

Catalog: Graduate Catalog 2014-2015 [Archived Catalog]

Title: Academic Information and Policies

Academic Information and Policies

Luke Gentala, B.S, M.A.R.

University Registrar

Michael Shenke, B.S., M.B.A.

Senior Associate Registrar

Tracy Godsey, B.S.

Associate Registrar for Graduate Studies

Kailyn Cheung, B.S., M.S.

Associate Registrar for Academic Operations

Brett Merritt, B.S., M.A.

Assistant Registrar for Graduate Studies

SEMESTER CREDIT SYSTEM

The University operates on the semester system. The unit for counting credit is the semester hour. A semester hour of credit consists of the equivalent of one 50-minute period of class work for 15 weeks, with an assumption of two hours of outside preparation or two 50-minute periods of laboratory work for each semester hour. Online courses are equivalent to the number of classroom contact hours (750 minutes per credit hour) expected in a synchronous residential course.

SEMESTER LOAD

Master's-level graduate students are considered to be full-time when enrolled nine or more hours per semester. All doctoral graduate students are considered full-time with a semester load of six or more semester hours.

Graduate students must secure permission from the appropriate Associate Dean or Program Director and from the Associate Registrar for Graduate Studies to take more than 15 hours.

ONLINE STUDENT STATUS

For financial aid purposes, **online student** full-time/part-time status will be determined by the number of hours for which the student initially enrolled in the semester. For example, if a student enrolls for the first time in the semester in the third sub-term, the number of hours the student takes in that sub-term will determine full-time/part-time status. A part-time student who adds courses for subsequent sub-terms of the same semester will still be considered part-time for the entire semester.

GRADES, QUALITY POINTS, AND GPA

All work is graded by letters which are assigned quality points as indicated below:

Quality

| Grade | Meaning | Points Per Semester Hour |
|-------|--|--------------------------|
| A | Excellent | 4.00 |
| A- | | 3.67 |
| AU | Audit | 0.00 |
| B+ | | 3.33 |
| B | Good | 3.00 |
| B- | | 2.67 |
| C+ | | 2.33 |
| C | Average | 2.00 |
| C- | | 1.67 |
| D+ | | 1.33 |
| D | Poor | 1.00 |
| D- | | 0.67 |
| F | Failure | .00 |
| FN | Failure for Non-Attendance | .00 |
| I | Incomplete | .00 |
| IP | In Progress | .00 |
| NF | Failure for Non-Attendance (for Pass/Fail courses) | .00 |
| NP | Non-Pass (for Pass/Fail courses) | .00 |
| P | Pass | .00 |
| Q | Academic Amnesty | .00 |
| R | Course Repeated | .00 |
| W | Withdrew | .00 |

A student's cumulative GPA is comprised of all coursework completed at the current academic level (Undergraduate, Graduate or Doctoral) regardless of prior degree conferral, broken enrollment or a program/major change. To determine the grade point average (GPA), the quality points earned are divided by GPA hours completed. GPA hours are hours that are used in the calculation of the GPA. The following grades are included in GPA hours: A, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F, and FN. Grades of AU, I, IP, NP, P, Q, R, and W are not included in GPA hours. A grade of B, for example, in a course bearing three semester hours of credit would be assigned nine quality points and a grade of C in that course, six quality points. Thus, if a student takes 16 semester hours of work and earns 40 quality points, his GPA is 2.50 (40 quality points divided by 16 semester hours). Only courses taken at Liberty are used in computing the GPA.

STUDENT CLASSIFICATION

The classification of students at Liberty is based on their degree level and number of earned semester hours.

| Classification | Graduate Level Semester Hours Earned |
|-----------------------|---|
| First Year Graduate | 0—29.99 |
| Second Year Graduate | 30.00—59.99 |
| Third Year Graduate | 60.00—89.99 |
| Fourth Year Graduate | 90.00+ |
| Doctoral | Pursuing a doctoral degree |

ADVISORS AND COURSE SELECTION

Each resident student will be assigned a faculty advisor upon acceptance to the University. The advisors will guide students in course selection. All questions concerning academic issues should be directed to the advisors. Students are encouraged to contact their advisors for help with any school-related problems they may encounter during the academic year.

Online students will have the Liberty University Online Academic Advising Office to assist them during their studies at the University. The office will guide students in course selection. All questions concerning academic issues should be directed to this office. Students are encouraged to contact the Liberty University Online Academic Advising Office for help with any school-related problems they may encounter during the academic year.

COURSE PLANNING

A course planning schedule is provided in order for students to plan their classes for upcoming semesters. The planning schedule presents every class offered and the terms where it is scheduled to be taught. This schedule is sorted alphabetically by class. You can find the course planning schedule by visiting the following site: <http://www.liberty.edu/academics/registrar/index.cfm?PID=23103>

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Only courses and degrees from institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the Department of Education will be evaluated for transfer credit (e.g., SACSCOC, TRACS, ABHE, etc.). Applicants must request official transcripts to be sent directly from the Registrar(s) of the previous school(s) to the Offices of Graduate Admissions. These transcripts must be received before an admission decision will be made.

Course work from a degree on the same academic level previously earned through Liberty University is considered transfer credit, and is subject to the same restrictions as course work completed through other institutions.

