



University of
Pittsburgh®

**School of Public and
International Affairs**

HANDBOOK OF ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAM

Table of Contents

Standard of Academic Integrity	3
Academic Code of Conduct: Guidelines of Academic Integrity	3
Student Obligations	3
Faculty Obligations	4
Academic Integrity Policy.....	4
Admissions	4
Admission Requirements	4
Admission Prerequisites	4
Application Process	4
Readmission	5
Statute of Limitations	5
Registration	5
Registering for Classes.....	5
Normal Credit Load.....	5
Registration Status at Graduation.....	5
Inactive Status	5
Adding and Dropping Courses.....	5
Monitored Withdrawal from a Course	5
Resigning from the University for a Specific Term.....	6
Leaves of Absence	6
Blocks and Holds on Registration.....	6
Academic Advising Hold Policy	6
Independent Study.....	6
Major Requirements.....	6
Minors and Certificates.....	6
Dual Degrees.....	7
General Educations Requirements.....	7
Overlapping Credits with SPIA.....	7
Credit Policies	7
Advanced Placement (AP) Credits.....	7
Summer Courses Taken Elsewhere.....	7
Evaluation of Transfer Credits.....	7
Global Experience and Credit Policy.....	8
Grading and Recording	8
Grading Policy	8
Official University Record: GPA Calculations	8
Grading System Definitions and Quality Points	8
Other Grades	9
Course Repeat Policy.....	10

Changing Grades.....	10
Records.....	10
Transcripts	10
Grade Report.....	10
Graduation.....	11
Graduation Process	11
Graduation Credit Requirements	11
Enrollment Status at Graduation.....	11
Graduation Certification.....	11
Academic Honors.....	11
Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal.....	11
Academic Standards.....	11
Probation.....	11
Probation & Eligibility for Financial Aid.....	11
Dismissal	11
Advising.....	11
Academic Advising Process	11
Career Advising Process.....	11
General Regulations	12
Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Policy.....	12
Computing Access and Use Policy.....	12
Copyright Policy.....	12
Drug-Free School and Workplace Policy.....	12
Email Communication Policy	12
Faculty-Student Relationship.....	12
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	12
Confidentiality of Student Records	12
Harassment Policies	12
Harassment	12
Sexual Harassment	12
Human Research Subjects: Institutional Review Board	12
Research Integrity.....	12
University Patent Policy	12
Rights and Responsibilities.....	12
Smoking Policy	14
Student Code of Conduct	14
Student Code of Judicial Procedures	14
Use of Alcohol Policy.....	14
 APPENDIX A: Grade Appeals Process.....	 15
APPENDIX B: SPIA Policy on Academic Integrity & Plagiarism	16
APPENDIX C: University Policy/ Disclaimer.....	18

Standard of Academic Integrity

Academic Code of Conduct: Guidelines of Academic Integrity

The integrity of the academic process requires fair and impartial evaluation on the part of the faculty, and honest academic conduct on the part of students. To this end, students are expected to conduct themselves at a high level of responsibility in the fulfillment of the course of their study. It is the corresponding responsibility of the faculty to make clear to students those standards by which students will be evaluated, and the resources permissible for use by students during their study and evaluation. The educational process is perceived as a joint faculty-students enterprise, which will perforce involve professional judgment by the faculty and may involve -- without penalty -- reasoned exception by students to the data or views offered by faculty.

Senate Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom

In Guidelines on Academic Integrity and Student Code of Conduct and Judicial Procedures,
February 1974

Firm in the belief that the most crucial asset of a respected, effective professional is his/her personal integrity, SPIA expects students and faculty to adhere to the guidelines described in the following code of conduct, taken from the University's Guidelines on Academic Integrity: Student and Faculty Obligations and Hearing Procedures, 1990.

Senate Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom in
Guidelines on Academic Integrity and Student Code of Conduct and Judicial Procedures, February 1974

Student Obligations

In addition to the academic standards and policies described here, individual professors may have their own expectations and policies. These are often explained on the course syllabi and discussed during the initial class meeting. It is the student's responsibility to ask questions about expectations and policies that are unclear or not addressed at all.

As a rule, students are expected not to discuss or collaborate on assignments unless explicitly authorized to do so by the instructor. Students are responsible for being familiar with and using generally accepted practices governing bibliographic research and citations of resource materials in a research paper. Students are not permitted to double-submit or reuse (self-plagiarism) their own previously written materials in another class without informing the faculty member that the materials have been submitted in another class. (See Appendix A regarding plagiarism and double submission.)

Students have an obligation to exhibit honesty and to respect the ethical standards of their chosen profession in carrying out academic assignments. Without limiting the application of this principle, a student may be found to have violated this obligation if they:

1. Refers during an academic evaluation to materials or sources, or employs devices, not authorized by the instructor.
2. Provides assistance during an academic evaluation to another person in a manner not authorized by the instructor.
3. Receives assistance during an academic evaluation from another person in a manner not authorized by the instructor.
4. Engages in unauthorized possession, buying, selling, obtaining, or using a copy of any materials intended to be used as an instrument of academic evaluation in advance of its administration.
5. Acts as a substitute for another person in any academic evaluation process.
6. Utilizes a substitute for another person in any academic evaluation procedure.
7. Practices any form of deceit in an academic evaluation proceeding.
8. Depends on the aid of others in a manner expressly prohibited by the instructor, in the research, preparation, creation, writing, performing, or publication of work to be submitted for academic credit or evaluation.
9. Provides aid to another person, knowing such aid is expressly prohibited by the instructor, in the research, preparation, creation, writing, performing, or publication of work to be submitted for academic credit or evaluation.
10. Presents as one's own, for academic evaluation, the ideas, representations, or words of another person or persons without customary and proper acknowledgment of sources.
11. Submits the work of another person in a manner that presents the work to be one's own. (see Plagiarism: Appendix A.)
12. Knowingly permits one's work to be submitted by another person without the instructor's authorization.

13. Attempts to influence or change one's academic evaluation or record for reasons other than achievement or merit.
14. Indulges, during a class (or examination) session in which one is a student, in conduct that is so disruptive as to infringe upon the rights of the instructor or fellow students.
15. Fails to cooperate, if called upon, in the investigation or disposition of any allegation of dishonesty pertaining to another student, or any other breach of a student's obligation to exhibit honesty.
16. Violates the canons of ethics of their program of study.

