

Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy

The goal of the Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy is to promote undergraduate student success. The policy establishes a structured framework and criteria to guide all students to completion of an undergraduate degree within a reasonable period of time.

Full-time degree seeking students normally are expected to complete the undergraduate program in four years. Within this timeframe, all students are expected to demonstrate continuing progress in their majors by completing prerequisite or required courses with the appropriate grades, and by completing other requirements consistent with graduation progress or benchmarks established by their academic units (see 2, below). It is ultimately the responsibility of the student to meet these requirements. To help students meet these requirements the University will facilitate student progress to degree by providing enhanced student advising through the following measures:

1. Academic units will create 4-year graduation templates that will specify the degree requirements for each major and provide semester-by-semester course schedule models that achieve graduation within four years. Students will prepare individualized plans for completing their degrees in accordance with the academic units' 4-year graduation plans. Students are also encouraged to periodically update their plans with the assistance of their academic advisors.
2. Academic units will establish graduation progress benchmarks for each academic major. These will specify the credit and course criteria that will indicate satisfactory progress to degree. Academic units will establish schedules for regular periodic reviews of student progress, and students who are in danger of falling behind the program benchmarks will be required to consult with an advisor prior to registration.
3. Students who do not achieve the progress expectations or benchmarks will be permitted to continue in the major only upon the approval of the dean of their college. If it becomes necessary for students to change majors, they will be given assistance in identifying and enrolling in a suitable alternative major.
4. When students change majors, they will be required to present an academic plan to the new major unit that demonstrates their ability to complete their degree in a timely manner.

While some students will have valid reasons to take additional time to degree, any student who completes 10 semesters or 130 credits (see footnote 1 for credits not counted towards these limits) without completing a degree will require mandatory advising in his/her college prior to registration for subsequent semesters. Students with exceptional circumstances, students whose programs include minors, double majors/degrees, enrichment activities or who need to pursue a degree part time will have on record approved plans with approved program benchmarks. Program benchmarks will be developed by the student in consultation with and approved by an advisor.

Footnote 1: Degree credits include University of Maryland credits and all applicable transfer credits from other postsecondary institutions. The equivalent semesters applicable to the enrollment limit for transfer credits will be determined by dividing all transfer credits applicable to the degree by 15. However, Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) credits, and credits earned for college courses taken while in high school and prior to matriculation at a postsecondary institution, will not count toward this semester or credit limitation. Such courses may, however, count toward degrees. Summer Session and Winterterm will not be included in the semester count. Credits earned during Summer Sessions or Winterterms will be included in the credit count.