See additional information about the evaluation of graduate transfer in the Graduate Admissions Section.

Students seeking certificates are not eligible for transfer credit.

ACADEMIC AMNESTY

Students Academically Suspended or Academically Dismissed from Liberty University may appeal for readmission under Academic Amnesty per the following protocols:

1. The student must not have been enrolled at the University for a period of at least three academic years. (Example: If the student's last enrollment was in the Spring 2012 semester, he/she would not be eligible to appeal for Academic Amnesty until **after** the Spring 2015 semester.)
2. The student must submit a written appeal for readmission to the Associate Registrar for Graduate Studies. The appeal should include a thorough explanation of (1) the circumstances which contributed to the academic performance which resulted in the student's Academic Suspension or Dismissal and (2) why the student's present circumstances are more conducive to improved academic performance if permitted to resume his/her studies.
3. Students who were Academically Dismissed because of academic dishonesty are not eligible for Academic Amnesty.
4. The Associate Registrar for Graduate Studies will confer with the Director of Graduate Student Affairs to determine whether or not there are any student-conduct-related considerations that should render the student ineligible to resume his/her studies through Liberty University.
5. If the Director of Graduate Student Affairs determines that the student is eligible to resume his/her studies from a student-conduct perspective, the Associate Registrar for Graduate Studies will then present the student's appeal for review to the Associate Dean or Program Director over the student's degree program.
6. If the student is determined by the Associate Dean or Program Director to be eligible for readmission, the Associate Registrar for Graduate Studies will submit the student's appeal to the Vice Provost for review.
7. If the Vice Provost approves the student's appeal, all grades of C, D and F (including +/- grades) will be revised to Q, and will no longer be included in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA. Grades of A and B (including +/- grades) will not be revised, and will continue to be included in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA.
8. Students in degree programs requiring a cumulative GPA of 2.0 for good academic standing and graduation will retain grades of C (and C+/-), as well.
9. If the Vice Provost denies the student's appeal, his decision will be final. The student will not be permitted to resume the pursuit of any Graduate or Doctoral degree through Liberty University.
10. Once the approved student's grades have been revised, he/she is eligible to apply for readmission. (He/she must meet all applicable admission requirements to gain readmission.) The student will be readmitted on Academic Caution, and will be required to take and pass GRST 500 Intro to Graduate Writing in his/her first semester (unless he/she has already passed the course).
11. The previously assigned academic standings will not change, and will remain part of the student's academic records for the respective semesters for which they were earned.
12. Students who have been granted Academic Amnesty are not eligible for

ONLINE COURSE REGISTRATION, ACTIVATION, AND COMPLETION DATES

Online students may register for courses online through ASIST. A student's enrollment period (course activation) begins the first day of the upcoming sub-term, provided the student is in good academic standing and has paid the tuition or secured financial aid approval. Students are encouraged to allow sufficient time to review their course materials before the beginning of the sub-term. Students must register and complete Financial Check-In at least 14 business days prior to the sub-term start date. See the University calendar for sub-term dates.

The student has 8 weeks from the sub-term course activation date to complete the course. Students are expected to submit tests and course work throughout the term. At the end of the first week of each sub-term, courses are reviewed to determine if the student is attending in the course. If the student has not submitted an academic assignment (such as an examination, written paper or project, discussion board post, or other academic event), the student will be dropped from the course roster and will not be allowed to submit further course work. The student may appeal to their instructor to remain in the course.

Students who begin a course, but at some point in the semester cease attending, and do not provide official notification to withdraw, will be assigned a grade of "FN" (Failure for Non-Attendance), dated to the student's last date of attendance (based on the definition provided below). A grade of "FN" will be assigned when a student stops attending and/or participating in a class for a period of 21 consecutive days or longer. "FN" indicates that the student ceased attendance and failed to complete the course objectives. The student alone assumes responsibility for course work missed from non-attendance. If a student receives all FN's in a term, he/she is subject to the Unofficial Withdrawal procedure that includes the reduction and/or return of all Financial Aid. Students are fully responsible for all resulting charges on their student account. To review the entire Financial Aid Withdrawal policy, go to www.liberty.edu/fapolicies.

Unofficial Withdrawal for Non-Attendance Appeal Process:

Students who receive a grade of "FN" may appeal to their professor to have the grade removed to allow a resumption of work in the course. This appeal must be communicated in written form to the faculty member. Please note, that appeals are reviewed on a case by case basis. If the appeal is granted the student must complete the course with an earned grade.

Students must complete and receive final grades for all courses in a semester before they will be allowed to enroll in the next semester. Students receiving all F's in a term must appeal to Financial Aid to receive aid in their next term of enrollment.

Students may drop a course for a full refund, through the day prior to the sub-term begin date. Beginning on the first day of the sub-term, if the student

has attended, he or she must withdraw from a course for a grade of W. Failure to submit coursework after attending may result in a grade of F or FN.