Faculty Obligations

A faculty member accepts an obligation, in relation to their students, to discharge their duties in a fair and conscientious manner in accordance with the ethical standards generally recognized within the academic community. Without limiting the application of the above principle, members of the faculty are also expected (except in cases of illness or other compelling circumstance) to conduct themselves in a professional manner, including the following:

1. To meet their classes when scheduled.
2. To be available at reasonable times for appointments with students and to keep such appointments.
3. To make appropriate preparation for classes and other meetings.
4. To perform their grading duties, and other academic evaluation, in a timely manner.
5. To describe to students, within the period in which a student may add and drop a course, orally, in writing, or by reference to printed course descriptions, the general content and objectives of a course, and to announce the methods and standards of evaluation, including the importance to be assigned various factors in academic evaluation and, in advance of any evaluation, the permissible materials or references allowed during evaluation.
6. To base all academic evaluations upon good faith professional judgment.
7. Not to consider, in academic evaluation, such factors as race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, and political or cultural affiliation, and lifestyle, activities, or behavior outside the classroom unrelated to academic achievement.
8. To respect the confidentiality of information regarding a student contained in University records, and to refrain from releasing such information, except in connection with intra-University business to appropriate personnel, or with student consent, or as may be permitted by law.
9. Not to exploit their professional relationship with students for private advantage, and to refrain from soliciting the assistance of students for private purposes in a manner which infringes upon such students' freedom of choice.
10. To give appropriate recognition to contributions made by students to research, publication, service, or other activities.
11. To refrain from any activity which involves risk to the health and safety of students, except with the student's informed consent, and, where applicable, in accordance with the University policy relating to the use of human subjects in experimentation.
12. To respect the dignity of students individually and collectively in the classroom and other academic contexts.

Academic Integrity Policy

Students have the right to be treated by faculty in a fair and conscientious manner in accordance with the ethical standards generally recognized within the academic community (as well as those recognized within the profession). Students have the responsibility to be honest and to conduct themselves in an ethical manner while pursuing academic studies. Should a student be accused of a breach of academic integrity or have questions regarding faculty responsibilities, procedural safeguards including the provisions of due process have been designed to protect student rights. These general guidelines may be found in *Guidelines on Academic Integrity: Student and Faculty Obligations and Hearing Procedures* at: https://provost.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/academic_integrity_guidelines.pdf

Admissions

Admission Prerequisites

Recommended, but not mandatory, that all applicants apply during the term they will complete the prerequisite 55 credits including undergraduate level courses in macro- and/or macroeconomics, statistics, and a statistical analysis program

Application Process

For current Pitt students (any campus)

Applicants must complete the Upper-Level Transfer Application along with a 300-400 word personal statement introducing themselves to the admissions committee and share their professional goals and motivation for pursuing Public Policy degree from Pitt Public & International Affairs, as well as any experience or unique skills.

For external transfer students

Applicants must complete the Undergraduate Application for Admissions through Pitt's Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. A supplemental application is not required.

Readmission

Readmission

If a student wishes to return to SPIA and complete the degree after being dismissed or made inactive for any reason, the student must file a complete application for readmission (and fulfill all current application requirements). Readmission is not guaranteed, nor does it necessarily reinstate the student to the status enjoyed prior to being dismissed/becoming inactive. To be readmitted, the student must demonstrate proper preparation to meet all current admission and degree requirements. If curriculum and/or policies have changed since a student's prior term of enrollment, the student will be held to the new set of requirements and standards. Readmission is automatic, however, for students who receive prior approval for a formal leave of absence. Leaves of absence may not exceed 12 months.

The following students must apply for readmission through SPIA. SPIA students who have not enrolled for three consecutive terms (one calendar year) and SPIA students who have completed their suspension periods and wish to continue their studies.

Students who are returning after completing their suspension period will be reinstated on probation.

Statute of Limitations

There is a six-year statute of limitations on returning to SPIA to resume a degree. If a student terminates their enrollment for any reason prior to graduating, or becomes inactive for any reason, that student must re-enroll at SPIA within six years of the final term of enrollment to resume progress toward the degree. After six years have passed, any credits a student has previously earned can no longer be applied toward a SPIA degree.

All of the credits required for a degree, whether earned in residence or transferred from another institution, must have been earned within 12 years prior to the date on which the degree is awarded. However, when given evidence that the previous courses still provide adequate preparation for the courses yet to be taken and still represent a reasonable part of the total academic program, this limitation may be waived. In such cases, the waiver is for a specific period during which the program must be completed. Under exceptional circumstances a candidate may apply for an extension of the statute of limitations. The request must be approved by the academic advisor and submitted to the associate dean for final action. Each student who requests an extension of the statute of limitations must be prepared to demonstrate proper preparation for the completion of all current degree requirements.

Registration

Registering for Classes

After being admitted to SPIA, students may register for courses with their academic advisor. The overall form and content of the student's program of study is the responsibility of SPIA. To carry out this responsibility, each student is assigned an academic advisor who, in consultation with the student, reviews the designated plan of study.

Students registering for the first time are advised to complete registration well before the beginning of the term to avoid both late fees and closed classes. The first day of classes is typically the last day for new students to register, without fees for late registration. New students are required to meet with their academic advisor to schedule their classes for the first semester. Continuing students are assigned registration appointments from the University Registrar. Appointments are based upon credits earned and can be viewed by logging into the Student Center through my.pitt.edu. Once registered, students may view their class schedules online.

Normal Credit Load

A normal credit load is 12 to 18 credits per academic term (e.g. fall and spring). Students should complete a minimum of 15 credits per term in order to graduate within two years. No SPIA student is permitted to register for more than 18 credits in a term without permission from the student's academic advisor. Students who receive approval to register for more than 18 credits will be billed for each additional credit that exceeds their full-time tuition rate.

Registration Status at Graduation

Students are required to register for at least one credit during the 12-month period preceding graduation and must be registered for the term in which they plan to graduate.

Inactive Status

A student who has not registered for at least one credit during two consecutive terms (including the summer term), without receiving prior written approval for a leave of absence, will be transferred automatically to inactive status. Such students must file an application for readmission to SPIA (application fee required) before being permitted to register again. Students on inactive status cannot apply to graduate; are not eligible to use University facilities and should not expect to receive counseling from the faculty or active supervision by their advisor and committee. If readmitted, students are subject to any curriculum changes and all new policies and procedures.

Adding and Dropping Courses

A registered student may add and drop courses only during the add/drop period. The dates for the add/drop period are listed in the University's Schedule of Classes and on the University's Academic Calendar online. Students who no longer wish to remain enrolled in a course after the add/drop period has ended may withdraw from the course or resign from the University. See Monitored Withdrawal from a Course or Resigning from the University.

Monitored Withdrawal from a Course

After the add/drop period has ended, students may withdraw from a course that they no longer wish to attend by completing a Monitored Withdrawal Request form in SPIA for SPIA courses or from the school offering the course. The grade W will appear on the student's grade report and transcript. There is no financial adjustment to students' tuition or fee obligations involved in withdrawing from courses, but withdrawing may jeopardize satisfactory academic progress. There is a deadline for monitored withdrawal each semester, published in the university's academic calendar. If a student has not submitted a Monitored Withdrawal Form by that deadline, they must finish the remainder of the class and receive a final grade.

