University of Pittsburgh | School of Public and International Affairs

HANDBOOK OF ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS

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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

Admissions
SPIA admits persons who have demonstrated intellectual competence and high motivation in an academic and/or professional environment and who will enrich the quality of life in the school. Individuals from varied cultural, academic, and social backgrounds provide an exciting frame of reference for the stimulating exchanges so vital to a dynamic academic process.

Undergraduate Degree Requirement
All applicants must have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution, or a degree from a foreign university that is equivalent to a bachelor's degree in a regionally accredited U.S. institution. Degrees from institutions that are not regionally accredited are not acceptable.

Admission Prerequisites
It is desirable, but not mandatory, that all applicants have successfully completed, at the undergraduate level, courses in macro- and/or macroeconomics, statistics, and a statistical analysis program

Application Process
SPIA only accepts online applications. Payment for the application fee can be made by credit card. The application fee, if not waived, is non-refundable; it does not apply toward the payment of tuition.

Tuition Deposit
Once admitted to SPIA, a student is required to submit a US$200 tuition deposit to secure their place in the incoming class. The deposit is applied to the tuition and is non-refundable. Payment can be made by credit card.

Admission Status
Admission to degree programs in the school are competitive and based on the relative strength of all credentials required in support of the application. Admission may be granted or denied only by the dean of the school or his or her designee. However non-immigrant students may be denied visa documents for non-academic reasons by the Office of International Services. Acceptable students are admitted to SPIA with "full", "provisional", or "non-degree" status, depending on their qualifications and objectives. The qualifications described below represent SPIA's minimum standards.

Full Graduate Status
For admission with full graduate status, an applicant must demonstrate, in the judgment of the admissions committee, that they clearly possess the skills, aptitude, and academic preparation necessary to succeed in graduate study. The judgment of the admissions committee is based on a holistic review of all application materials submitted, including, but not limited to, undergraduate grade point average, letters of recommendation, full- or part-time work experience, and the student's personal essay(s). Only students with full graduate status will be considered for school-based funding or be graduated.

Provisional Status
Applicants who are graduates of a recognized college or university but who do not qualify for admission to full graduate status because of deficiencies in either their undergraduate program or their academic achievement may be considered for provisional graduate status if strong evidence of their ability to complete a graduate program is provided. Courses taken to remove deficiencies do not contribute toward the completion of graduate degree requirements. Transfer from provisional to full graduate status is possible only after removal of deficiencies and other conditions noted at the time of admission and satisfactory progress in graduate work. A student on provisional status is not eligible to be considered for school-based funding or to be graduated.

As a requirement of provisional status, a student must complete 6 (for part-time students) or 12 (for full-time students) SPIA credits with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better by the end of their first term (for full-time students) or by the end of their second term (for part-time students). By meeting these requirements, status will be changed to full graduate status, which will allow the student to become eligible for graduation. The student will not be eligible to pursue any joint degree programs until they have obtained full graduate status. If a student defers their admission to a future term, the same conditions will apply. Students admitted provisionally must make satisfactory academic progress as outlined. If the conditions of their provisional admission are not met, the student will be dismissed from SPIA. Students can reapply to SPIA in the future, if reasonable efforts are made to improve their ability to maintain satisfactory academic progress if readmitted. Readmission is not guaranteed for any dismissed student.

Non-Degree Status
Applicants to the non-degree program must have a bachelor's degree and are held to the same admissions standards as anyone applying to a degree program. In most cases, only U.S. citizens/permanent residents are eligible. International students may not apply as non-degree students unless they are participating in one of SPIA's exchange partnerships with foreign universities.

Non-degree students are typically admitted for one semester only, to take a specific class or classes. Most often, they are graduate students at other universities who want to transfer the SPIA credits into their home schools. Some non-degree students are taking classes for professional training or for personal enrichment. In their essays, non-degree applicants should explain what courses they intend to take and for what purpose.

The non-degree program is not appropriate for students who are trying to improve their credentials so that they may apply to a SPIA degree program. Students who are not yet qualified for a degree program would not be admitted to the non-degree program. If a non-degree student wishes to enter a degree program, they must submit a new application to SPIA. No more than 6 credits earned under non-degree status can be applied to a degree program.

Part-Time Status
Admission procedures for part-time students are the same as those for full-time students.

Guaranteed Admission Program (University of Pittsburgh Undergraduate Students only)
Prospective undergraduates who apply to the University of Pittsburgh may be offered guaranteed admission to SPIA at the time they are admitted to the university's undergraduate program. The decision to offer this guaranteed rests entirely with the undergraduate admissions committee. To be considered for graduate/professional school guarantees, prospective freshmen must be U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens (i.e. permanent resident aliens, refugees, or legal immigrants), apply to the School of Arts and Sciences or a regional campus, unless otherwise noted, and indicate the pre-professional field of study on their admissions application. The

guarantee is void if the student does not enroll in/graduate from the University of Pittsburgh's undergraduate program or does not apply to SPIA within three years of graduating from the University of Pittsburgh with a bachelor's degree.

