

# PROFESSIONAL AND GRADUATE EDUCATION ACADEMIC POLICIES

Mount Holyoke students are expected to be fully acquainted with the policies affecting their academic and nonacademic lives on campus. Policies are published in this Bulletin, the Student Handbook, and in Faculty Legislation. New policies are published on the College's website.

## Academic Integrity Academic Responsibility

The decision to join this academic community requires acceptance of special rights and responsibilities that are essential for its effective functioning and the realization of its mission.

All members of the community share the responsibility to uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity, community engagement, and commitment to principles of equity and inclusion that are central to the mission of the College. Failure to accept and act on this responsibility threatens the rights of the rest of the community by undermining the trust upon which the community is built.

Students, faculty, staff, and administrators assume a commitment to the academic community that supports teaching and learning in an open environment based on mutual trust, respect, and concern. All members of the community have the right to careful and constructive analysis of their work, and they have the responsibility to provide a serious response to the work of others.

Each member of the academic community has the right to benefit from its collective knowledge and resources as well as the responsibility to contribute to them.

## Honor Code

Each member of the Mount Holyoke community is expected to adhere to the following honor code and all regulations in the Student Handbook (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/deanofstudents/student-handbook/>):

"I will honor myself, my fellow students, and Mount Holyoke College by acting responsibly, honestly, and respectfully in both my words and deeds."

The framework of our honor code assumes adherence to the rules and regulations of the College which are designed to promote intellectual and social pursuits and to ensure personal safety. In addition, the College protects and upholds human rights policies, and is committed to an inclusive and diverse community.

The honor code is the hallmark of life together at Mount Holyoke College. Simply stated, it means that each student is responsible for maintaining their own integrity and, to the best of their ability, the integrity of the Mount Holyoke community. While broad in its applications, it provides a guideline for decision making which holds each student to principles of good conduct toward themselves and others. To ensure the care and preservation of the honor code, standards and procedures have been developed and implemented to provide the structure by which the honor code is administered. Students are expected to comply with the rules and regulations of the College. Beyond minimal compliance, students under an honor code grow to understand, through course work and

collaborative learning, that honor is achieved with diligence, commitment, and courage.

The Mount Holyoke College honor system relies on the integrity of each student. The strength of the system derives from the honesty and self-discipline of every student and from the faith of the faculty and the administration in the student body. With integrity as the foundation, the honor system promotes individual freedom tempered by responsibility to the community. Each student demonstrates their respect for individual freedom by conducting themselves with maturity and honor, and by showing due concern for the welfare of other members of the community.

College regulations delineate the expected standard of behavior in academic and social circumstances. Dishonorable academic conduct, such as plagiarism and cheating, discredits the individual student. Behavior which is in conflict with the community standards and regulations of the College is detrimental to the well-being of the Mount Holyoke community.

Please see more information on the honor code on the Student Handbook website (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/student-handbook/honor-code-and-community-responsibility/>).

Additional information on the honor code, examples of violations, the process for reporting suspected violations, the procedures through which the Academic Honor Board adjudicates suspected violations, and potential penalties for its violation are available on the Academic Honor Board page (<https://offices.mtholyoke.edu/academicdeans/academic-honor-board/>).

## Plagiarism

Academic integrity is highly valued at Mount Holyoke College. Respect for intellectual labor and creativity is vital to academic discourse and enterprise. This principle applies to works of all authors and publishers in all media. It encompasses respect for the right to acknowledgment, right to privacy, and right to determine the form, manner and terms of publication and distribution. Plagiarism or other forms of scholarly misconduct can have no purpose or place in the academic life of the College. Each student is responsible for observing established procedures in the preparation of assignments, the writing of papers and examinations, and for submitting only original work. Violations of authorial integrity, including plagiarism may be grounds for sanctions against members of the academic community.

Please refer to this Library Research Guide (<https://guides.mtholyoke.edu/c.php?g=879988&p=6321509>) on how to cite sources properly and plagiarism. Please see the Graduate Student Policies Handbook for more information on academic integrity policies and procedures.

## Academic Standards

The academic requirements for graduate students include timely completion of all College, graduate program, and individual academic program requirements.

Students are expected to enroll in the courses per their approved program of study and submit any proposed changes to their program plan to their advisors, in advance, for approval.

