



UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES  
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**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NURSING**  
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10 Feb 2015

**SUBJECT: Daniel K. Inouye Graduate  
School of Nursing (GSN)  
Student Promotion Committee**

**GSN - APS 003-2014**

**ABSTRACT**

This Academic Policy Statement (APS) establishes guidelines and procedures for remediation, probation, setback, interim suspension, and disenrollment of students by the Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing (GSN).

**A. Purpose**

1. This Academic Policy Statement (APS) establishes USU GSN policy regarding the role and functions of the Student Promotions Committee (SPC) and establishes guidelines and procedures for remediation, probation, setback, interim suspension, and disenrollment of any Graduate School of Nursing (GSN) student.

**B. Reference**

1. GSN-APS-002-2013 (Former GSN P&P #94-06), Grading and Examining Policy.

**C. Background**

1. The SPC is an advisory body to the Dean and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, whose purpose is to provide an objective review of a student's record and performance and make recommendations as to the status of that student. Elements critical to the success of the students and this policy include early identification of students at risk, a personalized remediation program with regular feedback, and accurate and objective documentation of student progress. All persons involved in the academic and clinical training process must be committed to keeping the attrition rate to a minimum and to assisting students in overcoming weaknesses or deficiencies.
2. Once a student is identified as being at risk, courses of action include program specific remediation, and/or referral to the SPC for probation, setback, or disenrollment from the program. The Program Director or designee may institute a remediation program

without convening the SPC. The purpose of a remediation program is to design a plan of support with specific objectives that will enable the student to focus on areas of concern. Use of all available resources including counseling, study groups and individual tutoring are encouraged.

3. Once referred, the SPC may **recommend** continuation in regular student status (no action or a letter of counseling), probation, setback, or disenrollment from the program.
4. Students may be referred to the SPC at any time during their enrollment at the Uniformed Services University (USUHS).

#### D. **Applicability**

1. This policy applies to all students enrolled in GSN programs and to all GSN faculty members.

#### E. **Selection of Committee Members**

1. The Commandant and the Brigade JAG (or Office of General Counsel (OGC) representative) shall be members by virtue of their positions.
2. The Chair, members and alternates will be appointed through the existing GSN Committee assignment procedures and may serve any number of consecutive terms. Faculty membership should be representative of all GSN programs.
3. Clinical site faculty may be present during SPC discussion to provide information and answer questions specific to that clinical site.
4. A recorder to the committee will be appointed by the Dean.
5. The Committee will be composed of no less than five voting members. Uniformed members of the committee are to be of equal rank or senior to the student referred to the committee.
6. If a standing Committee Member is the student's academic advisor, designated faculty, course faculty or preceptor, then that faculty member should consider recusing himself or herself and be non-voting for that individual student.
7. Standing Committee Members are:
  - a. SPC Chair or appointed alternate (1) (voting).
  - b. Vice Chair (1) (voting).
  - c. GSN Commandant/Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (non-voting).
  - d. GSN Faculty members (5, minimum) (voting) ideally representing different GSN programs.
  - e. Brigade JAG or OGC Representative (1) (non-voting).
  - f. Recorder, (1) (non-voting).

8. Duties and Responsibilities of All Members interacting with SPC:

a. Role and Function of the Program Director in this process:

- i. Refer students as outlined previously.
- ii. Establish specific plan and timeline for academic or clinical remediation or probation.
- iii. Provide written and specific recommendations.
- iv. Provide supporting documentation for recommendations. This documentation shall include but is not limited to evaluations, papers, and examinations, performance appraisals, counseling notes, and letters of academic jeopardy, remedial work assignments, and outcomes.