Additional requirements:

- A separate application is not necessary for consideration. All first-year applicants to the Dietrich School of Arts and Science who choose a social science major will be considered for the guarantee. In addition, applicants who chose "Public and International Affairs" in the Guaranteed Admission Program dropdown box on the Application for Undergraduate Admission will also be considered for the guarantee. Only prospective first-year students can be considered for the guarantee.
- Maintain a minimum 3.5 grade point average while satisfying the minimum course work requirements for the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.
- Demonstrate a commitment to public service through internships, volunteer, and/or work experience in the fields of public and international affairs.
- Apply to the Master of Public Administration, Master of Public & International Affairs, or Master of International Development programs. The offer of guaranteed admission remains in effect for three years after graduation from Arts & Science with a bachelor's degree.

Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Pathway (for University of Pittsburgh Undergraduate Students only)
Exceptionally able undergraduate students from the Deitrich School of Arts and Sciences or the College of General Studies may be admitted to SPIA with full-graduate status. These students may use 12-24 credits based on SPIA degree program to satisfy their requirements for the baccalaureate degree. Eligible students must be in good academic standing with a minimum overall GPA of 3.5, have **completed at least 108 credits to be admitted for the MPIA and MID degrees or have completed at least 96 credits to be admitted for the MPA degree**, have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better for all three SPIA degrees, have completed all General Education and major requirements and have no "g" grades. Please see the two pathways below.

> **Pathway 1: For the MPIA & MID degrees,** students will spend their last term in their senior year as an undergraduate student, taking 12 SPIA credits while finishing any remaining undergraduate requirements (ideally no more than 3-6 credits). At the end of that term, students will graduate with their bachelor's degree on schedule. In year five, students will finish their remaining 24 SPIA credits and graduate with their master's degree.
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> **Pathway 2: For the MPA degree**, students will spend their last two terms in their senior year as an undergraduate student, taking 24 SPIA credits while finishing any remaining undergraduate requirements (ideally no more than 3-6 credits). At the end of the second term, students will graduate with their bachelor's degree on schedule. In year five, students will finish their remaining 24 SPIA credits as a graduate student and graduate with their master's degree.

Deferred Admission
Admitted domestic students may defer their enrollment for up to one term if they submit a deferral request via email to **SPIA@pitt.edu** and pay their enrollment deposit. Multi-term or year-long deferrals are not permitted.

International students are not eligible to defer and must reapply for a future term if they are unable to enroll as planned.

Scholarships, fellowships, and other forms of financial aid cannot be deferred and will be reevaluated during the student's new admission cycle.

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.

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.

International Student Academic Requirements and Credentials

Credentials
The minimum requirement for admission to SPIA is the completion of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States or the completion of a level of education that the University deems comparable to a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States.

Applicants are required to submit official original academic credentials. Official original academic credentials that are issued in a language other than English must be accompanied by a certified English translation. In addition, in cases where the transcript (grade report, academic record, examination results, and mark sheet) does not attest to the awarding of a degree or an academic qualification,

a certified copy of the original certificate or diploma awarding of a degree or qualification must be submitted. Certificates or diplomas that are issued in a language other than English must be accompanied by a certified English translation.

English Language Proficiency
International applicants must submit either the TOEFL, IELTS or Duolingo score. Scores must be directly from the testing agency to SPIA. The minimum TOEFL score of 80 is now a minimum score of 4.0 (CEFR B2) with all subscores also at 4.0 or higher. An overall score of 4.0 on the new scale corresponds to previous scores in the 72–85 range. Requiring all subscores to meet the 4.0 threshold ensures that applicants demonstrate proficiency in each language skill at the CEFR B2 level. SPIA's institutional code is 2574. Personal or other copies of TOEFL or IELTS results are not acceptable. The requirement to submit the results of the TOEFL or IELTS may be waived if the applicant has recently earned a degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States. The minimum Duolingo English Test score required for admission is 125.

SPIA may recommend students take English support courses to help improve their proficiency in English writing, speaking and listening, and vocabulary. Any recommened placements in English support courses are based on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Duolingo English Test (DET), and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores that international students who use English as an additional language submit with their applications.

Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching
In keeping with the University policy on Certification of English Language Fluency for Teaching, students who are not native speakers of English and are appointed as teaching assistants or teaching fellows are required to take a test of their spoken English. Individuals are given non-teaching assignments and are required to take special course work until they attain passing scores. An unsatisfactory score at the time of reappointment is sufficient cause for non-renewal

Admission Processing for Visa Documents
When SPIA completes its evaluation of the credentials of an applicant, it notifies the candidate whether he or she is academically qualified for admission. The applicant may still be denied a place at SPIA if the Office of International Services determines that the student does not qualify for an I-20 form or a visa.

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, faculty advisor, and a career 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.

Full-Time and Part-Time Study
Students must be officially admitted to SPIA to be eligible to register for classes. Students who register for 9-15 credits in the fall or spring term are full-time students and are assessed the SPIA tuition rate. SPIA requires students who receive school-based funding to register for at least 9 credits per term. Students who register for fewer than 9 credits are part-time students and are billed on a per-credit basis. During the summer term, SPIA students are billed on a per-credit basis regardless of the number of credits taken.

