

# ACADEMIC POLICIES AND GENERAL REGULATIONS

## Philosophy of Education

Fairfield University has, as its primary objective, the development of the creative intellectual potential of its students within a context of liberal arts-based education in the Jesuit tradition.

Fairfield believes in the particular excellence of a liberal education. In an effort to achieve this objective, it requires each student to take courses in English writing, history, philosophy, religious studies, language, mathematics, natural science, social/behavioral science, visual/performing art, and literature. Thus assured of a basic, well-rounded education, students are free to pursue a major field of study in preparation for scholarly or professional pursuits.

To assist students in the quest for truth, the University promotes dialogue between teacher and student, between student and student, between teacher and teacher. This dialogue takes place in an environment of absolute freedom of inquiry.

## Normal Academic Progress

### Academic Year

The academic year begins in early September and ends in late May, with recess periods in the winter and spring. It is divided into two semesters, each extending over a period of about 15 weeks. The semester hour is the unit of instructional credit. The class day begins at 8:00am and is divided into class periods of 50, 75, or 150 minutes and laboratory periods of two, three, or four hours.

### Admission Expectations

Undergraduate students admitted into the University on a full-time basis have the benefit of co-creating a premiere educational opportunity, one that attends to their educational, spiritual, vocational, and civic development across an intentional four-year course of study. We seek, of course, to expand students' awareness, during their time at Fairfield, of the many possibilities a Fairfield education makes available to them.

Undergraduate students admitted into the University on a full-time basis are expected to remain full-time until they graduate.

In the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dolan School of Business, the Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies, and the School of Engineering, consultation with the appropriate dean is required for a full-time student to switch to part-time status. Rules and their financial implications for movement from full-time to part-time will be clear at the time of matriculation. Reasons to switch may include personal hardship, such as a documented medical condition that requires a reasonable accommodation, unexpected and substantial family responsibilities, the first semester of return from an academic or medical leave of absence, fifth year seniors, etc.

Unexpected emergency situations that arise during a term would be handled through the normal withdrawal process. Part-time status may be an alternative to a full educational leave of absence.

### Course Load

Fairfield University desires to see all undergraduate students make normal progress toward graduation. The normal course load for a

matriculated student is five courses (each bearing three or four credit hours) per semester, equivalent to 15 to 20 credit hours. To maintain full-time status, a matriculated student must be registered for a minimum of 12 credit hours each semester.

### Online Courses

All full-time undergraduate students are eligible to enroll in *one* online course per semester. Typically, first-year students may not enroll in online courses during their first semester. Exceptions to these procedures for full-time students may be made in extenuating circumstances and must be vetted through the academic dean.

Part-time students are not restricted to one online course.

Students should be aware that some online courses are condensed, requiring the workload of a traditional semester in only 5-7 weeks. Online courses sometimes have irregular start and end dates, often beginning at the halfway point of the semester. As with semester-long lecture-based courses, class enrollment is firmly capped, and availability may be limited.

### Credit Hours

Three-credit courses at Fairfield University meet for 150 minutes per week, equally divided over one, two, or three meetings. Four credit courses meet a minimum of 200 minutes per week in various configurations.

### Classification System

Student classification is based on total credit hours earned.

Class	Credit Hours Earned	Year
First Year	0-29	1
Sophomore	30-59	2
Junior	60-89	3
Senior	90+	4

### Degree Requirements

At the time of graduation, a student must have earned a minimum of 120 credits and completed at least 38 three- or four-credit courses, depending on the course of study. However, no simple accumulation of credits is sufficient in itself to qualify for a degree from Fairfield University. Rather, students are expected to have completed with success all of the assigned courses that constitute the curriculum of their choice. The curriculum consists of courses that fall into the required categories of core curriculum, major, and electives. A second major, minor, and concentration are also an option. Students must have a minimum grade average of 2.0 (C) or better overall and in their major. Students must abide by the terms of the University's residency requirement, set forth below. In addition, students are expected to complete their undergraduate degrees within 10 years of beginning their studies.

### Registration Requirement

All matriculated full-time undergraduate students must register for classes by December 1 for the following spring semester, and by May 1 for the following fall semester. If a student is not registered by these dates, the University will presume them to be withdrawn at the end of the current semester. At that time, all residence hall and financial aid commitments will be terminated.

## Residency Requirement

To merit a Fairfield University degree, at least 60 credits must be taken at Fairfield. Furthermore, the final 30 credits must be earned at Fairfield University.

## Graduation Information

Diplomas are awarded in January, May, and August. Students who have been awarded diplomas in the August or January dates just prior to May are invited to participate in the May graduation ceremony.

Students who do not complete all of the requirements for their undergraduate degree may be granted permission by their Dean to participate in the Undergraduate Commencement ceremonies if they meet the following criteria:

- End of spring term major GPA and overall GPA: Student must have a minimum overall grade point average of 2.00 and must meet the appropriate major GPA, which is 2.00 unless otherwise stated.<sup>1</sup>
- Student must need no more than three classes to fulfill degree requirements. These courses must be taken at Fairfield in the summer immediately following Commencement.
- Student must send a written request to their Dean's office with proof of course registration by April 15th prior to Commencement.
- Student names will be announced at graduation, but they will not appear in the printed commencement materials.
- In the event a student passes away, the Provost/Chief Academic Officer (or designee) will award a posthumous degree if **all** degree requirements are complete. In situations where coursework is not complete, the Provost/Chief Academic Officer (or designee) in consultation with the student's Dean will consider awarding a degree in memoriam certificate.

<sup>1</sup> Students whose GPA is contingent on end of term grades will be notified of the approval or denial of their request when grades are posted.

## Attendance

### Class Attendance

All students are expected to attend every regularly scheduled class session. The impact of attendance on grading is specified in the syllabus for each course. Unexcused absences may be reported to the appropriate academic dean.

Faculty members should have a policy for dealing with student absence on the syllabus for each course. If a student will miss a class due to an illness/injury, the professor should be notified according to the policy on the syllabus. If a student will miss an exam, quiz or in class presentation due to illness/injury or another type of emergency, the professor should be contacted beforehand. A faculty member may request that the student provide verification of the absence from a health care provider. It is within the purview of the faculty member to determine when or whether a student absence will be excused.

For further information regarding student absences, please see the Policies and Procedures section of the Student Handbook.

## Released Time

A student participating in a University-sponsored event has the right to be excused without penalty or grade jeopardy from exams, student presentations, attendance, and other classroom events during that time,

provided the student makes up the required work in the fashion mutually agreed upon by the professor and the student.

Students participating in such University-sponsored events will be allowed to make up any major exams, tests, or quizzes they miss in a course when they are involved in a scheduled event provided that participating students, or the faculty moderator, inform all their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, or as soon thereafter as possible, once scheduling is confirmed.

University-sponsored events covered by this policy are defined as follows:

- Athletics
  - all varsity sporting events, including post season tournaments
  - all club sporting events
- Others
  - concerts, plays, or other group performances where the absence of a member would detract from the overall performance
- Departmental Clubs are not included in this policy.