Resigning from the University for a Specific Term

If students decide to drop all their courses after the add/drop period has ended, they must resign from the University for that term.

Before 60% of the term has passed, students may resign by contacting the Student Appeals Office. Students have several options. They may resign in person, by email, or by calling (412) 624-7585, where students may leave a message 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays. An R grade will appear on the student's academic transcript. Tuition is prorated from the date of the student's notification to the Student Appeals Office of the student's desire to resign, unless 60 percent of the term has been completed, in which case there is no refund.

After 60% of the term or session has passed, students who wish to terminate their registration may process withdrawal from all classes only with the permission of the Associate Dean. If the reason for withdrawal is medical or psychological in nature, the academic advisor may consult with the director of Student Health Services prior to deciding. There is no financial adjustment associated with this procedure, which results in the assignment of W grades for the courses.

Students who stop attending a course or courses and do not initiate add/drop, withdrawal, or resignation procedures, or who withdraws from a course without authorization, will be assigned an F grade and will incur financial obligations.

Leave of Absence

Under special conditions, undergraduate students may be granted a leave of absence. A maximum leave of two terms may be granted to undergraduate students. The length and rationale for the leave of absence must be stated in advance and approved by the academic advisor. If approved, the time of the leave shall not count against the total time allowed for the degree being sought by the students. Readmission following an approved leave of absence is a formality.

Students who take an unapproved leave of absence may, at the discretion of the Associate Dean, be readmitted to the school, but must finish their degree requirements within the statute of limitations set by their original matriculation.

Substituting Non-SPIA Courses for Core and Degree Requirements

Core courses and required courses for the bachelor's in public policy are considered by the school as essential to the study of public policy. Accordingly, students are required to take these courses in SPIA. In exceptional cases, and on a case-by-case basis, students may be permitted to substitute comparable courses offered in other Schools and departments, provided they obtain prior approval from the Associate Dean and their SPIA academic advisor.

Blocks and Holds on Registration

The University may withhold registration and add/drop services from students for financial, academic, or disciplinary reasons.

Academic Advising Holds Policy

Access to student services including registration and receipt of grades may be delayed for several reasons ranging from financial liability to missing data. Further information on this policy is available online at https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Academic/Policy_AC_62.pdf

Independent Study

Students may register for individualized course work or guided research under the direct supervision of a SPIA faculty member. Students are eligible to register for independent study (PIA 1097) if the following conditions are met: student has completed at least 15 SPIA credits; the student must be in good academic standing and making normal progress toward the degree; and a summary study or research design must be submitted in writing by the students and signed by the faculty member supervisor. Independent Study credits will count as an elective course, they may not substitute for a required course. Undergraduate students are permitted to take a maximum of three SPIA total credits via independent study before graduating.

Major Requirements

All students are required to complete the Public Policy major, in addition to general education requirements, in order to graduate from SPIA. Students must complete the major with a 2.00 GPA, and half of the credits earned for the major must be earned at the University of Pittsburgh main campus. Students declare their major by filling out an upper-level transfer application at <https://ulta.pitt.edu/> to transfer into the School of Public and International Affairs. Students normally apply during their fourth term of full-time study.

Note: Transfer students receive an evaluation of their previous course work indicating the equivalent University of Pittsburgh courses for which transfer credits have been awarded. Equivalent Dietrich School and School of Public and International Affairs courses will meet the requirements for the major and general education requirements where appropriate. Students who believe that a previous course not equivalent to a Dietrich School or School of Public and International Affairs course should meet a requirement for a major may petition the department to review that course.

Minors and Certificates

Minors and certificates are earned in addition to a major. Students must complete minors and certificates with a 2.00 GPA, and half of the credits earned for the minor or certificate must be earned at the University of Pittsburgh main campus. Students may overlap with a course to fulfill requirements between a major, a minor, and/or a certificate. Students who complete an approved minor or certificate will have it listed on their transcript, provided that the minor or certificate is indicated on the application for graduation.

Dual Degrees

SPIA students may choose to simultaneously pursue more than one undergraduate degree, either within the Dietrich School (i.e., both a BA and a BS) or in another undergraduate school of the University. Earning two degrees requires the completion of the curriculum requirements of both schools and 120 total credits.

General Education Requirements

All students graduating from SPIA must satisfy general education requirements detailed in the General Education document. Students select from a range of approved courses to meet these requirements. SPIA's general education requirements largely align with Dietrich's requirements.

Overlapping Credit Within SPIA

Up to six credits may be overlapped between a SPIA & non-SPIA program (major, certificate & minor, etc).

The academic advisement report (AAR) will not be able to catch excessive overlap; advisors and students will need to continue to monitor overlapping credits.

Credit Policies

Advanced Placement (AP) Credits

See the [AP credit](#) section of the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid Web site.

Summer Courses Taken Elsewhere

SPIA students in good academic standing (cumulative GPA of at least 2.00) may attend a summer or special session of another accredited institution in order to supplement their program, provided they receive prior approval from their SPIA academic advisor. Students must request prior approval from their SPIA academic advisor. Students must provide relevant course descriptions & syllabi to their SPIA academic advisor. A maximum of two courses (no more than 8 credits) may be taken in a single period of enrollment elsewhere.

Evaluation of Transfer Credits

Previous coursework for transfer students is evaluated by the SPIA academic advisor with respect to general education requirements. As well, SPIA advising liaises with Departments and Programs to ascertain transfer credit for major-specific course requirements. Before initial registration, all students who have accepted their offer of admission will have access to an Academic Advisement Report that illustrates the requirements that they have satisfied, and which requirements remain to be satisfied in order to complete their degree.

After receiving SPIA evaluation of transfer credits, a student may petition for a re-evaluation of courses within the first two terms after matriculation into the School. A student must submit all petitions to transfer or substitute courses taken prior to enrollment at the same time. SPIA academic advising will confer with the associate dean to evaluate the merit of these petitions.