Maximum Allowable Credits per Term
No SPIA student is permitted to register for more than 16 credits in a term without permission from the student's academic advisor. Students who receive approval to register for more than 16 credits will be billed for each additional credit that exceeds their full-time tuition rate.

Late Registration
After the start of classes, registration is permitted for new and continuing students only in unusual circumstances with the written approval of the Associate Dean and with the payment of a late registration fee.

Registration Status at Graduation
Graduate 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.

Registering in Other Schools and Departments
Students may register for graduate courses in other schools and departments in the University with the prior approval of the department offering the course. Students should also consult with their academic advisor to see if the course meets their degree requirements.

Course Work Acceptable as Graduate Credit
Courses at the University of Pittsburgh numbered 2000-2999 and 3000-3999 are acceptable graduate courses. Upper-level undergraduate courses (1000-1999) may qualify if they are recognized for graduate credit within their own department and if the instructor agrees to adjust the course requirements for graduate students. Such adjustments must be documented. No undergraduate courses numbered below 1000 may be applied toward SPIA graduate degree requirements.

Enrollment in Graduate Courses as Undergraduate
Undergraduate students with sufficient preparation are permitted to enroll in SPIA graduate-level classes. The credits earned in SPIA courses may be counted toward the undergraduate degree if approved by the student's school.

In rare circumstances, with prior approval from both SPIA and the student's undergraduate school, a University of Pittsburgh undergraduate may complete SPIA graduate-level courses in their final semester as an undergraduate. In accordance with University of Pittsburgh Policy 09-04-06, if the student subsequently enrolls at SPIA, these classes (up to 6 credits) may be posted to the student's SPIA transcript as advanced standing, provided that the classes did not count toward the undergraduate degree.

Cross-Registration
During the fall and spring terms, full-time students may earn credits by cross-registering in graduate courses at Carlow University, Carnegie Mellon University, Chatham University, Duquesne University, La Roche College, the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Point Park University, Robert Morris University, or Seton Hill University, when approved in advance by their faculty advisor and their academic advisor of SPIA. Credits earned by cross-registration are considered to be electives and are accepted as University credits for the purpose of calculating the grade point average and the completion of degree requirements. Students may only cross-register for one such course per term in the fall or spring terms, never in the summer term. Only full-time students are eligible to cross-register. Students may earn a maximum of 12 credits through cross-registration. Part-time students and international exchange students are not eligible to cross-register.

Students who cross-register are charged tuition at the SPIA rate and do not pay tuition to the host institution; however, they are responsible for any additional fees associated with the course, such as books, etc. Students are discouraged from cross-registering during their term of graduation to avoid delays in the receipt of course credit needed to graduate.

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, School-based funding, and assistantships or fellowships. 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, graduate students may be granted a leave of absence. A maximum leave of one year (12 months) may be granted to master's 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 individual degree programs are considered by the school as essential to the study of public and international affairs. 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 Program Director and their academic advisor.

Course Sequencing
Under most circumstances, students should strive to take all program core courses (except for the capstone seminar) within the first two terms in SPIA. Part-time students should complete the program core courses within their first 24 credits.

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 athttps://www.policy.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Policies/Academic/Policy_AC_62.pdf

Closed or Restricted Courses
SPIA and non-SPIA students wishing to register for a course that is restricted or has reached its maximum published enrollment may do so only with the written permission of the instructor of the course.

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 2097) if the following conditions are met: student has completed at least 12 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. Master's students are permitted to take a maximum of six total credits via independent study before graduating.

Course Waivers
As noted on the plan of study for each concentration, a small number of required courses may be waived. These waivers may involve a placement exam.

Other than those waivers explicitly specified on the plans of study, waivers of required courses generally are not granted. If a student has completed substantially equivalent, graduate-level coursework at another graduate institution, they may request a waiver of a specific course. Any waiver must be approved by the student's program director, academic advisor, and in some cases, the associate dean. Under no circumstances may any undergraduate-level course, or a graduate-level course taken while enrolled as an undergraduate, qualify a student for a waiver of a SPIA requirement.

A waiver does not reduce the number of credits required for the degree; it merely removes a particular course requirement. Students who are granted a course waiver may choose to substitute another course in an elective area. See your academic advisor for additional details and conditions regarding waivers.

Changing Academic Programs
Admitted students who wish to change their degree programs or concentrations in SPIA must complete a Change of Academic Plan form and submit it to their academic advisor. Students with full graduate status in the MID, MPA or MPIA degree programs may transfer freely between the programs. Master's students may not transfer into the PhD program. MID, MPA, or MPIA students may typically transfer into the MPPM program only if they would have qualified for admission to the MPPM at the time they applied to the MID/MPA/MPIA.

Concentrations and Minors
All MID, MPA, and MPIA students must apply to a specific concentration offered within the degree program of their choice. MPPM students do not declare a concentration. MID, MPA, and MPIA students may pursue only one concentration; there is no opportunity to double-concentration. A concentration requires a student to complete 9-12 credits of concentration coursework based on degree program.