## Grading System

### Grades

The quality of student performance in coursework is graded according to the official marks of A, B, C, D, and F. These marks have the following meanings:

A	Outstanding achievement
B	Superior level of achievement
C	Acceptable level of achievement with course material
D	Minimal achievement, but passing
F	Unacceptable level of achievement; course must be repeated to obtain credit

The plus (+) may be added to grades of B or C to indicate work performed at the top of that range.

The minus (-) may be added to grades A, B, or C to indicate work performed below that range.

A semester's grade will normally be determined according to the following procedure:

Each course has a syllabus that details the evaluative components of the course and their weighting in determining the final grade

The form of the final, end-of-semester comprehensive evaluation (written examination, take-home, oral exam, paper, etc.) must appear on the syllabus at the beginning of the semester. No form of the final evaluation is to be due prior to the date assigned by the Registrar for that course's final examination. Students are not required to take more than two exams in any final exam day.

In addition to the foregoing academic grades, which indicate the quality of student performance, the notations I (Incomplete) or W (Withdrawal) may appear on a student's grade report.

For the grading policy related to courses taken at different international locations during one's time abroad, please refer to the Study Abroad section of this catalog.

## Grade Point Value

The official mark or final letter grade earned in a course is assigned grade points. The grade points per credit hour and numerical equivalency for letter grades are as follows:

Grade	Grade Points	Numerical Equivalent
A	4.00	93-100
A-	3.67	90-92
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	83-86
B-	2.67	80-82
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	73-76
C-	1.67	70-72
D	1.00	60-69
F	0.00	0-59

Each semester's course grades are computed into a weighted average. To determine a weighted grade point average, the number of credits per course is multiplied by the grade points earned per course. The total number of grade points for all courses is then divided by the number of credits attempted.

## Academic Alert System

The academic progress of undergraduate students, specifically first year students and NCAA athletes, is monitored through a comprehensive Academic Alert System. A month into the semester, faculty are encouraged to report Early Alerts for undergraduate students, defined as academic and/or behavioral concerns that present obstacles to student success. At the midpoint of each semester, faculty report Midterm Estimates, defined as grades of C-, D, or F, for all first year students. Although not required for upper-level students, faculty can choose to utilize the Midterm Estimate function for these cohorts too. The Academic Alert System remains open throughout the academic year and provides a seamless interface for reporting students of concern while also streamlining academic support processes and providing a holistic approach to supporting student development and engagement. Although not part of a student's official academic record, academic alerts raised are designed to allow faculty advisors and professional staff to review a student's academic progress throughout the year. Each student who receives an academic alert receives comprehensive information and an opportunity to meet with an academic administrator. The goal is to connect students who may be having difficulty or who are academically at-risk to appropriate academic and student support resources. Early intervention with students on the part of professors, faculty advisors, and campus personnel can improve students' persistence, engagement, and success.

## Credit/No Credit Option

The credit/no credit option is intended to encourage intellectual exploration and risk-taking. Over the course of their undergraduate career, students may elect to take up to two courses credit/no credit.

- Under this option, if the student earns a C or above (73-100), the instructor will enter the grade as "credit" and the credits will count toward graduation, but will not be factored into the student's GPA. If the student earns a C- or below (0-72), the instructor will enter a grade of "no credit." the course will be listed on the student's transcript as "no credit," but will not be factored into their GPA. the student is responsible for determining how and when to make up the course/credits. the student will not receive any allowance/refund for a course that is designated as "no credit."
- Students may not use this option for:
  - courses in their major(s) or courses required by their major(s)
  - courses that are part of competitive programs that they have joined upon successful application, including, but not limited to: the Honors Program, Study Abroad, and the Residential College Program
- Students may use this option for
  - no more than one course used to fulfill a *Magis* Core requirement
  - any course not otherwise restricted by the limitations above
- Students are eligible for this option once they have completed 30 credits.

Students must declare their intention to the Office of the Registrar to take a course credit/no credit no later than the withdrawal deadline for the course. The decision is irrevocable. Students are strongly urged to consult with their academic advisor, instructor, and/or academic dean when considering this choice.

Note: Courses taken Pass/Fail in Spring 2020 through Spring 2021 are not counted against the maximum of two Credit/No Credit courses.

## Grade Reports

Grades are available to all students by accessing the student web portal (my.Fairfield) at the end of each semester.

## Incomplete

A grade of "I" is issued when, due to an emergency situation such as illness, a student arranges **BEFOREHAND** with the professor to complete some of the course requirements after the semester ends. All course work must be completed within 30 days after the beginning of the next regular semester. Any incomplete grades still outstanding after the 30-day extension will become Fs. This policy applies only to courses taken at Fairfield University. It does not apply to courses taken in Study Abroad programs. Please speak directly with Global Fairfield concerning grading processes at international institutions.

## Repeat Course Policy

When a student repeats a course that was failed, the new grade will be recorded. Grade point values will be averaged into the cumulative average, and the credits will count toward the degree. The original grade will remain on the transcript and be calculated into the cumulative average. When a student repeats a course for which the student has previously obtained a passing grade, the new course and grade will be recorded on the transcript with the notation, repeat course. The original grade and the repeated grade will be averaged into the GPA. The credit for the repeat course will not count toward the degree. The original grade will remain on the transcript.

## Transfer Credit

When students begin their university studies at other institutions and subsequently transfer to Fairfield University, the University accepts transfer credit under the following conditions:

- No courses with grades less than C will qualify for transfer.
- Credit will be granted only for specific work completed at regionally accredited institutions whose quality and course content have been approved by the University.
- Only credit hours, not grades, will transfer.
- Credits earned more than 10 years previous to a credit transfer request may not be able to be accepted.

All transfer credit must be approved by an undergraduate student's academic dean or an authorized representative of the Office of Academic Support and Retention. Every transfer student is required to complete at least 60 credits of undergraduate study at Fairfield in order to receive a Fairfield University bachelor's degree.

## Withdrawal from Courses

Students who wish to withdraw from a course after the initial add/drop period may do so through the end of the tenth week of a traditional semester provided that the student's academic dean, in consultation with the course instructor, finds withdrawal to be in the student's best interest (note that a student must maintain 12 credit hours for full-time status). After the tenth week in the semester, course withdrawal will only be granted in highly unusual circumstances, such as a documented health emergency. Withdrawal after the tenth week will not be permitted simply to prevent receipt of a grade that might not meet the student's satisfaction. Students who wish to withdraw from a winter or summer intersession course or an ASAP course (i.e., a 7 week course) may do so by the mid-point of the course. Students who have violated the academic honor code may not be eligible for withdrawal. In all approved cases, the University Registrar will record a grade of W (withdrawal) on the student's permanent record. To initiate a request to withdraw from a course, a student must complete a Course Withdrawal Form and meet with an authorized representative of their academic dean's office or the Office of Academic Support and Retention. A withdrawal may not be granted after final grades have been submitted except in very rare cases, during which an instructor must file a change of grade form.

## Disruption of Academic Progress

### Academic Probation

Academic records will be formally reviewed at the end of the fall, spring, and summer terms. Students who do not meet the stated requirements will be placed on Academic Probation. The purpose of academic probation is to alert the student and the institution to the problems associated with the student's academic performance and to recommend or implement strategies for improvement. The continuation of poor academic performance will result in the dismissal of the student. Faculty advisors are notified of all advisees placed on academic probation.