Definition of Online Attendance

Attendance is measured by any submission of a required assignment within the enrollment dates of the course (such as examinations, written papers or projects, any discussion board posts, etc.) or initiating any communication with one's professor regarding an academic subject. Attending is defined as completing an academically related activity which includes, but is not limited to:

- Physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students.
- Submitting an academic assignment (in Blackboard or disparate system).
- Taking an exam.
- Taking an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction.
- Attending a study group that is assigned by the school.
- Participating in an online discussion about academic matters.
- Initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

ONLINE COURSE MATERIALS

Online students must purchase all course materials from MBS Direct. Materials for some practicums and intensives may be purchased from the University Bookstore. Students should purchase materials after registration but prior to the sub-term begin date (course activation). Liberty does not guarantee that required course materials will be available after the sub-term activation date. Tuition does not cover the cost of course materials.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance in online courses is expected throughout the length of the term. The U.S. Department of Education requires that every university monitor the attendance of their students. Liberty University uses the following definitions* in determining student attendance which includes, but is not limited to:

- **Resident:** Physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students, submitting an academic assignment; taking an exam, an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction; attending a study group that is assigned by the school; participating in an online discussion about academic matters and initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.
- **Online:** Any submission of a required assignment within the enrollment dates of the course (such as examinations, written papers or projects, any discussion board posts, etc.) or initiating any communication with one's professor regarding an academic subject.

*These definitions are based upon the delivery format of the course and not the student's enrollment status (online versus on-campus).

Scholastic Regulations

Warning/Probation/Suspension/Dismissal. Students must maintain satisfactory standing in order to remain at Liberty.

Satisfactory scholastic standing for students enrolled in the graduate programs is:

| | |
|--|------|
| Seminary 36-hour Professional M.A. degrees | 2.00 |
| M.A. degrees in Ethnomusicology, Global Apologetics and Global Studies | 3.00 |
| M.A.R., M.R.E., and M.Div | 2.00 |
| M.A. in Human Services Counseling | 2.50 |
| M.A.T. and M.Ed. | 2.50 |
| M.A.M.L. | 2.50 |
| All certificate programs | 2.00 |
| All other programs | 3.00 |

Academic standing is calculated only at the end of each semester (including the Summer).

Students failing to attain and maintain the scholastic standing required will be placed on Academic Warning.

At the end of the semester on Academic Warning, students who fail to raise their GPA to a satisfactory level will be placed on Academic Probation.

At the end of the semester on Academic Probation, students who fail to raise their GPA to the required academic level will be placed on Academic Suspension.

Resident students who desire to return to Liberty in the future must contact the Registrar's Office in writing. The Associate Registrar for Graduate Studies will in turn submit the student's appeal to the appropriate Program Director or Associate Dean for review. If the student's appeal is approved, he/she will be given an Academic Contract, which, if followed, will enable him/her to return to good academic standing. The student must agree to abide by the terms of the Contract before being permitted to continue/resume his/her studies.

Online students who desire to return to Liberty in the future must contact the Academic Standing Consultant Team in writing at luoacademicstanding@liberty.edu. The Academic Standing Consultant Team will in turn submit the student's appeal to the appropriate Program Director or Associate Dean for review. If the student's appeal is approved, he/she will be given an Academic Contract, which, if followed, will enable him/her to return to good academic standing. The student must agree to abide by the terms of the Contract before being permitted to continue/resume his/her studies.

Students who are enrolled full-time (nine or more hours for Master's-level students and six or more hours for post-Master's and Doctoral students) and fail all courses will be Academically Suspended.

Students who fail to raise their GPA to the required academic level (see above) by the end of the subsequent semester and/or who fail to meet the terms of their Academic Contract will be Academically Dismissed and will not be allowed to return to Liberty unless qualifying for Academic Amnesty.

At the end of each semester, students on Academic Warning, Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal will be sent a notification by the Registrar's Office.

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY (Online Students)

If the student is unable to complete an assignment on time, then he or she must contact the instructor immediately by email. Assignments that are submitted after the due date without prior approval from the instructor will receive the following deductions:

1. Late assignments submitted within one week of the due date will receive a 10% deduction.
 2. Assignments submitted more than one week late will receive a 20% deduction.
 3. Assignments submitted two weeks late or after the final date of the class will not be accepted.
 4. Late Discussion Board threads or replies will not be accepted. Special circumstances (e.g. death in the family, personal health issues) will be reviewed by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.
-

COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS

Students desiring to use another course in place of a required course must complete a Request for a Course Substitution form. Course substitution forms must include a detailed rationale, explaining why the substitution is requested. Requests should be made with discretion. They should not be used merely to enable a student to graduate on time. If the course was taken at another college, provide a course description or course syllabus with the request. Requests must be submitted prior to the students last sub-term. Forms should be submitted to coursesub@liberty.edu. Forms will be reviewed by a Dean or Associate Dean within 2 weeks of submission. Course substitutions are not permitted for the certificate programs.

PROGRAM CHANGES

All requests to change degree programs, majors, cognates, and concentrations must be submitted in writing to the Registrar's Office for **resident** students and Liberty University Online Academic Advising for **online** students. The student will be placed on the Degree Completion Plan (DCP) or Certificate Completion Plan (CCP) in effect for the term for which the request is processed. All requests for a change of major will be processed by the Registrar's Office upon receipt, and will be effective the following full term of enrollment.

