

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about Probationary Academic Standing**

### **Q. What is an Academic Standing?**

A. An Academic Standing is a statement of your overall academic performance. An Academic Standing is determined at the end of each semester (i.e., Fall, Winter, Spring/Summer) in which you enroll in graded courses.

### **Q. What is Clear Standing?**

A. Students receive Clear Standing if their cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) is at least 1.67.

### **Q. What is Probationary standing?**

A. Students receive Probationary Standing when their overall academic performance falls below the standard required for graduation. A CGPA of 1.67 is required for graduation.

More specifically, you have Probationary Standing for one of three reasons:

- i. your cumulative GPA (CGPA) is 1.00 to 1.66;
- ii. you received a CGPA of less than 1.00 in your first semester at Ryerson; or
- iii. you have been re-instated into your program after a Required to Withdraw (or Suspended) Standing.

### **Q. What is the difference between my cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) and my Term GPA, and how are both calculated?**

A. Your CGPA is the average for all your courses at Ryerson, whereas your Term GPA is the average for one term. (An initial grade point average is not calculated until you have received three or more course grades.) For detailed information on grades and grade point averages, as well as instructions on how to calculate your CGPA and Term GPA, please refer to the Enrollment Services and Student Records website.

### **Q. Am I allowed to continue my studies if I am on academic Probation?**

A. With the authorization of your program department, you may continue your studies in the subsequent term. You should meet with your Program Advisor/Manager (Paula Rayson) to complete and sign a Probationary Contract. If you do not have an authorized Probationary Contract approved within five (5) working days of the first day of the semester, your course enrollments and course intention requests will be cancelled for the term in question. If you are on Probation at the end of the Winter term, you may choose, or be advised to wait until the Fall term to resume your studies. If you registered in Spring/Summer courses prior to learning about your Winter probationary standing, you must meet with Paula immediately to discuss your courses and sign an authorized Probationary Contract. Remember, you will receive an academic standing at the end of the Spring/Summer term.

### **Q. What should I do about my course enrollments?**

A. Do not add or drop courses until you have met with Paula. Paula will let you know the specific courses you should take during your probationary term.

**Q. Who is my Program Advisor/Manager?**

A. For the School of Creative Industries it is Paula Rayson.

**Q. What is a Probationary Contract?**

A. A Probationary Contract outlines a specific plan for studies and academic supports during your term of Probation. The plan will set out a group of specific courses that, if successfully completed with suitable grades, will raise your CGPA. The Probationary contract will include a reduced course load.

**Q. How many courses will I be allowed to take while on Probation?**

A. Students on academic probation students must take a reduced course load. This will maximize your chances of achieving academic success during your probationary term. Specifically, students on Probation may take no more than three or four courses (including courses through the Chang School of Continuing Education) during the Fall or Winter term. Paula will decide, in consultation with you, the maximum number of courses you will be permitted to take while on Probation, taking into consideration your: current Term and Cumulative GPAs; academic history; individual circumstances; program requirements; and resolution of INC grades.

**Q. Which courses should I take while on Probation?**

A. Paula will recommend the specific courses you should take while on Probation. You will be advised to repeat failed courses in the next available semester given that success in a previously failed course will help you work towards a Clear Standing by raising your CGPA. This is because an “F” or “FNA” grade has a grade point average of 0 and is calculated in your GPA. (“FNA”, or failure for non-attendance, is a failed grade for enrolling in, but failing to attend a course.) But, when you repeat the course, the grade you earn in the second attempt is substituted for the previous failed grade in calculating your CGPA. However, both grades are recorded on your transcripts.

If you failed an elective course (Liberal Studies, Professional, or Professionally-Related), you are not required to repeat the identical course. You may choose to take another course from the same elective group and have the grade earned in that course replace the “F” grade in your CGPA. In order to ensure that the upgrade is counted and the first course is not, you must complete and sign a GPA Adjustment Form. GPA Adjustment Forms must be submitted no later than the final date to add a class for the term in which the GPA adjustment will apply. This will ensure that your GPA is adjusted appropriately. Under certain circumstances, you may need, or choose to repeat one or more courses in which you earned a “D” or “D-” grade in order to raise your CGPA. (Or, if the low grade is in an elective course, you can replace the course with a different course from the same elective group and complete a GPA Adjustment Form.) Remember, the grade that you earn in a repeated course is substituted for the previous grade in calculating your CGPA, even if the grade is lower.

**Q. How many times am I permitted to repeat a course?**

A. No course can be repeated more than twice (i.e., enrolled initially, repeated once, repeated twice = three enrolments). Failure of a required program course for a third time will result in a Permanent Program Withdrawal. For detailed information on course repeats, refer to the Undergraduate Student Guide (“Academic Matters”).