MID, MPA, and MPIA students may pursue a minor in any of the fields SPIA offers as a concentration, including SPIA concentrations offered outside of their own SPIA degree. Students may not pursue a concentration and minor in the same field. Students may not minor in a field offered by another academic unit of the University of Pittsburgh outside of SPIA. A minor typically requires students to take a total of 9 credits within the minor field; courses used to fulfill minor requirements may not simultaneously fulfill any concentration requirements or core requirements. Students may pursue more than one minor, but it is not typically possible to do so without extending the length of enrollment beyond the 36 or 48 credits (depending on program) required for graduation. Students are not required to declare a minor but if pursuing one, the student must declare a minor by submitting the appropriate paperwork to their academic advisor at least one semester before graduation. MPPM students may not declare a minor.

Grading and Recording

Grading Policy

SPIA's grading policy recognizes the grade of B or better as representing adequate graduate-level attainment.; however, C or lower grades may be given. A grade of C- or below is considered failing. Under no circumstances will any grade of U, C- or lower be counted among the minimum total number of credits required for the degree.

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:

Dissertation	S/N (Satisfactory/Audit)
Thesis	H/S/U (Honor/Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory)
Independent study	H/S/U (Honor/Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory)

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	Minimal graduate-level attainment
C-	= 1.75	Failure, at graduate-level
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. Any G grade that remains on a student's transcript longer than one year after the term or session in which the course was taken will automatically revert to an NG (No Grade) grade. 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, **i**t 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 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 courses: PIA 2097 (master's independent study) and PIA 2099 (thesis).

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, **i**t 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. See resigning from the University for more information.

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.
- A student may not enroll in the same course at another institution and have that grade replace the original grade earned at the University.
- 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. **Grades of W (withdrawal), I or G all count as an attempt**, even if it has not yet lapsed to a final grade and counts towards the three-attempt maximum. **Grades of R (resignation) or N (audit) reported for the repeated course will not be counted as a course repeat attempt.**
- Students are only permitted to repeat each course a **maximum of three total times.**
- No sequence course may be repeated for credit after a more advanced course in that sequence has been passed with a B or higher grade.

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.

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 will be 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.

Internship

Internship Requirements
As a graduation requirement, all students enrolled in SPIA's 36 or 48-credit master's degree programs, must complete an approved 300-hour internship which complements and provides practical experience in the student's field of study. Upon satisfactory completion of the internship and submission of the Student Evaluation Form and Employer Evaluation Form.

- **Eligibility**. Students become eligible to obtain an internship after completing a minimum of 12 credits and maintaining good academic standing with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students with a minimum of three years of full-time professional experience pertinent to their field may apply to have the internship requirement waived. Waiver requests should be submitted to their career advisor during the first term of study at SPIA. Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their waiver request.

- **Full time Internship Study (FTIK)**. FTIK is a zero (0) credit course that allows a student to maintain full-time enrollment status while pursuing the 0-credit internship. Registration is only permitted with approval of the director of career development. FTIK is not appropriate for most students pursuing an internship except in special circumstances in which a student's enrollment status affects financial aid, visa status, fellowship status, or other issues. See your career advisor if you wish to request permission to register for FTIK.

Graduation

Credit Requirements

SPIA's MPA degree require the satisfactory completion of a minimum of 48 credits. For the MPA degrees, no more than 12 credits may be granted to a student as transfer credit for work done at another accredited graduate institution (see Acceptance of Transfer Credits for further information). The MPIA and MID degrees requires the satisfactory completion of a minimum of 36 credits. For the MPIA and MID degrees, no more than 9 credits may be granted to a student as transfer credit for work done at another accredited graduate institution (see Acceptance of Transfer Credits for further information).

The MPPM degree requires 30 credits to complete degree requirements; no more than six credits may be granted as transfer credits.

Courses taken through cross-registration will not be considered as transfer credit and may be counted for credit toward a graduate degree; the grade earned will be used in computing the student's grade point average.

Certification Requirements for Graduation

In addition to course work requirements including the Internship, students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to be in good academic standing. Students must also be registered for a minimum of 1 credit during their final term to be eligible for graduation. Students on probation are not eligible to be graduated until cleared from probation.

Application for Graduation

Students must file an electronic application for graduation in my.pitt.edu in the term in which graduation is expected. As noted above, 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.

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 graduate 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 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Students who do not maintain satisfactory performance are academically deficient and not making normal progress toward the successful completion of their degree. See Appendix C for a description of the definitions of academic deficiencies and the actions associated with them.

Probation

A student is automatically placed on academic probation when any of the following occurs: (1) The student fails to maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative or current (term) GPA in all courses; (2) The student fails to earn a minimum of 9 credits per term if full-time or 3 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, C- or lower. Please refer to complete policy in Appendix C. Students are not normally eligible to receive school-based merit funding (including tuition discounts funded by the school) while on probation.