DROPPING/ADDING COURSES

Changes are discouraged after a student and advisor have arranged the student's schedule for the semester.

Students desiring to take a Liberty University Online course must enroll in the course during the resident drop/add period. The course must be completed by the last day of the residential semester unless an extension is granted.

Students who do not attend their intensive(s), will be dropped from the course roster. An intensive may be dropped without a grade or a tuition charge, prior to the start date of the course. Class attendance is define, in accordance with the above definition of attendance.

REMEMBER: Any change in status (i.e., from full-time to part-time, etc.) may cause the reduction or cancellation of your financial aid award. In other words, your out-of-pocket expenses may increase.

Summer school tuition and fee adjustments for classes that are 3-8 weeks in length must be made by the third day of class.

Exceptions to these deadlines may be granted by the Registrar in unusual circumstances, such as extreme illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control.

No course is considered officially added or dropped until the add/drop form is submitted to the Registrar's Office and processed. This form requires the written approval of the instructor of the course.

DROPPING/ADDING COURSES BY ONLINE STUDENTS

Online students may drop a course for a full refund, anytime prior to the sub-term begin date. Beginning on the first day of the sub-term, if a student has attended, he or she must withdraw with a grade of W and no refund will be granted.

COURSE REPEAT POLICY

Students who want to repeat a course taken at Liberty and have the first grade removed from the cumulative GPA must satisfy each of the following guidelines:

1. All Master's-level programs will allow the repeat policy to be applied for a maximum of six hours of repeated course work.
2. All post-Master's and Doctoral programs will allow the repeat policy to be applied for a maximum of three hours of repeated course work.
3. The course must be taken at Liberty University in order to activate the policy.
4. The second grade of A, B, C, D, F, or FN (including +/- grades) will apply toward the cumulative GPA.
5. The repeat policy may not be applied for the following grades: AU, I, NF, NP, P, Q, or W.
6. On the student's transcript, the original grade will be followed by the letter "E," which will indicate that the original grade has been excluded from the computation of the cumulative GPA. The grade for the repeat of the course will be followed by the letter "I," which will indicate that the grade for the repeat of the course will be included in the computation of the cumulative GPA. The original grade will not count toward earned hours, GPA hours, or quality points, but will remain on the student's transcript as attempted hours.
7. Once a course has been repeated, the original grade is omitted from the earned hours, but it still counts toward the GPA hours, quality points, and cumulative GPA. It is only after the repeat policy is applied that the original grade is omitted from the GPA hours, quality points, and cumulative GPA.
8. This policy is retroactive to include any course taken at Liberty University.
9. Use of the repeat policy for a prior semester will not affect the academic

standing for that semester. Academic standing for a prior semester may be changed only because of a grade reporting error.

10. The repeat policy request must be submitted prior to degree conferral for the policy to be activated.
 11. The repeat policy may not be applied in reverse, meaning that a student may not repeat a course, earn a lower grade for the repeat, and apply the repeat policy to exclude the repeat grade from the cumulative GPA.
 12. If a student has earned a degree, and goes on to pursue a second degree, any use of the repeat policy in the pursuit of the first degree will not count toward the total number of uses of the repeat policy allowed under the second degree.
 13. If a student is pursuing a degree, and changes to another degree without completing the first degree, any use of the repeat policy in pursuit of the first degree will count toward the total number of uses of the repeat policy allowed under the second degree, even if the first degree, or course work completed in the pursuit of the first degree, are in a different discipline than the second degree.
 14. Any approved exception to this policy pertaining to a specific degree program will be stated in this Catalog in the Graduation Requirements information for that degree program.
-

INDEPENDENT STUDY / DIRECTED RESEARCH

Students may request to complete an Independent Study or Directed Research project in a major field or related discipline. Permission for the Independent Study or Directed Research will be granted only upon approval by the Department Chair/Program Director, the Dean of the School, the Administrative Dean, and the Associate Registrar for Graduate Studies. Forms are available online at <https://www.liberty.edu/index.cfm?PID=4849> or in the Registrar's Office.

CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

From time to time it may be necessary to cancel a class because of insufficient enrollment or other extenuating circumstances. The decision for such a cancellation is ultimately that of the Provost of the University. Every effort will be made to provide notice of the cancellation at least two weeks prior to the first scheduled meeting of the class. The Registrar's Office will advise the student of the cancellation and any other options including the possible rescheduling of the class. The University does not assume responsibility for any delay in the anticipated graduation date of individual students that might result from such class cancellations.

INCOMPLETES

Students may not do additional coursework or finish assignments after the last day of classes. Students who are unable to complete coursework by the last day of class due to unavoidable circumstances may appeal to their professor for a temporary course grade of I (Incomplete). The Dean of the school or college must also approve the grade. Approval of the reason given rests with the Registrar's Office. The professor will establish a new deadline for completing the coursework, based on the circumstances. A maximum of four months may be allowed. If the coursework is not submitted by the new deadline, the student will receive the grade designated by the instructor at the time the Incomplete was granted.

