

Academic Dismissal FAQs

Your dismissal letter provides information about your current academic standing and explains options for continued study in the College of Arts and Sciences at Indiana University. The [College of Arts and Sciences Bulletin](#) contains the Academic Standing policies, including dismissal standards. The FAQs below provide additional information. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Office of Undergraduate Retention and Student Success

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Office hours: 9:00 a.m. – noon and 1:00 – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

Dismissal definitions and standards

1. Why was I dismissed?

Students are dismissed from the College of Arts and Sciences when, in the assessment of the Office of Undergraduate Retention and Student Success, they fail to make adequate progress toward their degree. Students are automatically dismissed when:

- Their academic standing for the previous term is Academic Alert; and
- Their term grade point average is below 2.000; and
- Their cumulative grade point average is below 2.000.

Regardless of prior academic standing, students may be dismissed if their record reveals a failure to make adequate progress toward completion of a College of Arts and Sciences degree program in which they are enrolled.

2. What does dismissal mean for my future enrollment, access to IU services, such as financial aid, housing, email accounts, and official records, such as transcripts?

Dismissal *may* affect your access to services made available to degree-seeking students, but the impact will vary by service and service provider.

- **Future enrollment.** All enrollment at IU Bloomington for future terms is cancelled once a student is academically dismissed. (Please see #8 below for information about non-degree-seeking enrollment.)
- **Financial Aid.** Contact [Student Central](#) for information regarding aid eligibility and your repayment status.
- **Housing.** [Residential Programs and Services](#) generally cancels the housing contracts of students dismissed from the university, but you will need to check with them directly regarding eligibility and fee questions.
- **Email.** [University Information Technology Services \(UITS\)](#) manages email accounts, and they regularly review and deactivate accounts for graduated students, students who have stopped attending IU, as well as for students who have been dismissed. Removal of student email access is not instantaneous, but you should ensure that you have an alternate email on file in your student record that you check regularly. Students enrolled as non-degree-seeking students taking classes on the Bloomington campus and students taking courses at other IU campuses will continue to have some eligibility for IUB email and computing services, but you should confirm with UITS.
- **Transcripts and other official IU records.** Students in dismissal status continue to have access to their academic records. You can request transcripts via [One.IU](#) or via the [Registrar's webpage](#).

3. Is dismissal from the College of Arts and Sciences final?

No. Eligible students may apply for reinstatement. Reinstatement is not automatic, nor is it guaranteed. The Academic Retention Committee will evaluate each student's petition for reinstatement individually, assessing the student's readiness to resume studies and prospects for successful completion of a degree.

Reinstatement petitions, eligibility, procedures, and timelines

4. How do I know whether to petition for reinstatement?

As a student in dismissal status, you need to think carefully about your educational goals and your current circumstances. Before submitting a petition, you must meet with a member of the College Student Success team, who will give you an overview of the petition. In addition, you should consult with family and friends to get a number of perspectives on this question. You should consider whether changing majors or schools, or transferring away from IU Bloomington, is a better path to success for you.

The goal of academic probation and dismissal is not to prevent students from completing their education, but rather to intervene when a student has been caught in a pattern of academic performance that may jeopardize the chances of completing a degree in the College or at IU Bloomington's campus.

5. What factors are considered for reinstatement?

When your reinstatement petition is reviewed, the Committee will review your entire academic record at IU as well as any coursework you have completed at other institutions that is on your transcript. Committee members will consider whether you have taken a break from your studies since dismissal and whether you have completed any repair work that impacts your IU GPA. (see #11: **What can I do to repair my record while in dismissal status?**) They will also check to see whether you have a deficit in your cumulative (College) GPA. A cumulative GPA deficit is taken very seriously by the Committee because it puts you at risk for a second dismissal. Deficits greater than 10 points are particularly concerning because they reflect nearly a full term's worth of work. In these cases, you are encouraged to engage in some repair work before submitting a petition.

The Committee will also check to see whether you have a deficit in your major GPA and whether you propose to continue in your current major. If your record shows a pattern of difficulty in major courses (e.g., multiple grades below 'C' and/or repeated courses), you should seriously consider petitioning for reinstatement to a different major in the College. Review your academic record for patterns of success; for example, grades above 'C' in a major or disciplinary area: Arts and Humanities, Social and Historical Studies, Natural and Mathematical Sciences. If you petition to continue in a major in which you have a deficit, you should explain your decision in your petition.