Dismissal

Full-time students admitted with full graduate status are dismissed from SPIA if after 1 term of probation if they do not meet their probation requirements. Part-time students admitted with full graduate status are dismissed from SPIA if after two consecutive terms 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.

Students admitted provisionally must make satisfactory academic progress as outlined in their admission letter. If the conditions of their provisional admission are not met, the student will be dismissed from SPIA without the opportunity to appeal. Students can reapply to SPIA in the future, if reasonable efforts are made to improve their ability to maintain satisfactory academic progress if readmitted. Readmission is not guaranteed for any dismissed student.

Please refer to the complete policy in Appendix C. If students are dismissed from SPIA, they are notified in writing by the Academic Advising office.

Advising

The School of Public and International Affairs' advising model for graduate students is designed to offer holistic support by distinguishing between the types of advising. Faculty advisors help you envision your future—career choices, professional networks, research opportunities, and personal strengths. Academic advisors ensure you stay on track—meeting deadlines, credit rules, enrollment procedures, institutional expectations and support resources around Pitt. Together, the advisors form a coordinated support system: one helps you know *where* you're headed; the other helps you manage *how* you get there. SPIA faculty advisors are dedicated to nurturing your academic and professional journey—not just overseeing paperwork. They engage with you personally, listen

attentively, ask thoughtful questions, and offer early support if challenges emerge. Their focus is on helping you identify strengths, set long-term goals, and grow. Faculty notice signs of stress—academic, personal, or financial—and refer you to campus support services like counseling or financial aid when needed. Faculty make themselves approachable, in the classrooms, hallway check-ins, or office visits. They learn about your background, motivations, and values to help architect both short- and long-term plans. Faculty encourage professional development through networking opportunities, journals and, publication guidance. Faculty encourage connections with peers, alumni, external collaborators, and SPIA's wider scholarly community.

Each student is assigned to a faculty advisor upon enrolling in SPIA. SPIA's academic advisor role is staffed by professional personnel whose primary responsibility is to help you navigate the administration and logistics at SPIA and across Pitt. These advisors ensure you meet program requirements and understand all the rules and procedures. Prepare and assist with course registration, degree audits, and program requirement planning. Explain timelines and administrative procedures (e.g., enrollment holds, add/drop deadlines, probation). Connect you to campus supports—career services, counseling, writing centers, financial aid, disability services. Provide consistent guidance on university and SPIA policy, degree progression, and compliance. Serve as your primary contact for academic administration issues and first-line logistical support.

Students are assigned a faculty advisor during their initial registration appointment. If a student wishes to change their faculty advisor during their studies, the student must complete the Change of Advisor Form. This form is available by contacting the academic advisor. To change advisors, a student must obtain approval from the new advisor and submit the Change of Advisor form to their academic advisor in the Advising Office. The University reserves the right to change registration procedures.

Acceptance of Transfer Credits from Outside Institutions
Students who have completed graduate courses within the past seven (7) academic calendar years in degree-granting graduate programs at other accredited institutions prior to admission to SPIA should submit official transcripts from those institutions at the time they apply so that the courses can be evaluated for transfer credits or waivers. If the source institution is in the United States, the institution must be regionally accredited in order for the credits to be transferrable. Graduate-level courses taken while a student was enrolled in an undergraduate program are generally not eligible to be transferred into SPIA. Under normal circumstances, only graduate-level courses taken after a student has earned a bachelor's degree may be accepted as transfer credits. (See "Enrollment in Graduate Courses as an Undergraduate" above.) **A maximum of 12 transfer credits can be accepted for students in the MPA degree program. A maximum of 9 transfer credits can be accepted for students in the MPIA and MID degree programs. A maximum of six transfer credits can be accepted for students in the MPPM program.** Students admitted with provisional status cannot transfer credits until full graduate student status has been granted.

In their first semester at SPIA, students should submit (to their academic advisor) documentation for any course they wish to be evaluated for transfer credit. The documentation must include an official transcript as well as either a course syllabus or official course description. The documents must show that the course(s) taken were substantially similar in content to existing SPIA courses and that they were approved to count for graduate credit at the institution offering them. Only courses in which the student earned a final grade of B or better are eligible to be transferred. Approved transfer credits are entered as block credits on the student's transcript. Grades and quality points are not recorded for credits accepted by transfer.

The completion of requirements for advanced degrees must be satisfied through registration at the Pittsburgh campus of the University. Graduate students already enrolled, may, when approved in advance by the director of academic advising, spend a term or more at another graduate institution, to obtain training or experience not available at the University, and transfer those credits toward the requirements for a SPIA degree. In such instances, neither the University nor SPIA is responsible for any financial assistance to the graduate student. However, any credits earned this way will count toward the maximum number of transfer credits – that is, 12 for MPA students, nine for MPIA & MID students, and six for MPPM students.

No credits will be granted toward a SPIA degree for work completed in extension courses, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), correspondence courses, or those offered in the off-campus center of another institution unless those credits are approved for equivalent graduate degrees at that institution, and provided that the institution has a regionally accredited program. The final decision on transferability rests with the Associate Dean.

