Homewood Schools
Policy for Graduate Student Probation, Funding Withdrawal, and Dismissal
(Revised September 2011)

This policy addresses consequences of student underperformance, including funding withdrawal. Students who might lose financial support as a result of the termination of funding from an advisor’s sponsor should be given prompt notice, whenever possible.

1. Academic and Graduate Assistant Probation Notification
If it is determined that a graduate student has failed to meet minimum academic or graduate assistant (research assistant or teaching assistant) requirements, he/she may be placed on probation. This must be done with a formal letter and requires a meeting between the student and either his/her faculty advisor, his/her supervisor, the departmental director of graduate studies, or the department chair. The letter should clearly outline the student’s academic or graduate assistant shortcomings, indicate the corrective measures necessary to remain in the program or to retain funding, and state the length of the student’s probationary period (see section 2). Any funding ramifications for the student should be included as well. Departments must ensure receipt of the letter. A copy of the letter should be forwarded to the cognizant Dean (the Vice Dean for Humanities, Social Sciences, and Graduate Programs in the School of Arts and Sciences or the Vice Dean for Education in the School of Engineering) as well as the Office of Student Financial Services and the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (if appropriate).

2. Academic and Graduate Assistant Probation Timing
A student may be placed on probation at any time, however:

- If the probation can be resolved with coursework, the student should be notified before the first day of classes in a particular semester. He/she will have until the end of that semester (when grades are posted) before a final decision can be made.
- If the probation is related to research progress and cannot be resolved with coursework, the probation period must span at least 8 work weeks before a final decision can be made. Departments are at liberty to provide a longer probationary period.
- If the probation is related to teaching assistant performance, the probation period must span at least 4 in-semester work weeks before a final decision can be made. Departments are at liberty to provide a longer probationary period.
- If the probation is related to multiple aspects of the student’s work (e.g., coursework and research, teaching and research, coursework and teaching), the appropriate timing applies for each individual component, independent of the other component(s).*
3. Academic and Graduate Assistant Probation Appeal Process
A student may appeal the probation decision within ten business days, to the Program Chair, with a letter stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. The program must render a decision on the appeal within ten business days. The student may then appeal that decision within ten business days to the cognizant Dean, again, with a letter stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited.

4. Academic and Graduate Assistant Probation Final Decision Process
- If the probation can be resolved with coursework: As soon as possible, but no later than one month following the conclusion of the stated probationary period, the program must inform the student of his/her status based upon whether the student has met the requirements as stated in the probation letter. The options are as follows: (a) remove the student from probation, (b) extend the probationary period, or (c) dismiss the student.
- If the probation is related to research progress: Within one week following the conclusion of the stated probationary period, the program must inform the student of his/her status based on whether the student has met the requirements as stated in the probation letter. The options are as follows: (a) remove the student from probation, (b) extend the probationary period, (c) withdraw the student’s funding (if applicable) but permit the student to remain in the academic program, or (d) dismiss the student from the academic program; dismissal decisions must be made by the student’s home department. (NOTE: If the decision is to dismiss the student, he/she should be permitted to complete the semester if enrolled in coursework, but funding may be withdrawn following the conclusion of the probationary period.)
- If the probation is related to teaching assistant performance: Within one week following the conclusion of the stated probationary period, the program may inform the student of his/her status based on whether the student has met the requirements as stated in the probation letter. The options are as follows: (a) remove the student from probation, (b) extend the probationary period, or (c) withdraw the student’s teaching assistantship funding but permit the student to remain in the academic program.

In all cases, if the decision is to withdraw funding or dismiss the student, the action can be made effective immediately once the student is informed of the decision. However, departments are encouraged to provide a grace period to assist students in this transition.

5. Dismissal or Funding Withdrawal Notification
If the decision is to dismiss the student or withdraw funding, this must be done with a formal letter citing the reason for dismissal and requires a meeting between the student and either his/her faculty advisor, his/her supervisor, the departmental director of graduate studies or the department chair. This letter should contain information regarding the readmission process, if deemed appropriate. A copy of the letter should be forwarded to the cognizant Dean, the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Student Financial Services, and the Office of International Students and Scholars Services (if appropriate). Academic dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript at the request of the program and with the approval of the cognizant Dean.