The essays you submit with your petition are your opportunity to demonstrate that you have reflected on the reasons for your dismissal beyond low grades (you should determine what factors contributed to low grades over multiple semesters) and the steps that you have taken (importantly, not steps that you *will* take) to address these factors. Essays that demonstrate a thoughtful and thorough approach tend to be most persuasive.

6. How can I get a reinstatement petition?

If you have been dismissed from the College (including the Eskenazi School of Art, Architecture + Design, the Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies and the Media School), you must first meet with a member of the College retention team to discuss your academic difficulties, determine your eligibility to petition, and learn about the process and timelines. These meetings can be held in person or conducted by Zoom. To schedule a meeting, please call (812) 855-1647. (The office is open from 9:00 a.m. – noon and 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.) After the meeting, you will receive an email message with the link to the petition.

7. What will happen during a dismissal meeting?

The dismissal meeting consists of an evaluation of your academic record and a discussion of your circumstances and alternatives. The Student Success team member will evaluate your academic record to identify areas of concern that you will need to address prior to petitioning for reinstatement. They will calculate your cumulative and major deficit (if applicable) and share it with you during your meeting. [Detailed instructions on how to calculate your credit-point deficit are available [here](#).] Finally, they will discuss various routes for academic repair, explain non-degree-seeking enrollment, and provide information regarding the petition process.

8. How should I prepare for a dismissal meeting?

To make the most of your dismissal meeting, you should give some thought to the following questions:

- What are the root causes of the academic difficulty you have experienced?
- If you are not thriving in a particular field of study, should you change course?
- How does your chosen major or the type of undergraduate degree you are pursuing figure into your career goals?
- What alternative paths might help you achieve your goals?
- Should you return to Bloomington, or are there better educational opportunities for you closer to home?

Prepare a list of questions that you would like addressed in the meeting. Be prepared to ask your questions and to take notes.

9. When are reinstatement petitions due?

Reinstatement term	Meet with retention team member by	Submit complete petition by
Fall	June 1	June 20
Spring	September 30	October 15
Summer	January 10	February 1

10. What can I do to repair my academic record while in dismissal status?

When you are in dismissal status, you have several options for completing academic repair work including:

- finishing work for any incomplete ("I") grades listed on your transcript
- enrolling in fall, spring, or summer classes at IUB as a non-degree seeking student
- enrolling in classes at another IU campus
- enrolling in classes at a non-IU institution to help make degree progress and demonstrate readiness to resume studies (completing non-IU courses will NOT affect your IU GPA or credit-point deficit).

All coursework you complete at any IU campus will affect your IU GPA and may decrease or increase your credit point deficit.

Incompletes. Finishing work for Incomplete courses means that the "I" on your transcript will be replaced by the letter grade you earn when you complete the course. The Academic Retention Committee views completion of your Incomplete coursework as evidence that you have begun to take the necessary steps to repair your record and meet academic obligations. Incompletes must be removed within a year, and once the deadline passes, they are automatically converted to grades of F by action of the Registrar. The Committee views Incompletes as potential grades of F that could be added to your record. Since you have already paid tuition for courses in which you earned an Incomplete, you can do repair work for Incompletes without taking on additional financial burden. Keep in mind that earning a grade in an Incomplete course will not automatically rescind dismissal or probation, even if the grade earned raises your term GPA or cumulative GPA above 2.000.

Non-degree-seeking enrollment status. To request enrollment in non-degree-seeking status at IU Bloomington, you must complete the [Returning Student Application](#). You may request permission to enroll in one course in Fall and Spring terms and up to three courses (no more than two over-lapping) during the Summer term. Students with questions about financial aid eligibility for non-degree-seeking enrollments should contact [Student Central](#).

11. Can I complete transfer work at another institution while in dismissal status?

Completing coursework at other colleges and universities and then transferring the credit to IU can help you make progress toward your degree and demonstrate a readiness to return to your studies, but the grades will not improve your cumulative GPA nor reduce your credit deficit. While the Academic Retention Committee places a premium on Indiana University Bloomington coursework, it also recognizes the value of work completed at other institutions. Doing well in courses that show you have made degree progress or that show you can be successful in a particular major or disciplinary area give the Committee additional information about your readiness to return to IU Bloomington.