Transfer credits are subject to the following conditions:

- Courses that have a reasonable counterpart in the curricula of the various Schools/Departments of the University of Pittsburgh are eligible for transfer. Courses must be passed with a satisfactory grade (minimum of C or equivalent). Courses taken on a satisfactory/no credit (or similar nomenclature) grading system will only be transferred if the passing grade is equivalent to a C or better. Transfer course grades are recorded as T grades and are not used in computing a student's GPA, determining academic standing, or determining eligibility for graduation honors. Transfer credits must be in compliance with the University's [Academic Regulations](#) and may not be a repetition of any course previously taken (passed or failed) at the University of Pittsburgh.
- An official transcript of all courses taken at other institutions prior to joining the University of Pittsburgh must be submitted at the time of application, whether or not it is intended that such courses be counted toward the degree. No transfer credits will be posted to a University of Pittsburgh transcript without an official transcript from the originating institution.
- No more than 90 credits may be transferred from a four-year institution, and no more than 60 credits may be transferred from a two-year institution with a combined total of no more than 90 transfer credits posted to a student's transcript. No transfer credits will be transferred to a student's record during or after the term in which they exceed a total of 90 earned credits.
- The number of credits granted for a course cannot exceed the number on the transcript from the institution where they were earned nor exceed the number to be earned in the corresponding course at the University of Pittsburgh. Credits earned on the quarter system will be converted into semester credits. A quarter credit is equal to two-thirds of a semester credit (e.g., five quarter-system credits equal three semester credits, and three quarter-system credits equal two semester credits). Converted credits are rounded down to the nearest half.

- If a course is repeated for which advanced standing credit (AP test credit or other) has been granted, the advanced standing credit is canceled. This is monitored once per academic year and it is the student's responsibility to discuss course repeats - including those equivalent to advanced standing credit - with their advisor.
- Current students may also transfer in summer or special session credits from another institution with documented approval from SPIA's academic advisor. These credits must follow the regulations listed above, and an official transcript must be submitted as soon as the course grade is available.

Global Experience & Credit Policy

- SPIA students are encouraged to engage in global experiences. Students may pursue as many experiences as allowed by the Global Experiences Office. However, the maximum total of credits that may be applied to an undergraduate degree is bound by program or School limits of S/NC credits. Any credits earned during study abroad programs with the satisfactory/no credit (S/NC) grading option or appearing on the Pitt transcript as such will calculate into the S/NC credit limits.
- Completion of any global experience fulfills the "Global Awareness and Cross-Cultural Understanding" requirement within the the general education requirements. This is in addition to fulfillment of other requirements (general education or major) as pre-approved by the student's SPIA academic advisor, and/or the Dean's Office.
- Before students undertake a global experience, they must coordinate with and apply to a program through the Global Experiences Office. If admitted, students are required to engage in additional conversations with their SPIA academic advisor in order to complete the course approval, enrollment, and credit transcription processes.

Grading and Recording

Grading Policy

Under no circumstances will any grade of U, G, I, D or F be counted among the minimum total number of credits required for the degree major required courses.

Official University Record

GPA Calculation

A student's graduate GPA is obtained by dividing the total number of letter grade credits into the total number of quality points earned and accepted by SPIA for graduate credit. Only letter grades with quality point values will be used in computing the GPA.

Letter grades of A, B, C, D, and F are used for grading of all courses in SPIA, with the following exceptions:

Students receive the grade of H or S for satisfactory work and U for unsatisfactory work. The grades H and S are counted toward graduation but not the student's GPA.

The grades N and U are not counted toward graduation or the GPA. The S grades indicate adequate graduate attainment. In evaluating dissertation research, an instructor may only use the S/N grading option. It is the responsibility of each faculty member of the University to assign a standard letter grade or option grade as listed in the Schedule of Classes to each student enrolled in a course. All other grades will be recorded by the registrar as a Z, an invalid grade.

Grading System Definitions and Quality Points

The following policy includes all grades and their corresponding definitions that are used in SPIA. All available grading options and their uses are also included.

A+	= 4.00
A	= 4.00
A-	= 3.75
B+	= 3.25
B	= 3.00
B-	= 2.75
C+	= 2.25
C	= 2.00
C-	= 1.75
D+	= 1.25
D	= 1.00
D-	= 0.75
F	= 0.00

G Course work unfinished because of extenuating personal circumstances

H Exceptional (honors) completion of course requirements

I Incomplete course work, due to the nature of the course, clinical work, or incomplete research in individual guidance courses or seminars

N Noncredit audit

NG	No Credit, Unfinished Course Work (expired) Class work unfinished because of extenuating personal circumstances – work is no longer considered to be in progress.
R	Student resigned from the University
S	Satisfactory (successful) completion of course requirements
U	Unsatisfactory (failing) completion of course requirements
W	Withdrawal
Z	Invalid grade reported

Other Grades

G Grade

The G (incomplete) grade is a temporary grade used when extenuating circumstances (such as illness on the day of the final exam) prevent a student from finishing a class on time. It represents a contract between the faculty member and the student to continue working together after the end of the semester to finish any incomplete course requirements. Students should not be given a G grade if, in actuality, they need to repeat the course.

Students assigned G grades are required to complete course requirements no later than one year after the term or session in which the course was taken. Once the deadline has passed, the G grade will automatically change to an NG and will no longer appear as in progress on the student record. The student will be required to reregister for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation. SPIA students are strongly encouraged to remove the G grade within six weeks after the beginning of the term following the one in which the G grade was reported.

If a student wishes to request a G grade, the student should submit the Incomplete (G) Grade Agreement Form request directly to the faculty member before the end of the semester.

Faculty may choose to give a G grade (or not) at their sole discretion. If a faculty member approves a student's request for a G grade, both must complete and sign this form and submit a copy to the academic advisor.

It is the responsibility of the faculty member and the student to make sure the new grade is submitted in the deadline period. If the instructor does not submit a change of grade request, the G grade remains on the transcript for three terms (including the term it was assigned) and then automatically reverts to an NG grade. If the student graduates in the time period, the student will not be able to receive their diploma or transcript until the grade has been changed.

If the student does not complete the agreed upon work. The grade must be changed. For a G grade the choice of grading is up to the instructor. All G grades revert to a Non-Grade (NG) after one academic year. The Registrar's Office automatically assigns this grade. The instructor should act to change the grade before that time. It is up to the instructor to determine if they should assign an NG grade or assign the grade that should have been given at the end of the term. Once an NG grade is automatically assigned, the grade is final.

If the instructor is no longer teaching or no longer with the university, it will be up to the Associate Dean to decide what final grade to assign. Adjuncts or faculty who are not teaching the following term should NOT assign a G grade.

All graduating students must have final grades in all courses in order to receive their diploma and transcript. The degree will be awarded based on the schools' certification lists but will place diploma & transcript holds on any graduate missing final grades. G grades are not considered final grades, just placeholders or missing grades. This means that the record is not accurate/complete until the G grade/s are changed. If an instructor has assigned a G grade, the instructor is required to enter a grade at some point for the student even if the student has not completed the work. This applies to all courses that the student has enrolled in even if the course is not required for the degree.

N Grade

Students may audit a course and receive an N grade with the instructor and the school offering the course. However, to audit a course, a student must register and pay tuition for the course as if taking it for credit. Instructors may require auditing students to attend, participate, and complete assignments in the course. The N grade does not fulfill any graduation requirement. If interested in auditing a course, please consult with your academic advisor and the faculty instructor. Students are strongly discouraged from auditing most SPIA courses and in many cases, audits may not be permitted.