Students are expected to be enrolled in all terms required by their degree program. The only exception to this requirement occurs when the student is granted an official leave of absence by the Professional and Graduate

Education Executive Director, with the concurrence of the director of their program.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students in the graduate programs are required to obtain a B or better in all coursework. Any grades lower than a B- are not acceptable and can not be used towards the completion of a degree. In instances where a student has not met this requirement, the student must meet with the program director/advisor who, in consultation with the Executive Director of Professional and Graduate Education, will determine if the student can proceed in the program.

If the student is approved to proceed, and the Executive Director approves the student to retake the course graded lower than a B-, the Registrar will enroll the student in the course for the second attempt. The student will be charged the full regular tuition and fees for each course retaken. Grades from both attempts at the course will appear on the transcript and factor into the student's GPA, however only the credits from a course graded B- or better can be counted towards the requirements of the graduate degree.

Incomplete grades are awarded at the discretion of the instructor in concurrence with the Executive Director of PaGE. Incompletes that remain unchanged after the end of the authorized extension are converted to F grades.

To maintain full eligibility for federal student aid funds, satisfactory academic progress must be maintained. Graduate students who fail to complete the total number of credits attempted, whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.00 or whose years of enrollment in the program exceed the statute of limitations for the academic program will lose eligibility to receive any future federal student aid funds at Mount Holyoke. Student Financial Services will notify the student of the loss of federal eligibility and the appeal process available to request aid eligibility be reinstated.

## Statute of Limitations

For students who start a one-year graduate degree program, requirements must be completed within a three-year period from the semester of admission. For students who start a two-year graduate degree program, requirements must be completed within a four-year period from the semester of admission.

## Awarding of Degrees

Each candidate for graduation is personally responsible for obtaining clearance for graduation from their Program Director. Also, all graduating students should be sure to meet all required financial obligations to the College as prescribed by Student Financial Services, to ensure eligibility to receive their diplomas and continued access to official transcripts.

Mount Holyoke College confers degrees three times per year: on dates in October, March, and during the annual Commencement ceremony in May. Graduate students completing all degree requirements and having their degrees conferred in May, as well as those whose degrees were conferred the preceding October or March, are invited to participate in the May Commencement ceremony – unless they had participated, through exception criteria, in the previous May's ceremony.

The exception criteria allow graduate students to apply to participate fully in Commencement exercises before their actual degree conferral if they have completed at least 28 credits towards the Mount Holyoke degree and have a solid plan, approved by their program, for completing their remaining requirements by the end of the summer. Students interested in participating through this exception route in lieu of participating

after they have completed all degree requirements should contact their program director in the winter of their last year to seek permission for early participation. If approved, these early participants will robe, process into the Commencement ceremonies and sit with the graduating students, have their names called and cross the stage individually like the graduating students, though they will neither actually graduate on that date nor receive their diplomas. These students are then ineligible to participate at all in the following year's Commencement and Commencement weekend activities, since they participated the previous year.

No student can participate in the Commencement ceremony or any degree conferral if they are currently suspended or withdrawn from the College. The only students eligible to participate in the May Commencement ceremony are those who have completed the degree requirements in May and are having their degrees conferred that day, those whose degrees were conferred the preceding October or March, and those officially approved for early participation.

## Access and Inclusion

Mount Holyoke is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which all its members including students, faculty, staff and visitors can live and work together in an environment free from discrimination. Under federal and state laws, all students are protected from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, gender, (including sexual harassment), age, sexual orientation, marital or veteran status.

The College complies with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and amendments.

Compliance with the law is the responsibility of all members of the Mount Holyoke community.

Any student who feels that they have been discriminated against based upon any one of these factors must contact the College's Title IX Coordinator. These protections also include retaliation for filing complaints of discrimination. Concerns regarding course offerings, instructor and student attitudes should also be directed to the Title IX Coordinator.

The College's Title IX Coordinator shares oversight of the College's compliance with Title IX with Human Resources and the Dean of Faculty Office. The Title IX Coordinator oversees the use of grievance procedures as it pertains to the resolution of complaints of violation of Title IX.

The Title IX Coordinator can be contacted at: [titleixofficer@mtholyoke.edu](mailto:titleixofficer@mtholyoke.edu) or 413-538-3569.

For more information, please consult [www.mtholyoke.edu/risk/title-ix-compliance-mount-holyoke-college](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/risk/title-ix-compliance-mount-holyoke-college) (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/risk/title-ix-compliance-mount-holyoke-college/>), [www.mtholyoke.edu/directory/departments-offices-centers/office-diversity-equity-and-inclusion](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/directory/departments-offices-centers/office-diversity-equity-and-inclusion) (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/directory/departments-offices-centers/office-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>), and [www.mtholyoke.edu/student-handbook/discrimination-and-harassment-policies](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/student-handbook/discrimination-and-harassment-policies) (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/student-handbook/discrimination-and-harassment-policies/>).