**Q. Can I add courses while on Probation?**

A. You will not be permitted to add courses beyond the maximum number specified on your Probationary Contract.

**Q. Can I drop courses while on Probation?**

A. Yes, but you may be required to obtain Paula's approval before being permitted to do so. Your Probationary Contract will indicate whether you are required to inform or obtain written approval to drop any courses, or to have your course load fall below the minimum number specified on your Probationary Contract. It is your responsibility to be aware of the deadline date to drop a day course in good academic standing. This date will be on your Probationary Contract. If Chang School courses are part of your course load, it is also your responsibility to check the Chang School calendar for the relevant drop deadline dates as these dates may vary.

**Q. What campus resources are available to help me improve my academic performance?**

A. An important first step is to identify the factors that affected your academic performance during the last academic term. Complete the Faculty of Arts Student Self-Assessment Questionnaire, and then match the challenges you identified with the specific campus resources outlined on the Academic and Non-Academic Resources webpage. As you will see, there are many academic and non-academic support services on campus to help you work towards achieving academic success. Ryerson's "Get Clear" program, for example, offers programs and resources to help students on academic probation achieve a Clear Standing. Paula will recommend one or more of these resources as part of your Probationary Contract.

**Q. What if I experience medical or personal problems while on Probation?**

A. Consult with Paula immediately if the difficulties are affecting your ability to meet your academic obligations. You do not need to divulge specific details about your circumstances, but you should be prepared to provide supporting documentation. Paula will advise you as to what to do on a course-by-course basis. Remember, if circumstances arise that are negatively affecting your studies, it is your responsibility to consult with her as soon as possible. Failure to do so will jeopardize the ability to provide academic consideration and to launch a future appeal.

**Q. What performance is expected of me while I am on Probation?**

A. You must achieve a Term GPA of at least 1.67 and not violate the terms of your Probationary Contract. If you achieve a Term GPA of at least 1.67, but your CGPA is 1.00 to 1.66, you will continue in your Program on Probation.

**Q. How do I achieve "Clear" Academic Standing?**

A. You will achieve a Clear Academic Standing if at the end of a semester your Term GPA (TGPA) and CGPA are at least 1.67 and you have not violated your Probationary Contract.

**Q. Is there a limited amount of time for me to be on Probation?**

A. It is in your best interest to achieve Clear Standing as soon as possible. You must have a CPGA of 1.67 or higher in order to graduate.

**Q. What if I fail to achieve a Term GPA of at least 1.67 while on Probation or violate the terms of my Probationary Contract?**

A. You will be Required to Withdraw from your program at the end of the term if you fail to achieve a Term GPA of at least 1.67 or if you violate the terms of your Probationary Contract. A CGPA of less than 1.00 at the end of your probationary term will also result in a Required to Withdraw Standing.

**Q. What if I fail to achieve a Term GPA of at least 1.67 while on Probation but my CGPA is very close to 1.67?**

A. According to the GPA Policy (Section 2.4.3): "...Schools/Departments, at their discretion, may issue a special contract where the program judges the student to have a realistic chance of achieving a Clear standing in the semester following assignment of RTW by taking up to two courses. Students remain RTW during this semester. If the student fails to achieve a CGPA of 1.67 at the end of that semester, s/he will remain RTW. If the student is successful, s/he will return as Clear.

**Q. How do I appeal my Academic Standing?**

A. Refer to Ryerson's Undergraduate Consideration and Appeals Policy (Policy #134) for the grounds for filing an Academic Standing appeal and detailed information on the appeals process. The Ryerson Student Union offers workshops and seminars for students who are considering an academic standing and/or grade appeal. The workshops and seminars, previously known as "University 201 Seminars", are held in January and May. For more information, visit the Ryerson Student Union website or contact the RSU Student Issues & Advocacy Coordinator: [advocacy@rsuonline.ca](mailto:advocacy@rsuonline.ca), 416-979-5255, ext. 2322.

**Q. Where can I find more information on academic standings and Ryerson's academic policies?**

A. You should attend one of the Faculty of Arts Probationary "Get Back on Track" Workshops in order to learn more about your academic standing and Ryerson's academic policies. The Ryerson Student Union also provides workshops and seminars for all Ryerson students who have a Probationary academic standing. Visit the RSU website for further information and resources.

You can also refer to the following resources for more information.

- Ryerson's Full-Time Undergraduate Calendar
- The School of Creative Industries Student Handbook
- Ryerson's Undergraduate Student Guide
- Policy #46: Policy on Undergraduate Grading, Promotion, and Academic Standing ("The GPA Policy")
- Policy # 134: Undergraduate Academic Consideration and Appeals