9. Role and Function of the SPC:

- a. The SPC is an advisory body to the Dean and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, GSN, whose purpose is to provide an objective review of a student's record and performance and make recommendations as to the status of that student. Recommendations may include a return to full student status, probation, setback, or dismissal. In evaluating the student's progress, the Committee will determine if an identifiable problem exists, if there is sufficient documentation supporting existence of the problem, and if reasonable efforts have been made to assist the student in correcting the problem.
- b. The following questions are to be used as a guideline.
  - i. Does the student have an identifiable problem?
  - ii. Is the problem documented in the student's academic grades, daily clinical evaluations, counseling sheets, minutes from appropriate committee meetings, or other appropriate documents?
  - iii. Does documentation exist that shows the student was notified of his/her deficiency?
  - iv. Is a specific plan for remediation identified with a clearly defined set of objectives and timeline?
  - v. Is the student given enough time to correct the deficiency?
  - vi. Does the plan contain reasonable attempts to assist the student in correcting his/her deficiency?

## F. Policy

1. The following actions can be taken **prior** to an SPC referral:

- a. *Letter of Academic Jeopardy*: If a student is not meeting minimum standards in a course or program, the Program Director, Course Coordinator, or Faculty Advisor will send a letter of academic jeopardy to the student, listing the deficiencies and notifying the student that they must meet with the Program Director or his/her designee, to institute a remediation program to address the deficiencies. A copy of any Letter of Academic Jeopardy will be forwarded to the Commandant/Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.
- b. *Academic or Clinical Remediation*: A personalized remediation program will be developed for any student identified as having difficulty with knowledge, skills, ability, or progression in their academic or clinical training. The plan will identify areas of concern and strategies to assist the student in meeting semester or course objectives and shall include goals, objective criteria for determining if the goals have been met and timelines for completion of the goals (Enclosure 1.A). Consequences of failing to meet the set goals will be clearly described. Although students may be referred to the SPC at any time, if remediation goals are not met, SPC referral is automatic. The following are the guidelines for instituting a remediation program:
  - i. The Program Director or his/her designee will assign a faculty member to guide the student with the remediation program. The faculty is directly responsible to the Program Director or his/her designee.
  - ii. A written plan for remediation will be established by the Program Director or his/her designee and implemented including individualized student goals, objective criteria to assess goal achievement a timeline for completion and a schedule for meeting with the faculty. After joint discussion, the student, the designated faculty and/or the Program Director will sign the plan. All meetings will be documented in writing. The student will be given a copy of the signed and dated Enclosures 1.A, 1.B and 2.
  - iii. Objective criteria for removal from remedial status will be identified in the remediation plan along with a timeline. The student must meet all criteria to be removed from remediation.
- c. The Program Director may recommend one or more of the following actions to the SPC:

- i. *Probation.* Students who have failed to meet the standards/objectives of a course, program, or established remediation plan may be recommended for probation by the SPC. The length of probation will be established on an individual basis. At the end of the probationary period, the SPC will reconvene to determine further recommendation(s). If the student has successfully met the established criteria, the student will be recommended for removal from probation. If a student fails to meet the established criteria, the SPC has the option to recommend additional probationary time, setback, or disenrollment. Criteria for probation are:
  - a. A faculty member will be assigned by the Program Director or his/her designee to guide the student with the probationary program. The faculty is directly responsible to the Program Director or his/her designee.
  - b. A written plan for the probationary period will be established and implemented including individualized student goals, objective criteria to assess goal achievement a timeline for completion and a schedule for meeting with the designated faculty (Enclosure 1.A). After joint discussion, the plan will be signed by the student, the designated faculty and the Program Director. All meetings will be documented in writing.
  - c. Objective criteria for removal from probationary status will be identified in the plan along with a timeline. The student must meet all probation criteria to be removed from probation. If removal from probation is recommended, the student's attendance at the SPC is optional.
- ii. *Setback.* Students who have failed to meet established criteria may be recommended for setback.
  - a. Students who miss a portion of the program due to illness or other problems may also be recommended for setback.
  - b. Consideration for additional time will be determined on an individual basis. The sponsoring Service/Agency must concur with the setback.
  - c. Students who are setback must meet all program requirements prior to graduation.
- iii. *Disenrollment.* Students who have failed to meet established criteria may be recommended for disenrollment. Though a probationary

period should generally precede disenrollment, it is not required and disenrollment may be recommended without prior remediation or probation at the discretion of the committee.