Acceptance of Transfer Credits from Other Graduate Schools at the University of Pittsburgh
Except for students enrolled in formal joint-degree programs, students who earn/have earned credits while enrolled as a graduate student at another University of Pittsburgh school may petition for some of their credits to count toward the SPIA degree. Typically, no more than six credits earned while enrolled in another graduate program at the University of Pittsburgh may be counted toward the SPIA degree. In most cases, such credits will not be listed as transfer credits on the student's SPIA transcript and will count only as free electives. The final decision on course acceptability rests with the SPIA Associate Dean and the University of Pittsburgh Registrar.

Statute of Limitations
The purpose of the statute of limitations is to ensure that a graduate degree from SPIA represents mastery of current knowledge in the student's field of study.

Requirements for the professional master's degrees must be completed within a period of five consecutive calendar years from the students' initial registration for graduate study. Dual and joint degrees that require coursework more than 50 credits, may be granted a longer statute of limitations.

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.

Joint Degree Programs
Joint degree programs result in two degrees being awarded. Requirements for these programs include most of the requirements of two distinct academic degree programs. Joint programs exist between two or more schools. The same course, examination, or thesis may be used to fulfill requirements only if so specified in the documents formally establishing the joint degree program as approved by the University. These programs may result in a student earning two separate master's degrees or a master's and a first professional degree, but never result in a student earning two separate doctoral degrees.

Students seeking to complete a joint degree must be admitted to both academic programs prior to the completion of their first academic year (in the case of current law students, prior to the completion of their 2nd year) of full-time study and must graduate from both programs in the same term. SPIA requires all joint-degree students to enroll full-time and be active in SPIA for at least three full-time terms. In most joint-degree programs, joint-degree students who receive scholarships from SPIA may only receive the scholarship for the three terms in which they are actively enrolled as SPIA students. In certain joint degree programs, the funding/tuition model may be different; students should check with their academic advisor if they have questions or want to confirm how their program is structured.

Students admitted on provisional status may not pursue a joint degree until they have successfully met the terms of their provisional admission.

Not all degree programs at SPIA may be eligible for each joint degree program. Only MPA, MID, and MPIA students are eligible to pursue a joint Juris Doctorate, Master of Public Health, Master of Science in Information Science, or Master of Social Work with the respective unit at the University of Pittsburgh. Only MID and MPIA students may pursue a joint Master of Business Administration with the University of Pittsburgh Katz Graduate School of Business. In all these cases, students must complete 36 SPIA credits and be actively enrolled at SPIA for three semesters. Students may not double count any individual course toward both their required 36 SPIA credits and any requirement in the joint degree partner school. Only MPPM students are eligible to pursue a joint Doctor of Nursing Practice with the University of Pittsburgh's School of Nursing. In this case, MPPM students must complete 24 SPIA credits and any requirement of the joint degree partner school.

Area Studies Certificates
The University Center for International Studies (UCIS) is an umbrella organization comprised of several internationally themed research centers and programs. UCIS offers graduate certificates that SPIA students can pursue concurrently with their degrees, allowing them to focus their studies on a particular region or theme. It is normally possible to complete the requirements for a SPIA master's degree and a UCIS certificate in two years. For further information see your academic advisor or www.ucis.pitt.edu.

Thesis Option
Eligible MPA/MPIA/MID students (those who have earned at least 12 SPIA credits and a GPA of 3.6 or above) may elect to write a master's thesis instead of completing the capstone during their course of study in SPIA. A thesis is a six-credit, two-term process that fulfills both the capstone requirement and one three-credit free elective requirement. Students should check with their academic advisor no later than their second term to discuss the thesis option and see if they are eligible to complete a thesis. Students wishing to complete a thesis are required to take PIA 2003 Research Methods (or equivalent approved course in another school, see academic advisor for qualification) as a part of thesis requirements. Students who receive a U grade in the Master's Thesis will be required to complete a capstone seminar. If a thesis is submitted, its form must be in accord with SPIA's Master's Thesis Manual and in accord with the specifications stipulated in the ETD Format Guidelines for electronic thesis. For additional information regarding procedures, policy, format and publication requirements please see the Master's Thesis manual on the SPIA website.

Editorial Assistance
A student preparing a thesis or other written work as a part of academic requirements may, when appropriate, use the assistance of professional editors, provided that (1) they receive the approval of the research advisor or professor of the course in which the written work is being submitted; (2) that editorial assistance provided be limited to use of language and not to subject matter, content, or meaning; and (3) that all editorial assistance be described and acknowledged in the report.

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:CS 07 Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action (formerly 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

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.responsibleresearch.pitt.edu/research-integrity

Parental accommodation
Consistent with the University's efforts to be inclusive and to support academic personal life balance, the University believes it is important to provide accommodation for graduate and professional students who become new parents, whether by childbirth or adoption, so that they may contribute to their family responsibilities while continuing to make progress towards their degree. This practice will help develop students who can successfully integrate their academic and personal pursuits. In recognition of the challenges of balancing the demands of graduate study and parenting a new child, these guidelines aim to improve the academic environment for student parents. The Graduate and Professional Student Parental Accommodation Guidelines assist graduate students immediately following the birth or placement for adoption of a child. The purpose of these guidelines is to make it possible for a student to maintain registered full-time student status, along with all the benefits of such status, while facilitating the return to full participation in courses, research, and teaching.