Students who are unable to complete coursework by the last day of class due to significant illness or injury may appeal to their professor for a temporary course grade of I (Incomplete). Appeals must be supported by medical documentation signed by a physician, then approved by the professor and the Dean. Medical extensions may be renewed, if the condition warrants, up to a maximum of one year from the beginning of the semester. Supporting documentation must accompany all requests for renewals. If the coursework is not submitted by the new deadline, the student will receive the grade designated by the instructor at the time the Medical Incomplete was granted.

Incomplete request forms will only be accepted during the last three weeks of classes.

[Top](#)

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY ONLINE EXTENSIONS AND INCOMPLETE GRADES

Intensives

An **online student** enrolled in Intensives must appeal to his/her professor for a temporary course grade of Incomplete (I). The professor will establish a new deadline for completing the coursework, based on the circumstances. A maximum of four (4) additional months may be allowed from the end date of the course. If the coursework is not submitted by the new deadline, the student will receive a grade of zero for the incomplete assignments and a final grade will be submitted.

Liberty University Online Courses

A student enrolled in any Liberty University Online course, who is unable to complete coursework by the last day of class due to illness or injury, may appeal to his/her professor for a temporary course grade of I (Incomplete). Appeals must be supported by medical documentation signed by a physician. There is no charge for a medical incomplete. Medical incompletes may be allowed, if the condition warrants, up to a maximum of four (4) months from the course start date of the course (or 2 additional months after the end of the course). If the coursework is not submitted by the new deadline, the student will receive a grade of zero for the incomplete assignments and a final grade will be submitted.

Military Incompletes

Military service members are guaranteed a military incomplete for coursework that they are unable to complete on time due to deployments, extended cruises, unit operational tempo, or other duty-related extenuating circumstances. To obtain an Incomplete, a military student must send either a current copy of official military orders (as proof of professional conflict during enrollment in the course) or a signed letter on official letterhead from the student's commander or supervisor. The Liberty University Online Academic Advising Office staff will gather the documentation and confer with the professor to determine the new deadline for the course. A Military Incomplete cannot extend beyond two (2) months for any given course. If the student cannot finish the coursework within the two (2) additional months, he/she may request a military withdrawal with the option of a free repeat of the course. This documentation must be submitted to the Liberty

University Online Academic Advising Office who will complete the appropriate forms and submit them to Liberty University's Military Affairs Office for continued processing. Military students must notify their Military Education Office of a course Incomplete if they are receiving Tuition Assistance. Incomplete requests and supporting documents may be faxed to (434) 455-1287, scanned/ e-mailed to luomilitary@liberty.edu, or mailed to:

Liberty University Online
Office of Military Affairs
1971 University Boulevard,
Lynchburg, VA 24515.

Incompletes must be secured no later than 2 weeks prior to the course end date. If the faculty member is no longer active, the course manager is responsible for handling the completion of the course.

WITHDRAWAL FROM ONLINE COURSES

Liberty University Online students requesting to withdraw from courses during the semester must submit a request to the Liberty University Online Academic Advising Office. Generally, the withdrawal date will be the date the students submitted the email to Academic Advising. A grade of W will be assigned to all courses from which the student withdraws.

Students are subject to not being refunded for withdrawn courses and/or being charged a \$50 withdrawal fee based on pre-set, University criteria. Students should consult with their advisor before withdrawing from a course.

Graduate Residential Grade Appeals

Liberty encourages students to have open and respectful communication with their professor to resolve any concerns regarding individual course assignment grades and/or the final grade for the course.

Criteria for Appeal:

Only final posted grades may be appealed beyond the professor. Appeals are accepted only when the grade assigned conflicts with:

- The published grading rubrics for the course assignments
- Written communication (i.e. email, announcements, etc.)
- Calculation error on an assignment (resulting in a change to the final grade).

Appeals, other than those mentioned above, will not be reviewed.

The student must provide written documentation that demonstrates the occurrence of one or more of the above listed grounds for appeal. Documentation may be in the form of e-mail correspondence, graded assignments, proof of timely submission, etc.

Appeal Process:

A student wishing to appeal a final grade must submit the appeal to his/her professor and seek to resolve the situation with them. If the student wishes to appeal further he/she must follow the process outlined below:

1. Within 30 calendar days of the end of the term, the student may submit a written appeal to the Program Director/Chair. The student must include the information required above. The Program Director/Chair will consult with the instructor and review the student's written appeal. The Program Director/Chair will then notify the instructor and the student of his/her decision.
 2. If the student has additional support for his/her appeal, the student may submit a written appeal to the Dean/Academic Director after receiving the decision by the Program Director/Chair. This written appeal must be received within five (5) business days of the Program Director/Chair's email. The Dean/Academic Director will review the student's appeal, as well as any information provided by faculty member. When a decision has been reached, the Dean/Academic Director will notify the Program Director/Chair, the faculty member and the student. If the student has additional support for his/her appeal, after receiving the decision by the Dean/Academic Director, the student may submit a written appeal to the Dean of Academic Administration for the Graduate School and Online Education.
 3. This written appeal must be received within 5 business days of the Dean/Academic Director's email. The Dean of Academic Administration for the Graduate School will review the student's appeal, as well as any information provided by faculty member. When a decision has been reached, the Dean of Academic Administration for the Graduate School will notify the Dean/Academic Director, the Program Director/Chair, the faculty member, and the student. The Decision of the Dean of Academic Administration for the Graduate School is final.
-

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY ONLINE GRADE APPEALS

Liberty encourages students to have open and respectful communication with their professor to resolve any concerns regarding individual course assignment grades and/or the final grade for the course.