A student placed on academic probation will remain on academic probation until the overall GPA is at or above the requirements specified below. A student will be removed from academic probation when the overall GPA is equal to or greater than the requisite GPA according to credits earned.

A student on academic probation is ineligible to participate in extracurricular or co-curricular activities. A student on academic probation may petition the Office of the Provost for the right to participate

in extra- or co-curricular activities. The appeal must contain a valid and compelling reason why restriction of extra- or co-curricular activities is inappropriate, and must demonstrate effectively that the activity will contribute an improvement in academic performance.

First semester, first-year students with a GPA below 1.90 will not be placed on academic probation for their second semester, but they will lose their right to participate in extracurricular or co-curricular activities.

- Students with 29 or fewer credits earned by the end of the second semester, or the first year at Fairfield, will be placed on academic probation if the overall GPA is below 1.90.
- Students with 30-59 credits earned will be placed on academic probation if the overall GPA is below 1.90.
- Students with 60 or more credits earned will be placed on academic probation if the overall GPA is below 2.00.

## Academic Dismissal

Students meeting any of the following conditions will be dismissed from the University:

- A student who, regardless of academic standing, has received the grade of F in three or more 3- or 4-credit courses during the preceding 12 month period inclusive of all grades earned.
- A student with 29 or fewer credits earned, who regardless of incompletes, while on academic probation proceeds to earn a semester GPA below 1.90.
- A student with 30-59 credits earned, who regardless of incompletes, while on academic probation, proceeds to earn a semester GPA below 1.90.
- A student with 60 or more credits earned, who regardless of incompletes, while on academic probation proceeds to earn a semester GPA below 2.00.

Students are removed from registered courses based on the date of their dismissal letter. Such individuals lose all entitlement to institutionally funded financial aid.

### READMISSION AFTER AN ACADEMIC DISMISSAL

Prior to formally requesting readmission after an academic dismissal, students should consult with their Academic Dean's Office. Formal request for readmission should be made at least one month before the start of the semester in which the student seeks to resume enrollment.

**Note:** Students are expected to remain away for at least a full semester (fall or spring) before seeking readmission. Except in extraordinary circumstances, students who are academically dismissed a second time will not be considered for readmission.

1. The student seeking readmission must write a letter stating the rationale for the request including why the student is ready to resume study. The letter should be sent in advance to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellence or by email ([asr@fairfield.edu](mailto:asr@fairfield.edu)). The letter should include the student's name, ID, address, phone, current school and major, new school and major (if requesting a change), returning semester, choice of full- or part-time studies and intention to live on campus or commute.
2. After formal review of the student's request, the Academic Dean's Office will recommend whether the student should or should not be readmitted. Recommendations for readmission are forwarded to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellence, where a final decision will be rendered.

3. The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellence will send an official letter of acceptance or denial to the student, inclusive of any contingencies as deemed appropriate by the Academic Dean's Office. The student may not register for classes or be assigned University housing until the official letter of readmission is reviewed and processed.
4. Residency: Students who were academically dismissed from Fairfield University and are readmitted as full time students will need to specifically request on-campus housing, and that request is subject to the review and approval of the Office of the Dean of Students.

Additional questions or concerns can be directed to the Academic Dean's Office.

## Voluntary Withdrawal from University

To apply for a voluntary withdrawal, a student must complete the following steps:

1. To discuss voluntarily withdrawing (for non-medical reasons); contact the appropriate Academic Dean's Office. This meeting is necessary to facilitate the withdrawal process and to discuss any future plans to return to the University.
  - College of Arts and Sciences, CNS 100, x2227
  - Dolan School of Business, DSBN 211, x3230
  - Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies, NHS 401, x4150
  - School of Engineering, BNW 167, x4147
2. The student must submit a written request for withdrawing from the University, including the reasons for the withdrawal. Voluntary withdrawals from the University are subject to the following conditions
  - a. There are no pending student conduct issues.
  - b. The student is not liable for academic withdrawal due to insufficient progress or excessive absence.
  - c. The student has settled all financial obligations to the University.
  - d. Voluntary withdrawals cannot be granted retroactively.
3. Fairfield University is (regionally) accredited by NECHE and in general credits earned at Fairfield may be transferred to other institutions of higher education. However, final decision of whether to accept Fairfield credits is at the discretion of the receiving institution.

Note: If a student wants to withdraw when classes during the traditional semesters are not in session, the student must still submit a letter to the Academic Dean's Office.

### READMISSION AFTER A VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL

Prior to formally requesting readmission after a voluntary withdrawal, students should consult with their Academic Dean's Office and Office of the Dean of Students. Formal request for readmission should be made at least three weeks before the start of the semester in which the student seeks to resume enrollment.

1. The student seeking readmission must write a letter stating the rationale for the request including why the student is ready and wants to resume study. The letter should be sent in advance to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellence or by email ([asr@fairfield.edu](mailto:asr@fairfield.edu)). The letter should include the student's name, ID, address, phone, current school and major, new school and major (if requesting a change), returning semester, choice of full- or part-time studies and intention to live on campus or commute.
2. After formal review of the student's request, the Academic Dean's Office and the Office of the Dean of Students will assess whether the

student should or should not be readmitted. Recommendations for readmission are forwarded to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellence, where a final decision will be rendered.

3. The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellence will send an official letter of acceptance or denial to the student, inclusive of any contingencies as deemed appropriate by the Academic Dean's Office and/or the Office of the Dean of Students. The student may not register for classes or be assigned University housing until the official letter of readmission is reviewed and processed.

Residency: Students who voluntarily withdrew from Fairfield University and are readmitted as full time students are expected to live on campus and will be assigned a residential space on campus by the Office of Residence Life at the time their readmission request is approved.

Additional questions or concerns can be directed to the Academic Dean's Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

## Medical Withdrawal from the University

Students seeking a medical withdrawal should consult the section under Medical Leave of Absence and/or Medical Withdrawal. Depending on their specific circumstances, students may request and appropriate offices may recommend (a) only a medical leave of absence (for students unable to finish the current semester due to medical reasons but able to return in the immediately upcoming semester); (b) only a medical withdrawal (for students able to return in the immediately upcoming semester); or (c) both a medical leave of absence and medical withdrawal concurrently.

## Fairfield University Student Leave of Absence Policy

Circumstances leading to an interruption in a student's continuous enrollment at Fairfield University may arise. This policy addresses the various types of leaves of absence available to students and the applicable procedures governing the same.

Prior to requesting any form of a Leave of Absence, students are strongly encouraged to discuss the implications of such a leave with appropriate offices, including but not limited to the Office of Financial Aid, Office of the Bursar, Global Fairfield, and Veteran's Affairs, as well as the student's academic dean's office.

The University may designate alternate procedures than those described below for instituting and/or returning from any leave of absence, within its discretion.