I Grade

This grade is assigned in SPIA for coursework or research that faculty members and students know, during course registration, will extend beyond the term. I grades are only permissible in the following course, PIA 1097 (undergraduate independent study).

All graduating students must have final grades in all courses in order to receive their diploma and transcript. The degree will be awarded based on the schools' certification lists but will place diploma & transcript holds on any graduate missing final grades. I grades are not considered final grades, just placeholders or missing grades. This means that the record is not accurate/complete until the I

grade/s are changed. If an instructor has assigned a I grade, the instructor is required to enter a grade at some point for the student even if the student has not completed the work. This applies to all courses that the student has enrolled in even if the course is not required for the degree.

It is the responsibility of the faculty member and the student to make sure the new grade is submitted in the deadline period. If the instructor does not submit a change of grade request, the I grade remains on the transcript for three terms (including the term it was assigned) and then automatically reverts to an NG grade. If the student graduates in the time period, the student will not be able to receive their diploma or transcript until the grade has been changed.

If the instructor is no longer teaching or no longer with the university, it will be up to the Program Director or Associate Dean to decide what final grade to assign. Adjuncts or faculty who are not teaching the following term should NOT assign an I grade.

W Grade

The W grade signifies that a student withdrew from the course. See Monitored Withdrawal for a course for more information.

R Grade

The R grade Indicates that a student has resigned from the University.

Z Grade

The Z grade indicates that an instructor has issued an invalid grade.

Course Repeat Policy

Students earning a failing grade of C- or lower in a required course will be required to repeat that course.

Course repetitions are subject to the University's defined limitations:

- A sequenced course may not be repeated for credit if the student passes a higher sequence course with a C or better grade.
- No course may be repeated at any other institution and have that grade accepted as a replacement for the original grade earned at the University of Pittsburgh
- The original course and grade remain on the transcript; however, the grade and credits originally earned are not counted in the calculation of the GPA. The grade earned by repeating a course is used instead of the grade originally earned.
- W, R, or N grades reported for the repeated course will not be identified as a course repeat, and therefore the original grade earned will continue to be counted in the GPA. Incomplete grades (G) are not identified as repeated courses until the course work is completed.
- Students are only permitted to repeat each course a maximum of twice.
- Any grade earned in the repeated course will be posted to the academic record even if it is lower than the original grade. The repeated course must be the same in which the original grade was earned.

Students may not earn duplicate credit for courses that substantially duplicate the content of courses taken previously. For example, duplicate credit cannot be earned for the following:

- Both a regular version of a course and an honors version of that course.
- Courses that are cross listed with a course the student has already taken.
- Courses taken under a newly assigned course number if already taken under an old course number.
- Certain specific courses that duplicate material.

In all cases, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure their repeat course grades have been updated with the "Repeated - Excluded from GPA" flag on their academic record and that all credits have been calculated correctly. This process is not automatic and will not go into effect unless the student submits the Course Repeat Form. If the form is not submitted, both grades received will continue to factor into the student's overall GPA. If a student repeats a course and earns a lower final grade, the student may not submit a Course Repeat Form, and both grades will continue to factor into the student's overall GPA. Students should discuss repeat courses with their advisor at the beginning and end of the term of repeated enrollment. Course repeat forms must be submitted to the student's SPIA academic advisor to affect grade replacement.

Changing Grades

The instructor of a course may change a student's grade by Change of Grade request online at my.pitt.edu. All grade changes should be processed no later than one year after the initial grade is assessed. There may be reasons that justify a later change of grade, but they must be articulated in writing to the Associate Dean. Changes in I grades are exempt from this policy. The Associate Dean or their designee must approve a change before it is honored by the University Registrar.

Records

Transcripts

An academic transcript serves as a permanent record of a student's academic progress. The transcript is a cumulative record of the student's GPA, as well as a record of the department, title, and grade for each course in which the student was enrolled. Students may request an official transcript that bears the seal and the signature of the University Registrar in Thackeray Hall. Upon graduation, the transcript reflects a student's degree and date; major; and, if applicable, certificate or minor.

Grade Report

At the end of each term, a grade report is prepared by the Office of the University Registrar. This report shows credits carried, the grade received in each course, and the quality points earned. Shortly after the term ends, students can access their grades online via the Student Center at my.pitt.edu.

Graduation

Graduation Process

Students must file an electronic application for graduation in my.pitt.edu in the term in which graduation is expected by the posted deadline. *Graduation is not an automatic process.* All students must apply to graduate and should begin this process early. Generally, students should complete the following steps and allow themselves adequate time to adjust their course enrollment before their anticipated graduation term. Although degrees are conferred at commencement, the official audit (certification) of degree completion occurs several weeks after the ceremony. Neither walking in the Commencement Ceremony nor being named in the Commencement Program is an official indication of graduation. Similarly, reading a student's name at SPIA's Graduation Ceremony does not indicate that the student has met graduation requirements.

Graduation Credit Requirements

Students must earn at least 120-degree credits with a minimum 2.00 GPA. In addition, students must achieve a 2.00 GPA both in the major and in the minor or certificate. Within 120 credits, students must fulfill SPIA's curriculum requirements, which include General Education Requirements and requirements for a major, minor, or certificate. Furthermore, students must earn at least half of the credits for their major(s), minor(s), and certificate(s) and the final 30 credits toward the SPIA degree while enrolled as a SPIA student.

Enrollment Status at Graduation

Students should be active and registered in the term in which they are to graduate; in exceptional circumstances, students who complete all the degree requirements at the end of a term but graduate in the next term may petition their academic advisor for a waiver of this registration requirement. The requirement that a student be on active status cannot be waived.

Graduation Certification

Graduation certification is the process run by advisors and staff to ensure students have met all graduation requirements. This process is finalized after grades are posted for the term in question. Students who are concerned about their graduation eligibility should first review their academic advisement report (AAR) and then meet with their academic advisor.

Academic Honors

Graduating SPIA students who have attained an outstanding scholastic record and have completed at least 60 letter-graded credits at the University of Pittsburgh graduate with honors. All coursework completed at the University for a letter grade is calculated in the grade point average. University honors are awarded in the following levels of distinction according to grade point average at graduation: Summa Cum Laude: 3.75, Magna Cum Laude: 3.50, Cum Laude: 3.25

Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal

Academic Standards

Once admitted to SPIA, students must maintain acceptable academic standards as a condition of their right to continue their SPIA studies. Students are expected to make normal progress toward the completion of their degrees and maintain a minimum cumulative and/or current grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Probation

A student is automatically placed on academic probation when any of the following occurs: (1) The student fails to maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative or current (term) GPA in all courses; (2) The student fails to earn a minimum of 12 credits per term if full-time or 6 credits per term if part-time; (3) The student earns two G or I grades in one term, or maintains two G or I grades at any one time; or (3) The student earns a grade of U, F, or D.