Criteria for Appeal:

Only final posted grades may be appealed beyond the professor. Appeals are accepted only when the grade assigned conflicts with:

- The published grading rubrics for the course assignments
- Written communication (i.e., email, announcements, etc.)
- Calculation error on an assignment (resulting in a change to the final grade).

Appeals, other than those mentioned above, will not be reviewed.

The student must provide written documentation that demonstrates the occurrence of one or more of the above grounds for appeal. Documentation may be in the form of email correspondence, graded assignments, proof of timely submission, etc.

Appeal Process:

A student wishing to appeal a final grade must submit the appeal to his/her professor and seek to resolve the situation with them. If the student wishes to

appeal further he/she must follow the process outlined below:

1. Within 30 calendar days of the end of the term, the student may submit a written appeal to the Online Chair/Chair, but should do so through Liberty University Online Advising. The student must include the information required above. The Online Chair will consult with the instructor and review the student's written appeal. The Online Chair will then notify Liberty University Online Advising, the instructor and the student of his/her decision.
 2. If the student has additional support for his/her appeal, the student may submit a written appeal to the Online Associate Dean, through Liberty University Online Advising after receiving the decision by the Online Chair. This written appeal must be received by Liberty University Online Advising within 5 business days of the Online Chair's email. The Online Associate Dean will review the student's appeal, as well as any information provided by faculty member. When a decision has been reached, the Online Associate Dean will notify Liberty University Online Advising, the Online Chair, the faculty member and the student.
 3. If the student has additional support for his/her appeal, after receiving the decision by the Online Associate Dean, the student may submit a written appeal to the Online Academic Dean through Liberty University Online Advising. This written appeal must be received by Liberty University Online Advising within 5 business days of the Online Associate Dean's email. The Associate Dean will review the student's appeal, as well as any information provided by faculty member. When a decision has been reached, the Online Academic Dean will notify Liberty University Online Advising, the Online Associate Dean, the Online Chair, the faculty member, and the student. The Online Academic Dean's decision is final.
-

Withdrawal from Liberty University

REMEMBER: Any change in status (i.e., from full-time to part-time, etc.) may cause the reduction or cancellation of your financial aid award. In other words, your out-of-pocket expenses may increase.

Students withdrawing from the University during the semester must meet with a representative from the Student Advocate Office for exit counseling. As a part of this process, the student must also meet with a representative from the Financial Aid Office and the Student Accounts Office (if there is an outstanding balance on the student's account), and will be required to submit a signed statement of withdrawal. The student's official withdrawal date is the date they begin the withdrawal process by notifying a representative from the Student Advocate Office of his/her intent to withdraw.

Students withdrawing before the semester begins must only contact the Student Advocate Office in order to initiate the withdrawal process.

Any student who withdraws from the University during the first eight weeks of classes will receive a tuition refund. (See Expenses and Financial Policy Information: Withdrawals section). This is in effect even if the student drops classes in such a way as to go below full-time status during add/drop week.

If a student withdraws from all classes in a term, the student has officially withdrawn from the University. Financial Aid Recipients are subject to the Title IV withdrawal calculation.

Students receiving all grades of FN will be considered to have unofficially withdrawn from Liberty. The withdrawal date will be determined by the Registrar's Office and will be based upon University information indicating the student's last date of attendance in class. Students with Federal grants and/or Federal loans will be subject to the Title IV withdrawal calculation. The Title IV withdrawal calculation will result in the reduction and/or cancellation of all Financial Aid. Consideration will be given to students withdrawing due to circumstances beyond their control. The Registrar's Office will determine the official withdrawal date based upon the extenuating circumstances.

An expulsion resulting from violation of the disciplinary system will result in an administrative withdrawal. A grade of W will be recorded in all courses for which the individual is officially registered.

A \$50 fee will be charged for the processing of an official, unofficial, or administrative withdrawal. This fee will be deducted from any refund due on the student's account or he/she will be responsible for payment of this fee.

Anyone who withdraws from the University is considered to be breaking enrollment. Students who break enrollment must apply for readmission and will be subject to the requirements of the catalog and degree requirements in effect at the time of his or her readmission.

Liberty University Online Withdrawal

Online students withdrawing from the University must contact Academic Advising via the student's Liberty University email account. The withdrawal date will generally be the date the student submitted the email to - Academic Advising. If the withdrawal request is mailed or faxed to - Academic Advising, the withdrawal date will generally be the date the Withdrawal Form is received by the University or the last date of attendance. Attendance is defined as **any** submission to Blackboard within the enrollment dates of the course (such as examinations, written papers or projects, any discussion board posts, etc.) or initiating **any** communication with your professor regarding an academic subject or course materials. The academic advisor will notify the Financial Aid Office, Student Accounts Office and Registrar's Office.