## Accommodating Learning Differences

Students requiring accommodations should let their advisor know as soon as possible and will be required to register with the Office of

Disability Services (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/directory/departments-offices-centers/disability-services/>).

Students who are registered with the Office of Disability Services, and are seeking an incomplete as an accommodation based on a disability, should simultaneously make requests through Disability Services and the Executive Director of Professional and Graduate Education.

## Registration and Class Attendance

Students register for the next semester following academic advising periods. Courses may be added only during the designated add period, as outlined in the academic calendar (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/academic-calendar/>).

Students may drop courses only during the designated drop period, as outlined in the academic calendar (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/academic-calendar/>). Courses from which the student has dropped will not appear on the student's academic record. After the designated drop period, withdrawals from courses require the approval of the instructor and will appear on the student's record, with the notation "W." After this withdrawal period, students may withdraw from courses only with the approval of the instructor and authorization from the director of health services, the director of the counseling service, or AccessAbility Services when granted as an accommodation. Courses recorded with the notation "W" will not affect a student's grade average.

Regular class attendance is expected of all students unless an individual instructor suspends this expectation.

## Religious Observance

In support of our religiously diverse student population and in compliance with Title XXI Chapter 151C Section 2B of the General Laws of Massachusetts, students seeking a religious accommodation because their religious observance will determine they will miss a class or work and who need an extension, rescheduled exam, or make-up materials to complete work due on these dates are advised to contact their professors (or staff employer in relation to campus jobs) well in advance of the holiday or fasting period – preferably at the start of each semester.

Section 2B of Chapter 151C of the General Laws of Massachusetts reads: "Any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section."

## Course Evaluation

As the semester draws to a close, students are required to submit an online course evaluation for each of their courses. This requirement is a reflection of the importance the College places on students and faculty supplying each other with timely, thoughtful feedback. Professional and Graduate Education course evaluations are administered by the Office of the Provost and Dean of Faculty.

## Grading Policies

The grades of A and B (with "+" and "-") are acceptable for graduate credit. Anything lower than a B- is not acceptable toward the degree.

Grade	=	Points
A	=	4.00
A-	=	3.67
B+	=	3.33
B	=	3.00
B-	=	2.67
C+	=	2.33
C	=	2.00
C-	=	1.67
D+	=	1.33
D	=	1.00
D-	=	0.67
F	=	0

## Extensions

Extensions are to be used to address unanticipated emergencies only and are intended to apply to cases where the student has completed at least three-quarters of the work of the semester. During the semester, course instructors have full discretion with regard to the granting of extensions when students need extra time to complete assignments or examinations. Prior to the last class in a given semester, however, students who need any further extension must consult with their instructor and receive approval of the Executive Director of Professional and Graduate Education. In order to be eligible for an extension to complete course work beyond the end of the semester, a student must experience a medical or personal emergency that could not have been anticipated that prevents them from completing the final work in a course.

Per College policy, faculty are not allowed to accept work after the noon deadline on the last day of the examination period unless a student has an authorized extension. Students are strongly advised to plan ahead as much as possible and request an authorized extension.

Students who would like to request a course extension can access the form and additional instructions (<https://gradadmission.mtholyoke.edu/register/CourseExtension/>).

## Leaves and Withdrawals

A variety of factors may emerge that require students to disrupt their program of study. If something comes up, students should discuss their options with their advisor or program director.

Official notification must be given by the student in order to drop or withdraw from a course, request a leave of absence, or withdraw from the College. If the effective date of the request is before the first day of classes, that semester's courses will be dropped from the student's transcript. However if the effective date of the request is on or after the first day of classes, the student will be withdrawn from those courses and they will remain on the student's transcript with a grade of "W". Failure to complete the withdrawal procedures may result in failing grades.

Dropping or withdrawing from classes, taking a leave or withdrawing from the college may impact financial aid eligibility or the loan repayment schedule. Please contact Student Financial Services with any questions.

A partial tuition refund (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/PaGE/financial-policies/#refundtext>) may be available depending on when a request is received.