Probation & Eligibility for Financial Aid

The Office of Admissions & Financial Aid (OFA) monitors financial aid eligibility. Students on academic probation should contact OFA for more information.

Dismissal

Full-time students admitted with full undergraduate status are dismissed from SPIA if after 1 term of probation if they do not meet their probation requirements. Students admitted with full status may appeal their dismissal in writing directly to the Associate Dean, who will consider the case and may grant the appeal under extraordinary circumstances. Readmission is not guaranteed for any dismissed student.

Advising

Academic Advising Process

Each undergraduate student in SPIA is assigned an academic advisor to help guide them through from admission to graduation. Students are expected to meet with their advisor at least once per semester to ensure progress towards graduation.

Academic Advisors collaborate with students to develop a plan for student success by providing assistance with the following:

- All coursework scheduled should be approved by the academic advisor;

- Choosing classes, registration including add/drop, leaves of absence, and withdrawals;
- Discussions regarding academic expectations and performance;
- Assist with tracking progress towards graduation;
- Clarification of all academic policies and procedures (i.e., grading policies, graduation requirements, etc);
- A reliable source of information about university and school resources.

Career Advising Process

SPIA undergraduate students have access to a dedicated career advisor on the SPIA career development team. Students should meet with a SPIA career advisor once a term.

SPIA's Career Development team focus on pathways for a career by the following:

- Provide access to Career Launch to explore job opportunities
- Provide resources for career development such as resume reviews, mock interviews, negotiation preparation.
- Provide networking opportunities through events including professional development workshops, alumni career panels, and employer information sessions.
- Provide a document library enabling the student to download professional development resources, such as resume and interviewing guides.
- SPIA undergraduates continue to receive support through the University of Pittsburgh Career Center. SPIA Career Development advisors work closely with the Pitt career Center.

Students have the following responsibilities in relation to academic and career advising:

- Students are expected to be proactive in learning the components of the curriculum, including all course requirements and milestones, and to seek out resources beyond their academic advisor to understand and make decisions about the curriculum.
- Students are expected to take responsibility for their personal, academic, and career decisions.
- Students are expected to utilize the student support services of the University to enhance their educational experience.
- Students are expected to perform the following in order to select courses and make informed decisions regarding degree progress:
 - Refer to the academic calendar to meet necessary deadlines, including add/drop and withdrawal deadlines, and final exam schedules;
 - Navigate all aspects of PeopleSoft, the student registration system.
- Students are expected to meet all deadlines for applying for graduation and external certifications.

General Regulations

Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Policy

The University of Pittsburgh, as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a disabled veteran of the Vietnam era. Further, the University will continue to take affirmative steps to support and advance these values consistent with the University's mission. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs and activities. Additional policy information is available at: <http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/07/07-01-03>.

Computing Access and Use Policy

University policy establishes restrictions regarding the access and use of University technology resources such as computers, computer systems, networks, services, storage, and email. Students, faculty, and staff are obligated to protect University computing systems from illegal or damaging actions, either knowingly or unknowingly. Students should realize that any misuse of computing resources may result in the suspension of their computing privileges.

For additional information concerning this policy please see: [https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/01-Administrative and Organization/Policy AO 10.pdf](https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/01-Administrative%20and%20Organization/Policy%20AO%2010.pdf)

Copyright Policy

The University affirms that, except as specifically exempted by this policy, faculty, staff, and students are entitled to claim copyright ownership, including world-wide rights, in the following works authored by them: books, articles, educational coursework, similar works that are intended to disseminate the results of academic research or scholarly study, popular fiction or nonfiction works, poems, musical compositions, and other works of artistic imagination.

The University has no proprietary interest in copyrightable materials produced by faculty, staff, or students under contract with entities external to the University (in which the faculty, staff, and students have no controlling or majority interest), except as specifically exempted by this policy. For complete text of the policies, including the exemptions, see <https://pitt.libguides.com/copyright/pittpolicies>

Drug-Free School and Workplace Policy

The University of Pittsburgh prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance on University property or as part of any University activity.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action within 30 days, including, but not limited to, a warning, written reprimand, suspension, dismissal, expulsion, and/or mandatory participation and successful completion of a drug assistance or rehabilitation

program approved by an appropriate health or law enforcement agency. See complete text on this policy at <https://www.policy.pitt.edu/drug-free-workplace-drug-free-schools-06-02-01>

Email Communication Policy

The University of Pittsburgh has established email as an official means of communication with students. For more information, visit: <https://www.policy.pitt.edu/ao-15-e-mail-communication-policy-formerly-09-10-01>

Faculty-Student Relationship

The University's educational mission is promoted by professional relationships between faculty members and students. Relationships of an intimate nature (that is, sexual and/or romantic) compromise the integrity of the faculty-student relationship whenever the faculty member has a professional responsibility for the student. The University prohibits relationships between a faculty member and a student whose academic work, teaching, or research is being supervised or evaluated by the faculty member.

If an intimate relationship should exist or develop between a faculty member and a student, the University requires the faculty member to remove themselves from all supervisory, evaluative, and/or formal advisory roles with respect to the student.

Definition Note: In this policy, the definition of "faculty member" refers to anyone appointed by the University as a teacher, researcher, or academic administrator, including graduate and undergraduate students so appointed. For complete text on this policy, see <https://www.policy.pitt.edu/cs-02-consensual-relationships-formerly-07-14-01>

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, commonly referred to as the Buckley Amendment, the University guarantees that students have the right to inspect all personally identifiable records maintained by the institution and may challenge the content and accuracy of those records through appropriate institutional procedures. It is further guaranteed by the University that student records containing personally identifiable information will not be released except as permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. For more information on FERPA see

<https://www.policy.pitt.edu/access-and-release-education-records#:~:text=Summary,known%20as%20the%20Buckley%20Amendment>.

Confidentiality of Student Records

The policies and procedures concerning SPIA student records conform to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and the University guidelines implementing this Act. For further information, see <https://www.policy.pitt.edu/access-and-release-education-records#:~:text=Summary,known%20as%20the%20Buckley%20Amendment>.

Harassment Policies

Harassment

No University employee, student, or individual on University property may intentionally harass or abuse a person (physically or verbally) with the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with such person's work or academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or academic environment.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

The University is committed to the maintenance of a community free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment violates University policy as well as state, federal, and local laws. It is neither permitted nor condoned.

It is also a violation of the University's policy against sexual harassment for any employee or student at the University to attempt in any way to retaliate against a person who makes a claim of sexual harassment.

