or Program Director(PD), or the faculty as a whole as an outcome of the Comprehensive Student Review. In the event of an alleged breach of ethical conduct, any aggrieved or responsible party may request that an SDC Review be conducted. Through the review process, the SDC is responsible for examining the concerns cited, evaluating their merits, determining student status, and recommending a course of action.

1. Responsibilities of the Committee Chair:

The SDC Chair is responsible for notifying all involved parties including the student when a formal SDC Review is required and the rationale for it. When the rationale includes clinical or fieldwork concerns, every effort will be made to include the relevant parties from the clinical or fieldwork site in the meeting either in person, conference call or videoconference.

2. Responsibilities of the Committee:

The SDC is responsible for:

- a) gathering all pertinent information relevant to the stated concerns from all relevant parties, including the identified student, faculty, advisors, preceptors or field instructors.
- b) Determination of Student Status:
 - i) Marginal: This denotes that fact that concerns have been identified, and merit monitoring by the student's advisor(s).
 - ii) Probation: Probationary status allows a student to continue under certain specific criteria as determined by the SDC at a formal review. Students placed on probation will receive a letter from the PD outlining the conditions of probation and the steps required to return to good standing. Barring any exceptional circumstances, students who do not return to good standing within the specified time frame will be dismissed from the program.
 - iii) Return to good standing: Once a student has successfully completed the criteria specified in the SDC Review to the satisfaction of the SDC, the Committee will inform the PD who will send a letter to the student indicating return to good standing.
 - iv) Dismissal: Students may be dismissed for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to (1) unacceptable academic performance; (2) failure to remove probation status; or (3) a conduct violation.
- c) Recommending Actions steps:

The SDC will develop and recommend a plan of action to be taken to achieve stated outcomes, including the identification of responsible parties and expected dates of actions. This may include helping a student achieve educational objectives (e.g., remediation, use of the learning assistance center); employing alternate pathways to achieve educational objectives (e.g. extending field work hours beyond normal expectations, retaking a course); or specifying other terms for a student to remain in the program. The plan of action also describes the consequences for success

(e.g. removal of probationary status) or failure to comply with or achieve the stated goals (e.g., probation, dismissal, or other.)

- d) **Timetable:** The SDC decision re student status and recommended action steps are made within two (2) business days following the meeting(s) and communicated to the program director in writing. The PD reviews the report and seeks clarification if needed. The PD then communicates the action steps to the student in writing within five (5) business days.
- e) **Scheduling:** To insure the greatest chance for a successful outcome, educational and conduct concerns should be identified as early as possible, and the SDC Review process initiated promptly. Except in rare exceptions, this means a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the end of the current semester or term.

3. Responsibilities of the Student:

The student is responsible for participating in the SDC Review process. This includes providing information as requested and playing an active role in the development of the action steps.

4. Responsibilities of the Program Director:

The PD has a unique role as a member of the faculty while also providing administrative oversight for all program functions. In the case of SDC Reviews, the PD will review the determination of status by the SDC to ensure that policies have been followed and procedures implemented. In the case that the PD believes that there are any potential concerns about the process, such as procedural irregularities or additional information that should be considered, the PD will communicate these concerns to the SDC for reconsideration. The SDCs recommended action steps will be reviewed by the PD for logistical viability (faculty workload, support services, etc.). The PD will then either approve the plan as is or recommend modifications to the SDC. Following this step, the SDCs determination of status and recommended action steps will again be forwarded to the PD, who then communicates the outcome to the student.

5. Responsibilities of the Associate Dean(s):

The Associate Dean(s) serves as a consultant to the SDC and PD re policies and procedures on an as needed basis.

6. Student Appeals:

A student has the right to appeal to the Dean decisions affecting progression following the process outlined in the [UNE Student Handbook](#).

(PLEASE NOTE: Some of these procedures are expedited for online programs, please refer to the appropriate program Student Handbook or Director as needed)

D. ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES:

1. Leave of Absence (LOA). An LOA can be recommended by the Student Development Committee or be initiated as a student request. Students who desire to request a leave of absence are encouraged to begin the process with a discussion with their Academic Advisor. If a decision is made to proceed, a petition is completed by the student, signed by the Advisor, and submitted to the PD, who has final approval. Leaves of absence can be requested for academic, medical or other personal reasons, and are ordinarily granted for a period not to exceed one year. The petition form is available at: <http://www.une.edu/registrar/upload/leaveabsence.pdf>.

2. Withdrawal: Students wishing to withdraw for any circumstance must complete the required [University Withdrawal Form](#) . Official withdrawal also requires approval by the PD.

IV. Appeals, Grievances, and Complaints Other Than Academic Progression

Occasionally, a student may have a grievance regarding another issue. A student grievance with a faculty member should be addressed first directly with the faculty member. If a student is not satisfied following this step, the student may request a review by contacting the PD. The director has the discretion to address the concern directly, or to form a grievance committee. Questions about procedural options should be directed to the PD.

Grievances or complaints about other aspects of the program may be brought to a faculty member or the PD by an individual student or through student class representatives. If this does not successfully resolve the concern, a single student or a group of students may bring their complaint or grievance to the College Dean or other relevant administrative unit as per the guidelines in the UNE Student Handbook.

V. Support/remediation/learning assistance

Remediation is a process through which a student experiencing difficulty works to improve unsatisfactory performance and/or conduct issues. The intent is to increase the likelihood of a student's educational and professional success. It is a formal process, developed by faculty in conjunction with the student, and formally documented with

specific measurable and attainable outcomes. It may be initiated on the recommendation of a faculty member or required by the Student Development Committee, based on the judgment that the concern has the potential to be successfully addressed through reasonable strategies using available resources.

Any student who is offered the opportunity to develop a remediation plan, whether recommended or mandatory is strongly encouraged to seek input from the academic advisor, the PD, and other relevant stakeholders. Mandatory remediation plans are developed and presented by a student in writing to the Student Development Committee for approval. The terms specified in an approved plan must be successfully completed within the specified time lines of the plan. Failure to successfully complete the terms of a mandatory remediation plan will result in dismissal from the program.

Students are strongly encouraged to make full use of the services of the Learning Assistance Center: <http://www.une.edu/studentlife/portland/las/index.cfm> The staff of the LAC may be involved in remediation plans and their recommendations may be incorporated into an educational review in order to enhance achievement of the stated goals.

VI. Academic Integrity Policy of the University of New England:

“The University of New England values academic integrity in all aspects of the educational experience. Academic dishonesty in any form undermines this standard and devalues the original contributions of others. It is the responsibility of all members of the university community to actively uphold the integrity of the academy; failure to act, for any reason, is not acceptable. Charges of academic dishonesty will be reviewed by the dean of the appropriate College and, if upheld, will result at minimum in a failing grade on the assignment and a maximum of dismissal from the University of New England. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Cheating, copying, or the offering or receiving of unauthorized assistance or information.
2. Fabrication or falsification of data, results, or sources for papers or reports.
3. Actions that destroy or alter the work of another student.
4. Multiple submissions of the same paper or report for assignments in more than one course without permission of each instructor.
5. Plagiarism: the appropriation of records, research, materials, ideas, or the language of other persons or writers and the submission of them as one's own.”