## Course Drops/Withdrawal

Students who would like to request course drop or withdrawal can access the request form and additional instructions (<https://gradadmission.mtholyoke.edu/register/CourseWithdrawal/>). Withdrawing from a course may have both academic and financial implications. A grade of "W" is recorded for each withdrawn course. That grade will be reflected on the transcript, but not calculated in the grade point average. Once a withdrawal request has been processed for a course, it becomes part of the academic record and it is non-reversible. If the withdrawn course is required for the student's program, the student will need to retake the course and pay any associated tuition, fees, etc. Based on the time of withdrawal, students may qualify for a partial credit of tuition. The official date of withdrawal is based on the date the form is received by the Professional and Graduate Education.

## Leaves of Absence

A student in good academic and financial standing may request a leave for one or two semesters. A leave begins at the end of a regular semester. The student is expected to return at the conclusion of the leave or to request an extension of the leave. Students who would like to request a leave of absence can access the request form and additional instructions (<https://gradadmission.mtholyoke.edu/register/LeaveOfAbsence/>). Students who take a leave without a formal request or notifying the College will be withdrawn and must request reinstatement if they wish to return.

## Voluntary Withdrawal from College

Students who would like to request a withdrawal from the college can access the request form and additional instructions (<https://gradadmission.mtholyoke.edu/register/CollegeWithdrawal/>). Once a withdrawal request has been processed, it becomes part of the student's academic record and is non-reversible. Students who withdraw from the College must reapply (<https://gradadmission.mtholyoke.edu/register/withdrawal-readmission/>) if they wish to return.

## Privacy of Student Records

Mount Holyoke College policy with respect to confidentiality of student records complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended (PL 93-380, Section 438, the General Education Provisions Act), which gives students certain rights, consistent with the privacy of others, to review their own official records, files, and data, and to challenge the accuracy of the contents of such records. The act also generally prohibits the release of personally identifiable information (other than "directory information" defined below) about students without their written consent other than to teachers and other College officials who have legitimate educational interests; to officials of other institutions in which the student intends to enroll; to certain authorized state and federal officials; to appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to the student; to organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the College; to accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully ordered subpoena; and to appropriate officials in the case of health and safety emergency.

A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research or support staff position (including law enforcement personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the College has contracted as its agent to provide a service

instead of using College employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, IT specialist, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student or appointed volunteer serving on an official committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the College.

The regulations of the act make clear that, in the case of students who are dependents of their parents for Internal Revenue Service purposes, information from the education records of the student may be disclosed to parents without the student's prior consent. The College may notify the student's parents in writing of academic probation, required withdrawal, and suspension. In communications with parents concerning other matters, it is normally College policy to respect the privacy of the student and not to disclose information from educational records without the student's prior consent.

Requests for review of specific records must be made in writing. A student who seeks to review only health or career records should file a written request to do so with the director of health services, the director of the counseling service, or the Career Development Center. All other requests should be made at the Office of the Dean of the College.

The Privacy Act gives Mount Holyoke College the right to make public at its discretion, without prior authorization from the individual student, the following personally identifiable directory information: name; class year; home/permanent, off-campus/local, and College addresses; home, local, and residence hall telephone numbers; College electronic mail address; identification photograph; dates of attendance at Mount Holyoke College; enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate; full- or part-time; on leave); date and place of birth; major(s); degrees, honors, and awards received; participation in officially recognized sports and activities; status as student employee; and previous educational institution most recently attended. An individual student may limit release of the above information for any given year by filing such a request with the registrar by July 1 of that year; requests received after this date will be put into effect as quickly as possible, but directory information already released cannot be recalled.

## Transfer of Graduate Course Work

The College will accept transfer of up to two graduate courses, after a review has determined that the courses meet the content requirements of the particular program. However, all students completing the degree must still complete the full number of degree credits for their specific program by selecting among the alternative electives available through Mount Holyoke's Professional and Graduate Education programs.

## Course Eligibility Requirements

Grades received for courses requested for transfer must be "B" (3.00) or better. Graduate level courses to be transferred must have been taken no more than three years prior to the student's acceptance into the Master's program and may not have been used previously to fulfill the requirements for any other degree, certificate or diploma program. An official transcript and syllabus of the course(s) to be transferred are required.

No more than two courses, a maximum of eight (8) graduate credits, may be transferred. Eligible courses may be from any one of the following sources:

- Course(s) taken at another regionally accredited college/university within the United States,
- Course(s) taken while enrolled as a non-degree graduate student,
- Course(s) offered through Mount Holyoke's Professional and Graduate Education programs.

The MAT program may recognize courses taken as an undergraduate student, over and above the requirements necessary for the baccalaureate degree towards specific content areas, as appropriate towards licensure.