Grades of W will be recorded for all courses from which the individual withdraws. A student may not withdraw after the last day of the course or after submission of the final exam or final required course work. Courses not completed will be assigned a grade of W. For intensive courses, a student may not withdraw after the final exam has begun. Students requesting to withdraw will be subject to the Title IV withdrawal calculation. The Title IV withdrawal calculation will result in the reduction and/or cancellation of all Financial Aid. See Financial Information section.

Students who wish to withdraw from one or more courses in a given semester must contact the Liberty University Online. Academic Advising Office in writing or

via their Liberty University email account. Students who withdraw from all courses in which they are enrolled will be subject to the Title IV withdrawal regulations and will be reported as withdrawn from the University. However, it will not be necessary to reapply unless the student is not enrolled in any courses during an entire academic year (from Fall to Summer). Students only withdrawing from all courses in a given semester, and not the University, will be allowed to re-enroll in the next semester. However, the student will be subject to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy administered by the Financial Aid Office.

ONLINE PROGRAM UNOFFICIAL WITHDRAWALS

In accordance with Title IV regulations which require that universities have a mechanism in place for determining whether or not a student who began a course and received or could have received a disbursement of Title IV funds unofficially withdrew, the University has established a procedure for students enrolled in the online courses. This procedure is used to determine if students are progressing toward the completion of their courses.

Students who begin a course, but at some point in the semester cease attending, and do not provide official notification to withdraw, will be assigned a grade of "FN" (Failure for Non-Attendance), dated to the student's last date of attendance (based on the definition provided earlier). A grade of "FN" will be assigned when a student stops attending and/or participating in a class for a period of 21 consecutive days or longer. "FN" indicates that the student ceased attendance and failed to complete the course objectives.

The student alone assumes responsibility for course work missed from non-attendance. If a student receives all FN's in a term, he/she is subject to the Unofficial Withdrawal procedure that includes the reduction and/or return of all Financial Aid. Students are fully responsible for all resulting charges on their student account. To review the entire Financial Aid Withdrawal policy, go to <http://www.liberty.edu/fapolicie>

Unofficial Withdrawal for Non-Attendance Appeal Process:

Students who receive a grade of "FN" may appeal to their professor to have the grade removed to allow a resumption of work in the course. This appeal must be communicated in written form to the faculty member. Please note, that appeals are reviewed on a case by case basis. If the appeal is granted the student must complete the course with an earned grade.

Office of Graduate and Online Student Affairs

Liberty University Code of Honor for Graduate and Online Students

ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL CODE OF HONOR

Liberty University is comprised of a network of students, Alumni, faculty, staff and supporters that together form a Christian community based upon the truth of the

Bible. This truth defines our foundational principles, from our Doctrinal Statement to the Code of Honor. These principles irrevocably align Liberty University's operational procedures with the long tradition of university culture, which remains distinctively Christian, designed to preserve and advance truth. Our desire is to create a safe, comfortable environment within our community of learning, and we extend our academic and spiritual resources to all of our students with the goal of fostering academic maturity, spiritual growth and character development.

Communities are predicated on shared values and goals. The Code of Honor, an expression of the values from which our Doctrinal Statement was born, defines the fundamental principles by which our community exists. At the core of this code lie two essential concepts: a belief in the significance of all individuals, and a reliance on the existence of objective truth.

While we acknowledge that some may disagree with various elements of the Code of Honor, we maintain the expectation that our students will commit to respect and uphold the Code while enrolled at Liberty University. Adherence to the principles and concepts established within facilitates the success of our students and strengthens the Liberty community.

The Code of Honor can be viewed in its entirety at <http://www.liberty.edu/index.cfm?PID=19155>.

THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Some graduate degrees require a thesis, thesis project, or dissertation for graduation. Graduate thesis and dissertation requirements will not be considered complete until receipt of an acceptable copy of the approved thesis or dissertation is confirmed by the Jerry Falwell Library in accordance with current library deposit policies.

CERTIFICATE COMPLETION PLANS

Certificate completion plans outlining the program of study and other requirements for each graduate certificate program are available online at <http://www.liberty.edu/dcps>.

DEGREE COMPLETION PLANS

Degree completion plans outlining the program of study and other requirements for each graduate program are available online at <http://www.liberty.edu/dcps>.

TIME LIMITS FOR CERTIFICATE COMPLETION

Students pursuing a certificate must complete the certificate requirements within three (3) years of the date of matriculation.

Any student who does not complete coursework within the permissible time limit for any reason, including discontinued enrollment, must reapply for readmission and will be subject to the requirements of the Catalog and Certificate Completion Plan (CCP) in effect at the time of his/her readmission.

A break in enrollment occurs when the student fails to enroll in at least one course during an academic year. The academic year begins with the start of the fall semester and ends with the conclusion of the summer term. Students who break enrollment must apply for readmission and will be subject to the requirements of

the Catalog and certificate requirements in effect at the time of their readmission.

TIME LIMITS FOR DEGREE COMPLETION

All 30-47 semester hour master's programs have a maximum time limit of five years from the date of matriculation. All 48-60 semester hour master's programs, doctoral programs, or degrees offered outside the regular semester have a maximum time limit of seven years from the date of matriculation. All over-60 semester hour master's programs and doctoral programs have a maximum time limit of ten years from the date of matriculation.