## Educational Leave of Absence

Undergraduate students may apply for an educational leave of absence for a fall or spring semester or for a full academic year in order to study abroad or for the Washington, DC, semester. Educational leaves are granted by the associate/assistant dean of the student's school or college. To be eligible for an educational leave of absence, a Fairfield University student must have an overall GPA of 2.80 or better at the time of application. In addition, the student must have a record of good academic and social standing (please refer to the Student Handbook) for the semester immediately preceding application. Students who wish to be granted educational leave must complete all official paperwork with the study abroad coordinator by Feb. 1 for the following year.

All students granted educational leave by Fairfield University will be charged a fee for maintenance of their matriculation at Fairfield. Furthermore, students who study elsewhere in non-affiliated programs

lose their entitlement for institutional financial aid for the period of the leave.

## Personal Leave of Absence

Students may request to take a Personal Leave of Absence, for non-medical reasons. To qualify for a Personal Leave of Absence, the student must be in good academic standing at the time of the request. Personal leaves of absence can be taken only for non-medical reasons, and are limited to four semesters of absence.

To initiate a request for a Personal Leave of Absence, a student must contact their academic dean's office. The student must also submit a written request for a Personal Leave of Absence, which includes the reasons for the Personal Leave of Absence and future plans for returning to the University. Personal Leaves of Absence will not be granted retroactively.

Personal Leaves of Absence are typically subject to the following conditions:

1. The student must be in good standing with the Dean of Students Office;
2. The student must be in good academic standing; and
3. The student must be in good financial standing.

With prior approval from the dean's office, students may engage in focused activities while on leave (i.e. part-time coursework at other institutions, volunteering, employment, etc.) but this is not required. All institutional policies addressing financial aid, transfer credit, course waivers, and credits from other institutions shall apply. As such, students engaging in coursework at other institutions during Personal Leaves of Absence are encouraged to review these policies and speak with their respective dean's office before going on leave.

To return from a Personal Leave of Absence, students must contact their academic dean's office. To return in the fall semester from a Personal Leave of Absence, students must submit their request prior to June 30, and to return in a spring term, students must submit their request prior to November 1. To return from a Personal Leave of Absence in the summer sessions, students must submit their requests by April 1. A student on a Personal Leave of Absence with pending disciplinary charges will not be eligible to return to the University or to receive a University degree until the student's case has been adjudicated by the appropriate institutional office.

Students who are not approved to return may appeal the decision. Students shall submit their appeal in writing to the Provost, or appropriate designee, no later than five (5) business days from the date on which the student was notified of the denial of the request to return from a Personal Leave of Absence. The appellate officer's decision with regard to the appeal is final.

## Medical Leave of Absence

### *Initiating a Medical Leave of Absence and/or Medical Withdrawal*

The University recognizes students may experience medical situations that significantly limit their ability to function successfully or safely in their role as students. In those situations, students should consider requesting a Medical Leave of Absence and/or Medical Withdrawal, which permits students to take a break from University life and their studies, so they may receive treatment and later return to the University with an enhanced opportunity to achieve their academic and cocurricular goals. While each request for a Medical Leave of Absence and/or Medical

Withdrawal will be considered on its own merits, student should be aware that the following do not constitute circumstances which will alone support a request for a Medical Leave of Absence:

- Failing to attend class
- Insufficient academic performance
- Financial difficulties
- Dissatisfaction with course materials or offerings
- Change of interest or major
- Failure to meet all curricular and extracurricular commitments

Students interested in a Medical Leave of Absence should contact their academic dean's office as well as the appropriate University health service: Student Health Center or Counseling and Psychological Services (C&PS). After a meeting with the student, the appropriate health service will submit a recommendation to the dean's office as to whether a student's request for a Medical Leave of Absence is approved where the student's health, safety, or academic success has been compromised by a significant health issue. In recommending a Medical Leave of Absence, the appropriate health service will make individualized treatment recommendations to students designed to help them become academically and personally ready to resume life at Fairfield University. The appropriate health service may also request the student to provide supporting documents from the student's treatment provider.

Students are discouraged from submitting personal medical information or health records directly to faculty, academic dean's, or provost's offices. These documents should be shared directly with Counseling and Psychological Services or Student Health Center.

### *Returning from a Medical Leave of Absence and/or Medical Withdrawal*

Medical leaves are intended to give students time to receive treatment and focus on their health and wellbeing. The medical clearance process by which students return is intended to allow students to demonstrate that they will be able to adequately monitor their own health and function effectively in the autonomous student environment at Fairfield, without undue disruptions to others in the campus community. The goal is for students to be able to return to campus and be successful in their academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular pursuits.

When a student is interested in returning to the University after a Medical Leave of Absence and/or Medical Withdrawal, the student should take the following steps:

1. **Deadlines:** Contact the student's academic dean's office and the appropriate health service (C&PS or Health Center) to advise of the student's interest in returning well in advance of the intended returned date. Returning students must submit all materials by November 1 for consideration for the Spring semester, April 1 for the summer sessions, and June 30 for the fall semester.
2. **Brief Statement:** Provide a brief statement to the appropriate Health Service (no more than two pages) describing 1) the student's experience away from the University including activities undertaken while away 2) the student's current understanding of the factors that led to the need for the leave, and the insights the student has gained from treatment and time away and 3) how the student plans to ensure a successful return to Fairfield University. Students are discouraged from providing any statements that contain personal medical information to faculty or the academic dean's or provost's offices.

3. **Medical Letter:** Request a letter from the student's treatment providers, which should be sent directly from the treatment provider to the appropriate University health service. No medical letters should be sent to faculty, the academic dean's or provost's offices. The medical letter should include: 1) The clinician's credentials and clinical setting; 2) The nature of their work with the student, including the duration and frequency of their contact; 3) Any observed progress in the student's recovery from the medical condition that led to the leave of absence; 4) The clinician's assessment of the student's clinical status and their readiness to successfully resume academic and university life; 5) The justification for their assessment of the student's readiness.

Once a student has sent in all materials, the student should call to double check that the appropriate Health Service (C&PS or Student Health Center) and Dean's Office have received all pertinent information. The University will diligently review returning students' requests, however, if there is missing information and/or the University needs additional time to appropriately review (including if contact with student's treatment provider is warranted within the discretion of the University) consideration for a return may be delayed.

The University will review all information provided in order to make an individualized determination as to whether the student has met the criteria to be cleared to return. The appropriate Health Service will recommend a student for return where the documentation demonstrates that the student is ready to resume studies and be a successful member of the campus community. The appropriate Health Service gives significant weight to the documentation and the opinion of student's treatment providers regarding the student's ability to function academically and safely at the University with or without accommodations. If the appropriate Health Service determines that information provided by the treatment provider is incomplete, requires further explanation or clarification, or when there is a disconnect between the medical information provided by the treatment provider and other information in the student's files, the appropriate Health Service may contact the treatment provider to obtain additional information. The student will be notified once a determination has been made.

Students who are not cleared to return may appeal the decision. The appeal must be made in writing to the Vice President for Student Life no later than five (5) business days from the date on which the student was notified of the determination. The appellate officer's decision with regard to the appeal is final.

## Involuntary Leave of Absence

Fairfield University may determine that a student poses a threat of harm or safety risk to themselves or others that cannot be properly mitigated with reasonable accommodations. In such situations, the University may require the student to take an Involuntary Leave of Absence.