Any individual who, after thorough investigation and an informal hearing, is found to have violated the University's policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension, termination, or expulsion. Any disciplinary action taken will depend upon the severity of the offense. For more information, visit the University Office of Institutional Engagement and Wellbeing and/or <https://www.policy.pitt.edu/cs-27-title-ix-policy>.

Human Research Subjects: Institutional Review Board

The University is guided by the ethical principles regarding all research involving humans as subjects, as set forth in the report of the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (entitled: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects for Research [the "Belmont Report"]). Most research at the University involving humans as subjects must be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) before the research will be allowed to proceed. For a complete text of the IRB's policies and practices, see <https://www.hrpo.pitt.edu/policies-and-procedures>.

Research Integrity

Excellence in scholarship requires all members of the University community to adhere strictly to the highest standards of integrity about research, instruction, and evaluation. Research misconduct carries potential for serious harm to the University community, to the integrity of science, and to society as a whole. The complete text is available at:

<https://www.policy.pitt.edu/research-integrity>

University Patent Policy

During enrollment at the University, a student may be responsible for new discoveries and inventions that could have commercial value and contribute to scientific, technological, social, or cultural progress. Those accomplishments should be patented in the best interest of the student, the University, the public, and the government. The University's policy on patents determines the rights and obligations

of the student and the University in any technology the student may invent while enrolled in the University. Details of this University policy are available from the Office of Intellectual Property. For additional information, please see the following site:

<https://www.policy.pitt.edu/ri-10-intellectual-property>

Rights and Responsibilities

The University has a number of official policies affecting students. For complete and current text on all University policies, please see

<https://www.policy.pitt.edu/university-policies-category>

Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited in all University-owned and leased facilities, including residence halls and off-campus housing facilities, and in all University vehicles, including motor pool vehicles, campus buses, and vans, with explicit limited expectation described in

https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Community-Standards/Policy_CS_21.pdf

Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct is an outline of the non-academic rights and responsibilities of University students. The code defines offenses against students. A student or University official may file a complaint of violation of the Student CODE of Conduct at the University Student Judicial System Office.

Student Code of Judicial Procedures

The Office of the University Student Judicial System coordinates the Campus Judicial Board. It also receives, previews, and acts upon complaints of violations of the Student Code of Conduct. Its purpose is to provide due process and fair treatment in adjudicating charges filed for violations of the code. All complaints should be filed with the Judicial Office. Judicial Affairs also conducts a Student Mediation Program and screens requests for contact of students.

For detailed information on the Student Code of Conduct and Judicial Procedures see:

<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/conduct/code-conduct>

Use of Alcohol Policy

The University of Pittsburgh prohibits the use and dispensing of alcohol in compliance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. For more information, visit [https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Community-](https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Community-Standards/Policy_CS_24.pdf)

[Standards/Policy_CS_24.pdf](https://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Community-Standards/Policy_CS_24.pdf)

APPENDIX A: Grade Appeals Process

If a student believes that a professor incorrectly assigned a grade on an *individual* exam, paper, or other assignment (not the *final* grade for the course), the student may appeal by contacting the professor directly in writing. The student's correspondence must indicate the reason for the appeal and should offer supporting evidence that the original grade was miscalculated or otherwise assigned in error. The professor has a responsibility to read the student's appeal and may request a meeting to discuss the situation. The professor may agree to change the grade, or keep the grade unchanged, based on the professor's best judgment.

Students may not appeal grades on individual exams, papers, or other assignments to anyone other than the course instructor. If a student attempts to submit a grade appeal to the instructor and does not receive a timely response, the student may contact the Associate Dean, who will prompt the instructor to reply but will not recommend a resolution.

If, at the end of a course, a student wishes to appeal the *final* grade appearing on the student's transcript, the procedure is as follows:

1. The student must contact the professor in writing as soon as possible, but no later than four weeks after the submission of the final grade. The written correspondence should indicate why the grade may have been miscalculated.
2. If the professor agrees to change the grade and does so, the situation is considered resolved. If the professor disagrees with the student's appeal, or if the professor does not respond in a timely manner of five business days, the student may submit the written appeal to the Associate Dean.
3. The Associate Dean may request a copy of the syllabus for the course and any documentation that the student can provide. The Associate Dean may request a meeting with the student and a separate meeting with the professor to discuss the situation and may ask for further documentation as needed.
4. If the Associate Dean believes that the final grade was miscalculated based on the criteria laid out in the syllabus, the Associate Dean may contact the professor and recommend that the grade be changed. In making this judgment, the Associate Dean will give primary weight to whether the original grade was assigned according to the written criteria laid out in the course syllabus.

Note that the Associate Dean cannot and will not overrule the professor's judgment as to the quality of a student's work or other subjective criteria. The Associate Dean will only pass judgment on whether the grade was assigned according to the appropriate procedure – that is, whether the grade was accurately calculated and assigned based on the criteria laid out in the syllabus.

If at this stage, both the student and the professor accept the Associate Dean's recommendation, the issue is considered resolved. If either party refuses to accept the Associate Dean's recommendation, that party should notify the Associate Dean within 1 week of the recommendation's issuance and the Associate Dean will refer the case to a SPIA Academic Integrity Committee. The Committee will take up the case early in the Spring term (if a Fall term course) or as early as possible after graduation (if a Spring term course). The Committee will allow the student and/or faculty member to present their arguments informally at a meeting, in which the Committee members may ask questions of either party. The Committee will issue a written decision within two weeks. If either the student or the faculty member refuses to accept this decision, the process will move to a formal hearing and will follow the procedures for adjudication outlined in the University of Pittsburgh Guidelines for Academic Integrity.

Documents delivered to the Associate Dean as part of this process will not be added to the student's permanent file but will be kept by the Associate Dean until the student graduates. Within six months of the date the student graduates or leaves SPIA for any reason, the document will be destroyed.

APPENDIX B: SPIA Policy on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

If a faculty member suspects that a student has committed plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct, the faculty member must do the following:

1. Assign the student a "G" (incomplete) grade for the assignment and/or the course, which will remain in place until the allegation of misconduct is proven or unproven.
2. Schedule an appointment to meet individually with the student and present the evidence for the accusation. If an in-person meeting is not possible, the evidence may be presented to the student by phone, email or virtual meeting.

If the student admits to having conducted himself or herself in a dishonest way, the faculty member may decide upon a resolution that, in the faculty member's judgment, is appropriate given the severity of the case. Resolutions at this stage may include:

1. Withdrawal of the accusation. (When the initial accusation is determined to be without merit).
2. Forcing the student to redo the assignment and/or retake the exam (for infractions that are judged to be minor or inadvertent).
3. A reduced grade up to and including failure for the assignment.
4. A reduced grade up to and including failure for the course (for the most egregious cases).