Eligibility: The Parental Accommodation Guidelines apply only to full- and part-time students enrolled in graduate and professional programs who are in good academic standing and who are making satisfactory progress toward completion of a graduate degree. Students must have completed at least one full-time semester of their degree program to become eligible for coverage under these guidelines. The guidelines cover the situation of students who experience a childbirth, who adopt a child who is unable to be enrolled in full-day public school due to age or other developmental reasons, or who is a partner of someone who has experienced a childbirth or an adoption for whom the student has parental responsibilities. These eligibility requirements cover all provisions of the guidelines. See the following site: https://www.gradstudies.pitt.edu/graduate-and-professional-student-parental-accommodation

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

Teaching Assistant/Teaching Fellow/Graduate Student Assistant Policy Statement
Teaching Assistants ("TAs"), Teaching Fellows ("TFs") and Graduate Student Assistants ("GSAs") at the University of Pittsburgh are graduate students who are receiving financial support while gaining invaluable teaching and other educational experience under the guidance of faculty mentors. The primary purpose of teaching, from the standpoint of the University and the student, is for students to make steady progress toward an advanced degree, become a valuable member of the academic community, and gain valuable professional experience. TA/TF/GSA status is dependent upon being enrolled at the University as a graduate student. See https://www.gradstudies.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/assets/TA-TF-GSA-Academic-Regs-6-1-22-x.pdf.

Graduate Student Researcher Policy
Graduate Student Researchers ("GSRs") at the University of Pittsburgh are graduate students who are receiving financial support from external or internal research funds while they are fulltime students working toward their degree. The research performed is an integral part of the student's training, thesis and/or dissertation. The goal of the appointment, from the point of view of both the University and the student, is for students to make steady progress toward an advanced degree, become a valuable member of the academic community, develop the skills necessary to complete their academic program, and gain valuable professional experience. GSR status is dependent upon being enrolled at the University as a graduate student. See https://www.gradstudies.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/assets/GSR-Academic-Regs-6-1-22-x.pdf.

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-Standards/Policy_CS_24.pdf

Email Communication Policy
Each student is issued a University email address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This email address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read email sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an email forwarding service that allows students to read their email via other service providers (e.g., Gmail, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their email from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If email is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University email address.

SPIA students' University email addresses are automatically subscribed to a general email listserv for the entire student body, as well as specific listservs for each degree program. Other listservs may be created at SPIA's discretion. The purpose of these email listservs is to enable members of the SPIA community (faculty, staff, and students) to email the entire student body or subsets of the student body simultaneously. Any email sent by a student, staff, or faculty member to the listservs is subject to scrutiny and approval by SPIA administrators before it is released to the subscribers.

Students may use the email listservs sparingly to communicate information that is of direct relevance or reasonable interest to fellow students. Student communication via the listserv must use professional language, decorum, and tact.

Any email to the listserv may be blocked or disallowed if, in the judgment of SPIA administrators, it is deemed to be frivolous, unnecessary, offensive, unprofessional, or not sufficiently related to legitimate needs or interests of SPIA students. Emails may be disallowed if, in the judgment of SPIA administrators, they meet any of the following criteria (this is not an exhaustive list): **Online Courses and Online Students**

SPIA offers most courses in a live classroom setting ("in-person") but offers a small number of courses online through a 100% web-based interface.

Students may enroll in and complete SPIA's Master of Public Policy and Management program exclusively through online study. Only the MPPM may be completed this way. Students will be categorized as "online students" if they apply specifically to the online MPPM program. Students who are initially admitted to the in-person MPPM program may request permission to transfer to the online MPPM program by contacting their academic advisor. Permission to transfer into the online program is not guaranteed but may be offered on a case-by-case basis. Students initially admitted to the MPA, MID, MPIA, or PhD program must successfully complete the standard SPIA application process if they wish to transfer to the online MPPM program, regardless of how many credits they have already completed.

Unless otherwise indicated, all SPIA rules, policies, and regulations outlined in this handbook apply to online students just as they apply to students taking courses in person. Standards and policies that apply to the in-person MPPM program apply equally to the online MPPM program.

Students who are enrolled in the online MPPM program may take SPIA's in-person courses occasionally, if they are able to come to campus and participate fully in the in-person courses just as any in-person student would. Such courses will count toward the online MPPM graduation requirements. Online students who wish to enroll in an in-person course should contact their academic advisor for permission. Under normal circumstances, online MPPM students will not be permitted to take more than one in-person course per term.

Students who are not enrolled in the online MPPM program may petition to take online courses on a space-available basis. Priority for registration for online courses will always go to online MPPM students. Other students must receive permission from their academic advisor and may be asked to wait to confirm their seat until all online MPPM students have had an opportunity to register. Under normal circumstances, in-person students will not be permitted to take more than one online course per term.