The Dean of Students or appropriate designee may place a student on an interim Involuntary Leave of Absence while the University determines whether an Involuntary Leave of Absence is warranted.

If the Dean of Students or appropriate designee deems it prudent to impose an interim involuntary leave of absence, this may be done without prior notice to a student.

In such circumstances, which shall be determined by the Dean of Students or appropriate designee, the Dean of Students or appropriate designee should still consider the student's individual circumstances, to the extent they are known, and whether reasonable accommodations may

obviate the need for an interim or full Involuntary Leave prior to imposing an interim Involuntary Leave.

If the Dean of Students or appropriate designee imposes an interim Involuntary Leave of Absence, the University will notify the student and the student may ask the Dean of Students or appropriate designee to revoke the interim Involuntary Leave of Absence within seven (7) business days of the imposition of the Involuntary Leave. The student may submit relevant information and meet with the Office of Accessibility to discuss reasonable accommodations in conjunction with the student's request that the Dean of Students or appropriate designee revoke the interim Involuntary Leave of Absence, provided the student does so within five (5) business days of asking that the Involuntary Leave be revoked.

If the Dean of Students or appropriate designee determines that an interim Involuntary Leave of Absence is warranted, the University will normally attempt to notify the student that it is considering placing the student on an Involuntary Leave before imposing an Involuntary Leave.

After being notified, the student will have the option of seeking a voluntary leave of absence. The student must decide whether to seek a voluntary leave within three (3) business days of being notified that the University is considering placing the student on an Involuntary Leave of Absence.

The Dean of Students or appropriate designee will conduct an individualized assessment to determine whether an Involuntary Leave of Absence is warranted in their discretion. This individualized assessment may begin as soon as the University is considering placing the student on an Involuntary Leave of Absence. The individual assessment will include an analysis of whether reasonable accommodations exist that may obviate the need for an Involuntary Leave of Absence.

In considering whether to impose an Involuntary Leave, the Dean of Students or appropriate designee may confer with the Office of Accessibility regarding whether reasonable accommodations exist that may obviate the need for a leave, but is not required to do so.

The Dean of Students or appropriate designee may also confer with the University's Counseling & Psychological Services or any other individual or entity to determine whether an Involuntary Leave of Absence is warranted and/or whether reasonable accommodations exist and may ask the student for permission to speak to and/or obtain information from third parties, including but not limited to the student's treatment providers, if any, but is not required to do so.

Except when the Dean of Students or appropriate designee places a student on interim Involuntary Leave, in which case the procedures above apply, the student ordinarily has five (5) business days after being notified that the University is considering placing the student on an Involuntary Leave of Absence within which to provide relevant information to the Dean of Students or appropriate designee and/or meet with the Office of Accessibility to discuss possible reasonable accommodations, provided that the student notifies the Dean of Students or appropriate designee of the student's intent to provide relevant information or meet with the Office of Accessibility within three (3) business days of being notified that the University is considering placing the student on an Involuntary Leave of Absence.

If the student timely notifies the Dean of Students or appropriate designee of the student's intent to submit relevant information or meet with the Office of Accessibility, the Dean of Students or appropriate designee will generally not render a decision regarding Involuntary

Leave until six (6) business days after the student was notified that the University was considering placing the student on an Involuntary Leave unless the Dean of Students or appropriate designee determines that an interim Involuntary Leave of absence is warranted.

Nothing herein shall, however, preclude the Dean of Students or appropriate designee from imposing an interim Involuntary Leave of absence at any time, even if the Dean of Students or appropriate designee initially determines that an interim Involuntary Leave of Absence is not warranted.

If the student does not timely notify the Dean of Students or appropriate designee of the student's intent to submit relevant information or meet with the Office of Accessibility, the Dean of Students or appropriate designee may render a decision regarding Involuntary Leave immediately.

The University will inform the student of the Dean of Students' or appropriate designee's decision. A student may appeal the Dean of Students' or appropriate designee's decision to the University's Provost or appropriate designee within five (5) business days of being notified of the decision.

An Involuntary Leave of Absence is not disciplinary in nature and is not intended to and does not take the place of any disciplinary proceedings involving the student in question. The University may concurrently proceed with an Involuntary Leave and student disciplinary proceedings.

#### *Returning from an Involuntary Leave of Absence*

A student placed on an Involuntary Leave of Absence may apply to rejoin the University community by contacting the Dean of Students in writing.

When a student placed on Involuntary Leave contacts the Dean of Students to rejoin the community, the Dean of Students or appropriate designee will determine whether the circumstances that warranted the leave have sufficiently abated to allow the student to rejoin the community with or without reasonable accommodations.

The student may submit relevant information in conjunction with the student's request to rejoin the University community and the Dean of Students or appropriate designee may consult with the Office of Accessibility, Counseling & Psychological Services, and/or any other individuals or entities, and may ask the student for permission to speak to and/or obtain information from third parties, including but not limited to the student's treatment providers, if any.

The Dean of Students or appropriate designee may also ask the student to submit to independent or University offered examinations, treatment, consultations, counseling, etc. in conjunction with either the Dean of Student's or appropriate designee's consideration of whether to impose a Leave or the student's request to rejoin the University community. The student has the option to decline any examinations, treatment, consultations, counseling, etc. requested by the Dean of Students or appropriate designee, and the Dean of Students or appropriate designee may consider any such declination in rendering a decision with respect to imposing or revoking a Leave.

The student may appeal the decision as to whether the circumstances that warranted the Leave have sufficiently abated to allow the student to rejoin the community, with or without reasonable accommodations, to the Provost or appropriate designee within five (5) business days. The appellate officer's decision with regard to the appeal is final.

### **The Dean of Students or appropriate designee or the Provost or appropriate designee may exercise their discretion to modify the time requirements and/or limitations in this policy.**

#### **Military Leave of Absence**

Fairfield University recognizes that students who serve in the U.S. Armed Forces may encounter situations in which military obligations force them to withdraw from a course of study and that this can sometimes happen with little notice. This procedure is intended to recognize and make appropriate allowances for students who find themselves in such situations and seeks to minimize disruption to the lives of servicemembers, allowing them to return to Fairfield without penalty for having left because of their service.

Students may request a Military Leave of Absence to perform service in the uniformed services, whether voluntary or involuntary, in the United States Armed Forces, including service as a member of the National Guard or Reserve, on active duty, active duty for training, or full-time National Guard duty under Federal authority (but not State authority), for a period of more than 30 consecutive days under a call or order to active duty of more than 30 consecutive days.

Student servicemembers will qualify for Military Leave of Absence if:

1. Fairfield University is given notice of the student servicemember's absence for service.
2. The cumulative length of absences from Fairfield University by reason of service does not exceed five years.
3. The student servicemembers give notice of their intent to return by the applicable time limit.

Notice of student servicemember absence shall be directed to the Provost's Office (for undergraduate students, to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellence; for graduate students, to the Vice Provost for Graduate, Continuing and Professional Studies). Notice should be provided by the servicemember or an appropriate officer of the Armed Forces or official of the Department of Defense and given as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances.