6. Dismissal without Probation
A student may be dismissed without a formal probation period under three circumstances: (1) if he/she meets the conditions for dismissal based on coursework as stated by the academic program in its department handbook or on its website; (2) if he/she fails an oral or written
examination for which successful completion is necessary to continue in the program and whose retake options have been exhausted (as stated in the program’s degree requirements), or if he/she fails to meet any condition resulting from a qualifying or GBO exam; or (3) if he/she is expelled pursuant to Homewood Procedures for Handling Allegations of Misconduct by Full-Time and Part-Time Graduate Students, the KSAS Policy on Integrity in Research or the WSE Procedures for Dealing with Issues of Research Misconduct. Under these circumstances, programs are expected to follow the same procedures for Dismissal cited above (in section 5). In addition, students are also subject to immediate dismissal on non-academic grounds in accordance with the Homewood Procedures for Handling Allegations of Misconduct by Full-Time and Part-Time Graduate Students as well as applicable policies at http://www.jhu.edu/news_info/policy.

7. Funding Withdrawal without Probation
A student’s funding may be withdrawn without probation if the student is dismissed without probation (see above), or as the result of a decision rendered pursuant to the Homewood Procedures for Handling Allegations of Misconduct by Full-Time and Part-Time Graduate Students, the KSAS Policy on Integrity in Research or the WSE Procedures for Dealing with Issues of Research Misconduct. A student’s funding may also be withdrawn without probation if the student is found to have egregiously disregarded his/her research or teaching duties [or as appropriate under University or Homewood Schools policy]; such action requires the approval of the cognizant Dean.

8. Dismissal Consequences
When a student is dismissed from the university, several consequences follow:

- The Office of the Registrar cancels the student’s registration for the next semester and authorizes a refund of tuition paid for that semester, if applicable.
- Notation of dismissal may be placed on the student’s transcript at the request of the program and with the approval of the cognizant Dean.
- The Office of Student Financial Services suspends financial aid to the student and work-study aid.
- The Office of International Student and Scholar Services performs duties as required by U.S. federal regulations regarding persons not eligible to study at the university.

9. Readmission Following Dismissal
On rare occasions, students may be presented with the option to be readmitted. The terms for readmitting a student who has been dismissed are established by individual departments. The readmission process should be described in the dismissal letter, if deemed appropriate. Students who have been dismissed should discuss the readmission process with their advisor.

10. Dismissal or Funding Withdrawal Appeal Procedures
A student may appeal the dismissal or funding withdrawal decision within five business days, to the Program Chair, with a letter stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. The program must render a decision on the appeal within five business days. The student may then appeal that decision within five business days to the cognizant Dean, again, with a letter stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. In the case of funding withdrawal, the Department will continue funding the graduate assistant during the appeal process, provided that the graduate assistant continues with his/her assistantship duties. The student’s visa and
registration status will not be affected until the appeal process is complete. If the student believes the decision was made in an arbitrary or capricious manner, he/she may file a grievance following the Homewood Grievance Policy (see http://www.grad.jhu.edu/downloads/HwGrievancePolicy_Final.pdf). If the decision is made to dismiss an international student, immigration regulations require that the student depart the country within fifteen days. This does not preclude the student from filing a grievance, however.

NOTE: Graduate students who believe that their language ability prevents them from properly expressing themselves during the written appeal process may seek assistance in composing the appeal from the JHU Office of the Dean of Students or the JHU Graduate Representative Organization.

*As an example, consider a student placed on probation for coursework as well as for his/her research assistantship at the start of a semester. If after eight weeks, the advisor wishes to remove the student from probation relating to the research assistantship, the coursework probation remains in effect until the end of the semester. However, if after eight weeks the research is still deficient, the student’s funding may be withdrawn or s/he may be dismissed.