If the student accepts the penalty, the issue is resolved. The faculty member and the student must sign a written agreement detailing the outcome of the situation and deliver a copy of that agreement to the Associate Dean. If the student declines to accept the penalty, or refuses to admit to any wrongdoing, the matter may then be mediated by the Associate Dean, who will meet with the faculty member and the student. The student will be given the opportunity to present any evidence in support of his/her position. The Associate Dean will recommend a resolution, in writing, which the faculty member and student will have the opportunity to sign. If both parties sign the document, the matter will be considered resolved.

*This policy is based on the policies outlined in the University of Pittsburgh's Guidelines on Academic Integrity (<http://www.as.pitt.edu/fac/policies/academic-integrity>). Nothing in this policy shall be construed as overriding or replacing any policy in that document.

If, at this stage, either the student or the faculty member refuses to accept the Associate Dean's recommendation, the case is referred to a SPIA Academic Integrity Committee. The Committee will allow the student and/or faculty member to present their arguments informally at a meeting, in which the Committee members may ask questions of either party. The Committee will issue a written decision within two weeks. If either the student or the faculty member refuses to accept this decision, the process will move to a formal hearing and will follow the procedures for adjudication outlined in the University of Pittsburgh Guidelines for Academic Integrity.

Documents delivered to the Associate Dean as part of this process will not be added to the student's permanent file but will be kept by the Associate Dean until the student graduates. Within six months of the date the student graduates or leaves SPIA for any reason, the document will be destroyed.

What Constitutes Plagiarism:

Plagiarism, defined in dictionaries as "stealing and using the ideas or writings of another person as one's own," must be clearly understood and carefully avoided by anyone writing a research paper. Unlike other types of composition in which most of the information comes directly from the writer and is the property of that writer, a research paper must contain great amounts of information and many ideas from the work of others. These other sources must be acknowledged.

Therefore, it is important that when you are taking notes from sources you should mark carefully on your note cards exactly which words are directly from the source (using quotation marks), which are paraphrased, and which are your own.

A complicating factor for some students whose first language is not English is the fact that different cultures may have different attitudes to using other's words and ideas without acknowledgment. In some cultures, it may be acceptable because everyone agrees that the words of the original could not be improved. In others, it may be acceptable because the source is considered an authority whose words and ideas are common property as soon as they are published. In yet others it might be regarded as disrespectful and even deceitful to change words of an original source, so they are no longer recognizable. So, for practical purposes students from other cultural backgrounds may have to learn to work with a different set of values when using the language and ideas of others in a research paper. These values are based on the idea that it is a serious crime to plagiarize, so serious that in some cases it may lead to a student being expelled from school.

Follow these guidelines:

1. Use your own words and sentence structures when writing your paper, even when writing the ideas of others.
2. When paraphrasing (putting an idea in your own words), avoid using words from the original, unless they are essential technical terms.
3. If you use any of the original words from a source, you must acknowledge them by enclosing them in quotation marks. It is still regarded as plagiarism if, without quotation marks, you use some of the original words and phrases from a sentence and change

others. Also, it is still regarded as plagiarism if you keep the sentence structure of the original and change all the words to synonyms.

4. Acknowledge all ideas taken from other writers, either in a footnote or as part of the sentence describing the ideas. This applies to any ideas or theories that specialists in the field can recognize as belonging to a specific person. It does not apply to ideas and information that are common knowledge in the field. This is a most difficult area in which to judge whether something is plagiarized, because over the years ideas which originate with an individual become so generally accepted that their origin is forgotten, and the idea becomes part of the body of knowledge that is central to the subject area and that appears in School textbooks.

EXAMPLES

Original text:

The second problem would have guaranteed the failure of the new math even if the first problem had not existed. The overwhelming majority of elementary-School teachers had inadequate training in mathematics, and thus did not understand what they were expected to teach. A program that attempts to transmit knowledge not possessed by the teacher is doomed to fail. As this fact became clear to curriculum directors and textbook publishers across the country, they compounded their error by attempting to make the new math teacher-proof. This involved developing self-explanatory materials and mechanical, repetitive techniques, which were based on underlying mathematical principles. Unfortunately, the new techniques were far more complicated than the old ones had been, the teachers still didn't understand what was going on, and an entire generation did not learn how to compute. [From: Copperman, P. (1980). *The literacy hoax*. New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, p. 65.]

Example 1

PLAGIARISM: A program that attempts to transmit knowledge not possessed by the teacher is doomed to fail. (This should be in quotation marks with a citation reference.)

NOT PLAGIARISM: "A program that attempts to transmit knowledge not possessed by the teacher is doomed to fail." (The quotation marks make this an acceptable use of the original.)

Example 2

PLAGIARISM: A course that attempts to transmit knowledge not possessed by the teacher will never succeed. (This is patchwork plagiarism; a few words are paraphrased, but most are from the original and the sentence is also from the original.)

NOT PLAGIARISM: A course "that attempts to transmit knowledge not possessed by the teacher" will never succeed. (The quotation marks around words from the original make this acceptable.)

Example 3

PLAGIARISM: A course that tries to convey understanding not held by the teacher is fated to be unsuccessful. (This is plagiarism because the original sentence structure has been kept, even though the writer has used synonyms to replace most words.)

NOT PLAGIARISM: If the instructor does not have the knowledge that the student is meant to learn from a course, then the course will never succeed. (This is acceptable because it is a full paraphrase, with the original words and sentence structure changed, of an idea that is common knowledge in the field of education.)

Example 4

PLAGIARISM: Without the first problem, the second one will still have been enough to stop the new math from working. (Even though this is a full paraphrase, it is plagiarism of the author's idea from the first sentence of the extract, because the idea is not common knowledge in the field of math education.)

NOT PLAGIARISM: Copperman (1980, p. 65) claims that, without the first problem, the second one will still have been enough to stop the new math from working. (This is acceptable because it is a full paraphrase and the author's own idea has been clearly attributed to him.)

NOT PLAGIARISM: Without the first problem, the second one would still have been enough to stop the new math from working (Copperman, 1980, p. 65). (This is acceptable because it is a full paraphrase and the author's own idea has been clearly attributed to him.)

Source: Lionel Menasche, *Writing a Research Paper* (Pittsburgh: University Press, 1984), pp. 38-40.

Double Submission (Self-Plagiarism)

Students are not permitted to double submit or reuse (self-plagiarism) their own previously written work in another class without informing the faculty member of that class that the work has been submitted in a previous course. The students must seek permission and obtain approval of the faculty member prior to re-using previously submitted written work

Appendix C: University Policy/Disclaimer

In addition to reviewing this handbook, students should refer to the University of Pittsburgh Catalog and related pages on the University's website, for the most up-to-date University-wide policies and regulations.

Website Disclaimer

The information contained on the SPIA website was accurate at the time of publication. Fees, deadlines, academic requirements, courses, degree programs, and other matters described on the SPIA website may change without notice.