#### *Returning from Military Leave of Absence*

Qualifying servicemember students will be promptly readmitted with the same academic status. The appropriate point in a course or program for a student to resume studies, the timing of the re-enrollment and the determination as to "same academic status" will be determined by Fairfield University taking into account the unique characteristics and requirements of each program and student's circumstances. All requests to return from Military Leave shall be submitted to the Provost's Office (for undergraduate students, to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Excellence; for graduate students, to the Vice Provost for Graduate, Continuing and Professional Studies) and can be oral or written. The student servicemember seeking to return from Military Leave of Absence must provide documentation to establish that:

1. The student has not exceeded the cumulative five-year limit on absences from Fairfield; and
2. The student's eligibility for readmission has not been terminated by reason of: 1) a dishonorable or bad conduct discharge; or 2) a dismissal of a commissioned officer permitted under section 1161(a) or Title 10 USC by sentence of a general court martial, in commutation of a sentence of a general court-martial, or, in time of war, by order of the President; or 3) a dropping of a commissioned officer from the rolls pursuant to section 1161(b), Title 10 USC due to absence without authority for at least three months, separation



by reason of a sentence to confinement adjudged by a court-martial, or a sentence to confinement in a Federal or State penitentiary or correctional institution.

The types of documents necessary will vary from case to case and the adequacy of such documentation shall be determined by Fairfield University in accordance with applicable law. Fairfield University will not unreasonably delay or attempt to avoid readmission of a student servicemember.

Notice of intent to return from a Military Leave must be provided not later than three years after the completion of the period of service. For a servicemember who is hospitalized for or convalescing from an illness or injury incurred in, or aggravated during, the performance of service, notice must be provided not later than two years after the end of the period that is necessary for recovery from such illness or injury.

If a student servicemember is not prepared to resume studies where the student left off at the time notice to return is due, Fairfield University will engage reasonable efforts that do not place an undue hardship on Fairfield University, to provide assistance to the student servicemember to become prepared or to enable the student to complete the program, including but not limited to providing refresher courses and/or allowing the student servicemember to retake certain academic credentials at no extra cost.

Fairfield University is not required to readmit a servicemember if it determines, after reasonable efforts, that the servicemember is not prepared to resume the program at the point where the student left off, or is unable to complete the program.

## General Rules Applicable to Leaves

*Authority:* The University retains absolute discretion over whether to grant a student's request to take a leave of absence and/or to return from a leave of absence in accordance with this policy.

*Campus Access:* Students on leave may be present on Fairfield University's campus as guests or visitors, unless otherwise excluded pursuant to another University process and/or directive, and must follow all University policies.

Students living in on-campus housing at the time of a leave of absence are expected to move out within a few days, usually 72 hours.

If invited as a guest in the dorms by other students, students on leave must abide by all applicable guest rules.

Students on leave may not hold leadership positions or participate in University sponsored or funded international travel.

*Email and Library Access:* Students on leave ordinarily retain remote library privileges and email access for a period of time from the date the leave was initiated.

*Disciplinary Violations:* A leave of absence does not preclude students from disciplinary violations as provided by the Student Conduct Code.

*Finances:* The financial consequences of a leave will depend on the timing of the leave and will follow the schedule as announced by the Office of the Bursar on its website, under the "Refunds" page.

Students receiving financial aid should contact the Office of Financial Aid to help answer questions students may have regarding if and how their leave may affect financial aid and help identify any impacts to their financial obligations (including student loan information). Students are

also encouraged to consult the appropriate University Catalog regarding the return of Title IV Funds Policy.

International Students should contact Global Fairfield.

*Length of Leave:* Because every student's situation is different, the length of leave shall be determined individually, based on that student's particular circumstances. Students are encouraged to consult appropriate University policy (including program specific handbooks) to understand time limitations within which students must complete certain programs and degrees.

Students who are not actively registered and/or enrolled in classes and who do not request a Leave of Absence as described above may be administratively withdrawn from the University.

## Credits from Other Institutions

Matriculated students may be permitted to take courses for degree credit at another institution with pre-approval by the dean of the student's school. Only credits (not grades) are transferable. For each approved course taken at another institution, credits will be accepted in transfer only if the student has earned a grade of C or better. Official transcripts should be forwarded to the student's academic dean upon completion of pre-approved coursework at other institutions.

Students are cautioned that deans will grant permission to take courses elsewhere only when the student can demonstrate compelling reasons to do so or to take advantage of a special curriculum offered at another U.S. institution. Students are expected to complete graduation requirements including Major and Core courses at Fairfield University. Students participating in a study abroad program while on approved Educational Leave of Absence should consult with the Study Abroad Office prior to departure to obtain course pre-approval.

In all cases, the following restrictions apply:

- Of the 120 or more credits required for the bachelor's degree, a minimum of 60 of those credits must be earned at Fairfield University.
- Students are permitted to take no more than two courses at another regionally-accredited U.S. institution during a summer or winter intersession and no more than 5 courses (post-matriculation) will be applied toward degree completion.
- The last 30 credits earned toward a student's degree must be completed at Fairfield University or through a program that issues Fairfield University course credit.

## Advanced Placement

While in high school, some students pursue one or more college-level Advanced Placement courses. Fairfield University will award three or four hours of credit toward graduation for each AP course taken by a student, provided that the student has taken an Advanced Placement Test prepared by the CEEB program. **Fairfield will only accept a score of 5 on the test for some subjects; however, for most a score of 4 or 5 will be accepted.** *It is the discretion of college/school officials to determine if such AP credits can be used to exempt students from specific University courses or requirements.* AP credit will not be awarded for Tier I Orientation courses in the *Magis* Core. No student will be awarded more than a total of 15 AP credits by Fairfield University. *If a student is placed into the same Fairfield course after AP credit has been awarded (in most cases due to either Language or Mathematics placements), the student must waive the AP credits.*

Below is a partial list of AP tests submitted by students that are considered for Fairfield credit at the undergraduate level.

AP Test	Credits
Art History	3
Biology	4
Chemistry	4
Microeconomics	3
Macroeconomics	3
English <sup>1</sup>	3
Environmental Science	3
European History	3
U.S. History	3
World History	3
Calculus AB	4
Calculus BC	8
Computer Science Principles	3
Computer Science A	3
French Language	3
German Language	3
Italian Language	3
Spanish Language	3
Physics I or II	3
Physics C	4
Psychology	3
Statistics	3
U.S. Government and Politics	3
Comparative Gov't and Politics	3
Studio Art: 2D Design	3
Studio Art: 3D Design	3
Studio Art: Drawing	3

<sup>1</sup> Students may receive credit toward Fairfield's degree requirements for only one AP English exam. Further, these will only count as elective credits, as all students must complete ENGL 1001 in the Magis Core.

## Higher Level International Baccalaureate Courses

Fairfield University recognizes the advanced nature of Higher Level International Baccalaureate courses. Generally, three credits will be awarded toward a Fairfield degree for a Higher Level IB course taken by a student, provided a grade of six or seven is achieved. Final determination concerning the amount of credit and whether or not it can be used to exempt students from specific University courses or requirements rests with the dean in consultation with the academic department. Normally, Higher Level IB credit will not exempt a student from requirements in their major. Higher Level IB credit will not be awarded for Tier I Orientation courses in the *Magis* Core. Students can earn a maximum combined total of 15 credits for Higher Level IB and Advanced Placement courses.