If you are interested in taking courses at other institutions, visit the [Admissions Credit Transfer Service](#) and work with your academic advisor to plan enrollments. This database has a tool that lists how a particular course will be counted towards an IU degree. Keep in mind that only courses in which you earn a grade of C or higher can be transferred to IUB and carry credit toward degree.

General considerations and strategies for improving academic performance and getting reinstated

12. What makes for a good reinstatement petition?

Strong petitions are thoughtful, clearly written, complete, and free of errors. Students must allow sufficient time to gather relevant documentation and information and must include a meeting with the academic advisor of the major for which the student is petitioning reinstatement. The goal of the process is to allow students to confront, analyze, and, ideally, resolve many of the factors that have interfered with their studies.

The Committee denies petitions that are incomplete, late, or do not include a meeting with an academic advisor for the proposed major. Students who submit petitions that include enrollments beyond 14 credit hours for the Fall or Spring terms are rarely approved. Students petitioning to continue in a major in which they have a deficit are rarely reinstated for that major. Students with deficits in their major should explore alternative paths before applying for reinstatement.

13. Why do I need to meet with an academic advisor before I submit my petition?

The petition requires a meeting with an academic advisor in the major you are proposing to complete because advisors are experts on the specific requirements to earn a degree. Academic advisors can also help you analyze your record to highlight potential obstacles and recommend courses, help you prepare a balanced courseload, and recommend instructors that can help you to maximize your chances for success.

14. What should I do if I am changing majors or schools?

If you intend to complete your degree outside the College, you should meet with an academic advisor in the unit offering the major you hope to pursue or in [Advising & Major Exploration Services \(AMES\)](#). These advisors will help you determine a path to another unit.

15. What sort of evidence can I provide in support of my petition for reinstatement?

Good grades earned in Indiana University Bloomington classes are the strongest evidence that you are ready to return to your studies and be successful; however, a number of other factors may be relevant. If you have faced external issues that negatively impacted your grades, you can submit relevant supporting documentation with your petition.

16. How many credits can I successfully complete in a term, and how many hours can I work at a job to earn money for expenses?

The answers to these questions depend on the individual student, but the convention that many instructors use when designing syllabi and reading lists is that students will do 2-3 hours of work outside the classroom (reading, studying, researching, and writing) for every one hour of classroom contact. Following this model, a 15-credit-hour term should result in a 45-60 hour academic work week.

It is not uncommon for students to lengthen their time to degree when exceeding 15 credit hours or by taking on too many responsibilities. To get a better sense of how many hours of enrollment and work you can handle, consider how many hours you have been taking from one term to the next and reflect on the following questions:

- Have you been packing too much into your terms?
- Is there an upper-limit above which your grades begin to drop?
- Are you earning poor grades in terms in which you are employed for more than 10 hours a week?
- If you are working at night, are you getting assignments done and making it to class regularly?
- In this context, how do wages you are earning compare to the tuition dollars you are investing in courses from which you withdraw or earn low grades?

You should also consider how many withdrawals (“W” grades) are on your record.

- Why are they there?
- Are they the result of overly ambitious scheduling?
- Have you repeatedly enrolled in and dropped a course in which you lack the necessary foundational skills to succeed? You may need to take or repeat a lower-level course to move forward.
- Are you dropping early morning classes due to attendance issues?

17. How quickly can I finish my degree?

Time to degree completion is a real concern for most students, and this anxiety can result in poor decisions. Scheduling too many courses in one term in an effort to “catch up” because of poor performance/withdrawals or combining the wrong classes can actually backfire, leading to additional low grades or withdrawals.

The Academic Retention Committee encourages you to plan on enrolling in, at most, 12-14 credit hours in your first term after reinstatement. While the maximum is 12-14 credit hours, you are welcome to enroll in fewer hours or even be part-time (11 or fewer enrolled credit hours in a term). Many students are more successful with a slower reentry to their studies and achieve the grades they would like to earn by slowing down the first term back and then later resuming full-time enrollment. You may want to discuss with Student Central the financial aid implications of part-time enrollment.