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: Acceptable Academic Standards

SPIA expects all students to share equal responsibility for monitoring their academic performance. To assist students in this task, the chart below illustrates, by student status, what constitutes good academic standing and the consequences when good academic standing is not maintained. While on probation, students are typically not eligible to receive school-based merit funding.

	Status	Good Academic Standing	Probation	Dismissal
Full-time students admitted with full status	• Registered for a minimum of 9 credits per term	• Maintain minimum cumulative and/or current (term) GPA of 3.0 • Earn a minimum of 9 credits per term	• Fail to maintain a cumulative and/or current (term) GPA of 3.0 • Fail to earn a minimum of 9 credits per term • Earn two incomplete (G or I) grades in one term • Earn a grade of U, C- or lower	• Students are dismissed if they fail to meet the terms and conditions outlined in their probation letter. • Students are also dismissed if they qualify for probationary status in two consecutive terms.
Part-time students admitted with full status	• Registered for fewer than 9 credits per term	• Maintain a minimum cumulative and/or current (term) GPA of 3.0 • Earn a minimum of 3 credits per term. (Students who enroll in just one course and earn an incomplete [G or I] grade may qualify for probation on a case-by-case basis.)	• Fail to maintain a minimum cumulative and/or current (term) GPA of 3.0 • Earn 2 or more incomplete grades (G or I) in one term, or earn at least one incomplete grade in two consecutive terms • Earn a grade of U, C- or lower	• Students are dismissed if they fail to meet the terms and conditions outlined in their probation letter. • Students are also dismissed if they qualify for probationary status in two consecutive terms.
Full- or part-time students admitted with provisional status	• Registered for a minimum 12 credits, if full-time • Registered for fewer than 9 credits, if part-time	• Maintain a minimum cumulative and/or current (term) GPA of 3.0 • Full-time students must successfully complete 12 credits in the first term; part-time students must successfully complete at least 6 credits by the end of their first two terms	• Are admitted as probationary students in their first term in residence	• Earn a grade of U, C- or lower • Earn 2 or more incomplete (G or I) grades in one term. • Fail to achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 • Fail to successfully complete 12 credits in the first term, if full-time. • Fail to successfully complete at least 6 credits in the first two terms, if part-time.

Appendix D: School-Based Funding

SPIA offers competitive, merit-based scholarships to its most outstanding master's degree applicants. All applicants for fall admission are automatically considered for merit funding, if they are planning to pursue full-time study and have submitted a complete application by the February 1 deadline. Funding awards, upon availability, may be offered to full-time spring applicants who complete their applications by the 1 November deadline. There is typically no separate application for SPIA merit funding.

SPIA's merit-based funding is only distributed for the fall and spring terms. Awards are typically awarded for two terms and typically may be renewed for an additional one or two terms (based on degree program) if the student meets renewal requirements: continuing to make satisfactory academic progress, as well as earning at least 12-24 credits (based on degree program) and maintaining an overall GPA of 3.0 or better during the course of the first two consecutive fall and spring terms. Students who do not meet these conditions will have their funding revoked in the next term of study.

Funding is not generally awarded to master's students for more than three or four terms, or in the case of joint degree students, three terms. Joint-degree students typically receive funding only during the three terms in which they are actively enrolled in SPIA. Funding cannot be deferred and is available only for the terms in which it is initially offered. Funding is not available for the summer term. Students receiving awards from other sources outside of SPIA may have their SPIA funding adjusted, depending on the amount of the outside award. Students whose residency status changes may have their SPIA funding adjusted.

Part-time students and students admitted with provisional status are ineligible for school-based funding.

Appendix E: Capstone Seminars

The only prerequisite for a capstone seminar is completion of 12 credits, including a satisfactory grade in all the school-wide core requirements other than the capstone seminar. Students ought to be advised in advance that certain skills or bodies of knowledge will be advantageous.

The intent of the capstone seminars is to provide students with a focused experience in working on a real-world problem of policy and management in a team setting under expert faculty guidance.

Appendix F: 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.

Appendix G: MPPM Discount Policy

Students enrolled in the mid-career Master of Public Policy and Management program may receive a scholarship equivalent to 20% of their tuition if they are currently employed full-time by a local, state, or federal government agency. Students who think they may qualify for this discount must request it in writing during the first two weeks of every term by submitting a letter from either their direct supervisor or human resource representative confirming full-time employment. The scholarship is posted to the student's account after the add/drop period has passed. Students may be required to pay their tuition upfront at the beginning of the semester and then receive a refund once the scholarship has been posted.

Private-sector government contractors are not eligible for this discount. Part-time government employees are not eligible.

Full-time employees of public-school districts are eligible. Full-time active-duty military personnel are eligible if they are not already receiving military education benefits.

Students must be in good academic standing at SPIA to receive the discount. Students who are on academic probation or admitted provisionally are not eligible. To become eligible, they must successfully meet the terms of their probation or provisional admission.

Students enrolled in programs other than the MPPM are not eligible.