## College Courses Completed While in High School

For students who pursue college courses while in high school, upon receipt of an official college transcript and related documentation, the course work will be evaluated by the appropriate dean/director in consultation with the appropriate curriculum area, provided the following criteria are met:

- The course(s) must have been completed in a college environment and must have been taught by a college professor
- The course(s)/credits were not used to satisfy high school graduation requirements
- A final grade of "C" or better was earned

The student's dean will determine the appropriateness of the transfer credit for the student's program and decide whether it has met Fairfield's curriculum standards. A maximum of 15 credits of approved coursework will be awarded transfer credit. The grades will not be transferred. *If a student is placed into the same Fairfield course after transfer credit has been awarded (in most cases due to either Language or Mathematics placements), the student must waive the transfer credits.*

## Transcripts

Fairfield University transcripts are ordered online via Parchment with the option to request paper (mailed) or electronic (emailed) official transcripts. The Parchment site guides you through creating your account, the ordering process, and delivery options and fees. Your signed consent is required to fulfill your transcript order. Order updates are emailed, and you can check your order status online. Transcript orders will not be processed if there are certain holds, such as financial, on your Fairfield University account.

## Academic Freedom and Responsibility

The statement on academic freedom, as formulated in the 1940 Statement of Principles endorsed by the AAUP (American Association of University Professors) and incorporating the 1970 interpretive comments, is the policy of Fairfield University. Academic freedom and responsibility are here defined as the liberty and obligation to study, to investigate, to present and interpret, and to discuss facts and ideas concerning all branches and fields of learning. Academic freedom is limited only by generally accepted standards of responsible scholarship and by respect for the Catholic commitment of the institution as expressed in its mission statement, which provides that Fairfield University "welcomes those of all beliefs and traditions who share its concerns for scholarship, justice, truth, and freedom, and it values the diversity which their membership brings to the university community."

## Freedom of Expression

As an academic institution, Fairfield University exists for the transmission of knowledge, pursuit of truth, development of students, and the general well-being of society. Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the attainment of these goals. Fairfield University recognizes that academic freedom, freedom of expression, and responsibility are required to realize the essential purposes of the University.

## Student Rights

As constituents of the academic community, students should be free, individually and collectively, to express their views on issues of institutional policy and on matters of general interest to the student body.

Fairfield University students are both citizens and members of the academic community. As citizens of a private institution, Fairfield's students enjoy the same freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, and right of petition that students at other private institutions enjoy as accorded by law, and as members of the academic community, they are subject to the obligations which accrue to them by virtue of this membership. Faculty members and administration officials should ensure that institutional powers are not employed to deprive students of their rights as accorded

to them by law and University policy. At the same time, the institution has an obligation to clarify those standards which it considers essential to its educational mission and its community life. These expectations and regulations should represent a reasonable regulation of student conduct.

As members of the academic community, students should be encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. They do this within the requirements of the curriculum and the courses in which they are enrolled.

The professor in the classroom and in conference should encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression. Student performance should be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. This means that students are free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students in professional programs are expected to understand and uphold the standards required in their profession.

Students bring to the campus a variety of interests previously acquired and develop many new interests as members of the academic community. They should be free to organize and join associations to promote their common interests. Students and student organizations should be free to examine and discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. Students should be allowed to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing. Those procedures required by an institution before a guest speaker is invited to appear on campus should be designed only to ensure that there is orderly scheduling of facilities and adequate preparation for the event, and that the occasion is conducted in a manner appropriate to an academic community. Guest speakers are subject to all applicable laws, and to the University policies on harassment and discrimination. Students' freedom of expression extends to their ability to express their opinions in writing or through electronic means, and to distribute and post materials expressing their opinions. Any restrictions should be designed only to ensure the orderly use of space and facilities, to provide reasonable restrictions on commercial messages, to comply with applicable fire, health or safety codes, to comply with the University's Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, or to comply with state or federal law. Students should always be free to support causes by orderly means which do not disrupt operations of the institution. At the same time, it should be made clear to the academic and larger community that in their public expressions or demonstrations, students or student organizations speak only for themselves and not the institution.

## Student Responsibilities

Freedom of expression enjoyed by students is not without limitations. The rights set forth herein must be balanced against and considered in the context of the following responsibilities:

- Students have the obligation to refrain from interfering with the freedom of expression of others.
- Students have the responsibility to respect the rights and beliefs of others, including the values and traditions of Fairfield University as a Jesuit, Catholic institution.
- Students have the responsibility to support learning, and when learning, to engage others in a respectful dialogue, to never threaten the safety or security of others, and to comply with all University policies prohibiting harassment, hate crimes, and discrimination.

All policies in this catalog and the actions taken under them must support Fairfield University's Mission Statement and the Statement on Academic Freedom.

## Honor Code

Fairfield University's primary purpose is the pursuit of academic excellence. This is possible only in an atmosphere where discovery and communication of knowledge are marked by scrupulous, unqualified honesty. Therefore, it is expected that all students taking classes at the University adhere to the following Honor Code:

"I understand that any violation of academic integrity wounds the entire community and undermines the trust upon which the discovery and communication of knowledge depends. Therefore, as a member of the Fairfield University community, I hereby pledge to uphold and maintain these standards of academic honesty and integrity."

## Academic Honesty

All members of the Fairfield University community share responsibility for establishing and maintaining appropriate standards of academic honesty and integrity. As such, faculty members have an obligation to set high standards of honesty and integrity through personal example and the learning communities they create. Such integrity is fundamental to, and an inherent part of, a Jesuit education, in which teaching and learning are based on mutual respect. It is further expected that students will follow these standards and encourage others to do so.

Students are sometimes unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty. In all academic work, students are expected to submit materials that are their own and are to include attribution for any ideas or language that are not their own. Examples of dishonest conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Falsification of academic records or grades, including but not limited to any act of falsifying information on an official academic document, grade report, class registration document or transcript.
- Cheating, such as copying examination answers from materials such as crib notes or another student's paper.
- Collusion, such as working with another person or persons when independent work is prescribed.
- Inappropriate use of notes.
- Falsification or fabrication of an assigned project, data, results, or sources.
- Giving, receiving, offering, or soliciting information in examinations.
- Using previously prepared materials in examinations, tests, or quizzes.
- Destruction or alteration of another student's work.
- Submitting the same paper or report for assignments in more than one course without the prior written permission of each instructor.
- Appropriating information, ideas, or the language of other people or writers and submitting it as one's own to satisfy the requirements of a course - commonly known as plagiarism. Plagiarism constitutes theft and deceit. Assignments (compositions, term papers, computer programs, etc.) acquired either in part or in whole from commercial sources, publications, students, or other sources and submitted as one's own original work will be considered plagiarism.
- Unauthorized recording, sale, or use of lectures and other instructional materials.

In the event of such dishonesty, professors are to award a grade of zero for the project, paper, or examination in question, and may record an F for the course itself. When appropriate, expulsion may be recommended. A notation of the event is made in the student's file in the academic dean's office. The student will receive a copy.