- a. A student should be considered for disenrollment only after reasonable attempts have been made to correct the deficiencies identified.
  - b. Students who have overall GPA's below 3.0 or grades in individual courses below required minimums may be recommended for disenrollment without a probationary period.
  - c. Students who are found to have committed serious acts of academic misconduct may be recommended for disenrollment without a remediation or probationary period.
- iv. *Leave of Absence.* Students who require a lengthy absence from academic or clinical activities and who are in good academic standing may be placed in a leave of absence status upon recommendation of the Program Chair and concurrence by the respective Service. At the Program Director's discretion, the student may not be required to appear in person before the SPC.
- a. Students who miss a significant portion of the program due to illness or other problems may also be recommended for a leave of absence.
  - b. Leave of absence will be determined on an individual basis. The sponsoring Service/Agency must concur with the leave of absence.
  - c. Students who are granted a leave of absence must meet all program requirements prior to graduation.
  - d. Upon return to academic or clinical activities, the SPC will evaluate the academic re-entry plan and adjusted timelines.

## G. **Procedures**

1. Referral to the SPC will be accomplished in the following manner (See Flow Chart):
  - a. The SPC will set a regular monthly meeting with the latitude to call a special meeting if there is an urgent case.

- b. The Program Director or Commandant will refer the student to the Chair, SPC by submitting a formal request (Enclosure 2).
- c. The Program Director or his/her designee will complete Enclosures 1.A, 1.B and 2.
- d. The Program Director or his/her designee will notify the student of referral to the SPC, have the student review Enclosure 1.A and 1.B with all supporting documentation and acknowledge through signature on Enclosure 1.B and on each piece of supporting documentation.
- e. The Program Director or his/her designee will then send the signed and dated Enclosures 1.A, 1.B & 2 with supporting documentation to either the Commandant or Chair 1 week prior to the SPC meeting.
- f. The recipient of Enclosures 1.A, 1.B & 2 (Commandant or Chair) will pass those papers on to the Brigade JAG or Representative from the Office of Brigade JAG or the OGC representative and the non-recipient (Commandant or Chair) immediately.
- g. The Commandant will notify the student of the referral to the SPC at least 72 business hours prior to the convening of the SPC using the Student Referral Form (Enclosure 3).
  - i. The student will acknowledge receipt through signature on Enclosure 3 page 2.
  - ii. This procedure will be the same if the student is on or off USU campus.
- h. The student will acknowledge the following rights through signature of Enclosure 3 page 2.
  - i. That student may challenge any member of the SPC upon presenting evidence that the member may not render a fair and impartial opinion.
  - ii. That the student may be represented before the committee by anyone other than a committee member. This may include an attorney of the individual's choosing, secured at the individual's expense, another student, or a federal government employee, predicated upon availability of such personnel.
  - iii. A copy of this policy and the signed enclosures will be given to the student. As per this policy, the student may present evidence (documentary, witness, or testimonial) relevant to the proposed action.