Any student who does not complete coursework within the permissible time limit for any reason – including discontinued enrollment – must reapply for admission. The respective program director will determine if any previous courses are sufficiently time sensitive and must be repeated. Beginning with the date of readmission, the time limit for degree completion is determined by the number of hours remaining: less than 48 hours – five years; 48-60 hours – seven years; more than 60 hours – ten years.

For **resident students**, a break in enrollment occurs when the student fails to enroll in either the Fall or Spring semesters. For **online students**, a break in enrollment occurs when the student fails to enroll in at least one course during an academic year. The academic year begins with the start of the fall semester and ends with the conclusion of the summer term. Students who break enrollment must apply for readmission and will be subject to the requirements of the Catalog and degree requirements in effect at the time of their readmission.

WORK IN RESIDENCE

Online student candidates for the Master of Arts in Counseling and Master of Education degrees must complete nine hours on campus. Candidates for the Doctor of Education degree must complete 12 hours on campus. Students may satisfy this requirement by attending modular courses or attending other regularly scheduled classes at Liberty University. Modular courses are one-or-more-week intensive sessions scheduled during summer and other selected times during the year. Students requesting exemptions must do so by presenting their reasons (with documentation) to the appropriate Liberty University Online Faculty Coordinator.

GRADING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Liberty University Faculty members, both residential and online, must submit final grades for all students to the Registrar at the end of each term. Faculty teaching online courses should have grades submitted to the Registrar on or before the second Wednesday after the course ends. Faculty teaching residential courses should have grades submitted to the Registrar one week after the end of each semester. Liberty University Faculty members, both residential and online, are urged to promptly complete and submit final course grades. Confidentiality of student grades falls under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Please see the FERPA section and policies for more information.

Grading Scales:

Liberty University incorporates a standardized 1,000 point system across all undergraduate and graduate programs. The undergraduate utilizes a 100 point

scale to differentiate between letter grades, while the graduate programs utilize three distinct scales: 80, 70 and 60 point scales to differentiate between letter grades. Each academic department determines the scale used within the department. The grading scale for each course will be posted within the syllabus for each course. Students are encouraged to review the syllabus for each course individually to verify the grade scale.

RECORDING OF GRADES

All grades will be recorded in the Registrar's Office as reported by the instructors in charge of the various courses. Requests for grade changes may be submitted in writing only by the instructors.

Any extra-credit assignments that are a part of the instructor's syllabus must be completed prior to the final exam for the course. A student may not submit an assignment for extra credit after the semester has ended and a final exam has been given.

ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS

Official transcripts are made only at the written, signed request of the student concerned. No transcript will be issued for anyone who has failed to meet all financial obligations to the University. Official transcripts are not released directly to the student. Requests for transcripts are to be made directly to the Registrar's Office. There is a \$10.00 fee for one transcript. Additional transcript requests **made at the same time** are \$1.00 each.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The following general guidelines for graduation apply to each candidate for a graduate degree. Any additional requirements are specified in the section which describes a particular program.

1. Post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional programs must be at least 30 semester credit hours.
2. The complete program of study for the degree, as outlined in the catalog in effect when the student is accepted as a degree candidate, must be successfully completed before graduation.
3. The student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 unless otherwise stated.
4. At least one-third of the course work for any program of study must be earned through Liberty University. The minimum number of hours which must be completed through Liberty for each degree program is noted in this Catalog in the Graduation Requirements section for that program.
5. The student must submit a Graduation Application to the Registrar's Office at the beginning of his/her final semester.
6. The Registrar's Office will process the conferral of a degree once all degree requirements have been met, including the minimum GPA requirement and graduation application. If a student wishes to take further non-applicable coursework, he/she must do so under a new application.

CERTIFICATE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

1. The complete program of study for the certificate, as outlined in the catalog in effect when the student is accepted to the certificate, must be successfully completed.
2. The student must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0.

3. No grade of D may be applied to the certificate (includes grades of D+/D-).
 4. All course work for the certificate must be completed through Liberty University.
 5. The student must submit a Certificate Completion Application to the Registrar's Office at the beginning of his/her final semester.
 6. The Registrar's Office will process the conferral of a certificate once all certificate requirements have been met including the minimum GPA requirement and certificate completion application. If a student wishes to take further non-applicable coursework, they must do so under a new application.
-

GRADUATION APPROVAL

All candidates for graduation must be approved by the faculty and the Board of Trustees. Conditions such as transfer credit and incomplete grades should be removed by the beginning of the candidate's last semester.

GRADUATION HONORS

Honors graduation is available for all graduate, post-graduate, and doctoral programs. Honors for graduation will be determined by the cumulative GPA earned at Liberty. Students must meet the following GPA standards to earn the corresponding academic distinction:

| GPA | Distinction |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| 3.90—3.94 | Graduate with distinction |
| 3.95—4.00 | Graduate with high distinction |

The specific honor calculated on April 1 of the student's graduation year will be printed in the commencement program and the student will wear that particular honor regalia; however, the final cumulative grade point average will be recorded and that final cumulative GPA will determine the specific honor that will be printed on the diploma and transcript.

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

Degrees are granted in September, January, and May of each year. All candidates for degrees may participate in the annual graduation exercises which take place in May.