## Student Academic Grievance Procedure

### Purpose

Procedures for review of academic grievances protect the rights of students, faculty, and the University by providing mechanisms for equitable problem solving.

### Types of Grievances

A grievance is defined as a complaint of unfair treatment for which a specific remedy is sought. This procedure is concerned solely with academic grievances. It excludes circumstances that may give rise to a complaint for which explicit redress is neither called for nor sought, or for those for which other structures within the university serve as an agency for resolution.

Academic grievances relate to procedural appeals, academic dishonesty appeals, or quality of work appeals.

Procedural appeals are defined as those seeking a remedy in which no issue of the quality of a student's work is involved. For example, a student might contend that the professor failed to follow previously announced mechanisms of evaluation.

Academic dishonesty appeals are defined as those seeking a remedy because of a dispute over whether plagiarism, cheating, or other acts of academic dishonesty occurred. Remedies would include but not be limited to removal of a file letter, change of grade, or submitting new or revised work.

Quality of work appeals are defined as those seeking a remedy, following the completion of a course, because the evaluation of the quality of a student's coursework is alleged to be prejudiced or capricious.

### Time Limits

The procedure herein defined must be initiated by the end of the subsequent fall or spring semester after the event that is the subject of the grievance. If the grievance moves forward, all subsequent steps of the informal process must be completed and the formal process must be initiated before the end of the second semester subsequent to the event that is the subject of the grievance.

### Informal Procedures

1. The student attempts to resolve any academic grievance with the faculty member. If, following this initial attempt at resolution, the student remains convinced that a grievance exists, she or he advances to step two.
2. The student consults with the chair or program director, bringing written documentation of the process to this point. If the student continues to assert that a grievance exists after attempted reconciliation, she or he advances to step three.
3. The student presents the grievance to the dean of the school in which the course was offered, bringing to this meeting documentation of steps one and two. After conversation with the instructor of record and the department chair/program director, the dean will inform the student whether or not the grade shall be changed by the instructor

of record. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, the dean will inform the student of the right to initiate formal review procedures.

### Formal Procedures

1. If the student still believes that the grievance remains unresolved following the informal procedures above, she or he initiates the formal review procedure by making a written request for a formal hearing through the dean to the Provost. Such a request should define the grievance and be accompanied by documentation of completion of the informal process. It should also be accompanied by the dean's opinion of the grievance.
2. The Provost determines whether the grievance merits further attention. If not, the student is so informed. If, however, the grievance does merit further attention, the Provost determines whether it is a procedural appeal, an academic dishonesty appeal, or a quality of work appeal.

For procedural appeals and academic dishonesty appeals, the Provost will convene a Grievance Committee according to the process described below, providing the committee with the written documentation resulting from the previous steps in the appeal process.

For quality of work appeals, the Provost will request that the chair of the department through which the course is taught, or if the chair is the subject of the grievance a senior member of the department, assemble an ad hoc committee of three department/program members to review the appeal, providing the committee with the written documentation resulting from the previous steps in the appeal process.

3. For procedural appeals and academic dishonesty appeals, the Grievance Committee takes whatever steps are deemed appropriate to render a recommendation for resolving the grievance. The committee adheres to due process procedures analogous to those in the *Faculty Handbook*.

For quality of work appeals, the department committee shall make itself available to meet and discuss the appeal with the student, and shall discuss the appeal with the instructor of record for the course. If the final consensus of the department committee is that the academic evaluation that led to the course grade was neither prejudiced nor capricious, the appeals process ends here.

4. For procedural appeals and academic dishonesty appeals, the recommendation from the Grievance Committee is forwarded to the Provost in written form, accompanied, if necessary, by any supporting data that formed the basis of the recommendation. Should the Grievance Committee conclude that a change of grade is warranted, the two faculty members on the Grievance Committee will recommend an appropriate grade. In case of disagreement between the two faculty members, the dean chairing the Grievance Committee will decide which of the two recommended grades to accept. The recommended grade change shall be included in the report.

For quality of work appeals, if the final consensus of the department committee is that the academic evaluation that led to the course grade was prejudiced or capricious, the department committee will recommend an alternative course grade. If the instructor of record agrees to change the grade to that recommended by the committee,

the appeals process ends here. If the instructor of record declines to change the grade, the department committee shall prepare a written report, including the department committee's recommended grade. The report will be forwarded to the Provost and the instructor of record, who may send the Provost a written response to the report.

- For procedural appeals and academic dishonesty appeals, the Provost renders a final and binding judgment, notifying all involved parties. If such an appeal involves a dispute over a course grade given by a faculty member, the Provost is the only university official empowered to change that grade, and then only to the grade recommended by the Grievance Committee.

For quality of work appeals, if the Provost agrees with the department committee that the academic evaluation that led to the course grade was prejudiced or capricious, she or he is authorized to change the course grade to the grade recommended in the department committee's report.

## Structure of the Grievance Committee

The structure of the Grievance Committee will be as follows:

- Two faculty members to be selected from the Student Academic Grievance Board. The faculty member against whom the grievance has been directed will propose four names from that panel, the student will strike two of those names, and the two remaining faculty members will serve.
- Two students to be selected from a standing pool of eight students elected by the student government. The student filing the grievance will propose four names from that panel, the faculty member will strike two of those names, and the two remaining students will serve.

In the event that any faculty member or student selected through the foregoing process is unable to meet, another elected member of the panel will serve as an alternate.

The Grievance Committee will be chaired by a dean (other than the dean of the school in which the course was offered) to be selected by the Provost. The dean so selected will have no vote except in the event of a tie, and will be responsible for overseeing the selection of the Grievance Committee, convening and conducting the committee meetings, and preparing the committee's report(s) and other appropriate documentation.

## Due Process Procedure

- Both the student and the faculty member shall have the right to be present and to be accompanied by a personal advisor or counsel throughout the hearing.
- Both the student and the faculty member shall have the right to present and examine witnesses and to cross-examine witnesses.
- The administration shall make available to both the student and the faculty member such authority as it may possess to require the presence of witnesses.
- The Grievance Committee shall promptly and forthrightly adjudicate the issues.
- The full text of the findings and conclusions of the Grievance Committee shall be made available in identical form and at the same time to both the student and the faculty member. The cost shall be met by the university.

6. In the absence of a defect in procedure, recommendations shall be made to the Provost by the Grievance Committee as to possible action in the case.

7. At any time should the basis for an informal hearing appear, the procedure may become informal in nature.

## Grievance Process Complaints

Fairfield University endeavors to resolve all grievances, complaints and disputes in a timely and fair manner. In the event a student believes a complaint remains unresolved after the conclusion of Fairfield University's grievance and/or dispute resolution processes (including all appeals), the student may request that the complaint be reviewed by the State of Connecticut Office of Higher Education. The Office of Higher Education is responsible for quality review of independent colleges and will investigate complaints concerning matters within its statutory authority. For more information or to file a complaint, contact:

Office of Higher Education  
61 Woodland Street  
Hartford, CT 06105-2326  
Phone: 800-842-0229

Fairfield University is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). Students may contact:

NECHE  
3 Burlington Woods Drive  
Suite 100  
Burlington, MA 01803  
Phone: 855-886-3272