## **H. Conduct of an SPC**

1. Prior to the start of individual student cases, the Committee will hear updates on open and recently closed cases.
  - a. A report of all final decisions by the Dean or Associate Dean for Academic Affairs on cases from previous SPC meetings will be reported at that time.
  - b. These updates will be recorded as general meeting minutes by the Recorder, signed by the Chair and kept by the official recorder of the SPC.
2. The Chair will convene individual student cases and provide for introductions of all persons present including role, title and voting status.
3. The Brigade JAG or the OGC representative will read the student his/her rights and reiterate to those present that the meeting is administrative in nature, therefore, the formal "Rules of Evidence" do not apply and all relevant information may be considered.
4. The Program Director or their designee will present the student's record and any pertinent information and should be prepared to answer any questions posed by committee members.
5. The student will be allowed to present documentary, witness, or testimonial evidence relative to the proposed action, and should be prepared to answer any questions posed by the committee members.
  - a. The student does not have to be present for proceedings when he/she is being removed from probation.
6. After all information pertinent to the case has been presented; the SPC will hold closed deliberations for discussions and voting. The student, Program Director, and any other persons presenting evidence must leave the room during deliberations.
7. Upon completion of deliberations a motion will be made in relation to the case presented and voted upon by the members. All SPC decisions will be by vote of a *simple majority* of members present, with the exception of a recommendation for disenrollment, which requires an affirmative vote of *two-thirds* of the members present.
8. Upon completion of the SPC vote, the Chair shall:
  - a. Inform the student and Program Director of the committee's recommendations.

- b. Advise the student that the committee's action is a recommendation only.
  - c. Notify the student that she/he may appeal the recommendation in writing using Enclosure 4 within five business days from receipt of the official SPC committee report (Enclosure 5) from the Chair, SPC.
9. The Chair, with assistance from the Recorder, will:
  - a. Prepare the SPC report (Enclosure 5) outlining the findings and recommendations of the committee. In the event there is divergence among committee members, a dissenting opinion may be prepared and submitted with the committee report.
  - b. The final SPC report, all supporting documentation, student appeal materials (if applicable) and a signature page (Enclosure 6) will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs within 5 business days of the SPC if no appeal is made or within 10 business days if an appeal is being submitted.
10. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may concur with the Committee's recommendations or request other action be taken. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will return his/her decision to the SPC chair in writing within 5 business days of receiving the final SPC report.
11. The Chair will forward a signed copy of the final decision to the student and Program Director for action.
12. The student may appeal the decision to the Dean, GSN by submitting an appeal in writing, including any supporting documentation, to the Chair of the SPC within five business days from notification of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs recommendation.
13. The Dean, GSN may concur with the Associate Dean's recommendations or request other action be taken. The Dean will return his/her decision to the SPC chair in writing within 5 business days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Dean is final: no further appeal is possible.
14. Originals of all official SPC documents will be kept with the official recorder of the SPC.

#### **I. Voluntary Request for Withdrawal**

1. A request for voluntary withdrawal (enclosure 7) from a GSN academic program by a student shall be evaluated by the Program Director. A request to withdraw may be submitted at any time during the course of study and does not require action by the SPC. The student in concert with the Commandant and Program Director must coordinate such action with the sponsoring service/agency prior to submission

of such a request. The Commandant and the Program Director will counsel the student regarding his or her decision. Upon acceptance of the request by the Program Director, the letter will be forwarded through the Commandant to the Dean and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for approval.

2. Upon notification of approved voluntary withdrawal, the Commandant will contact the student's military service and make the student available for reassignment. If the student is non-military, the Commandant will notify the sponsoring agency of the withdrawal. If the student is involved in the SPC process at the time of withdrawal, the Commandant will send a copy of the withdrawal approval to the Chair, to be placed in the student's SPC file so the file may be closed out.
3. If a student is being recommended for disenrollment, they may voluntarily withdraw up until the meeting of the SPC. Once they have met the SPC for review of the disenrollment recommendation, they no longer have the option of voluntary withdrawal.

#### **J. Interim Suspension**

1. The Dean, GSN is empowered to summarily suspend any student from academic activities without prior appearance or review before the SPC if there is cause to believe suspension is necessary to protect patients and the interests of USUHS.
2. When an interim suspension is imposed, the student may request an expedited meeting of the SPC (within 1 week) if the suspension is for academic related issues. All SPC policies and procedures as stated above will apply. Usually review of suspensions for non-academic issues are the purview of the Brigade and not the SPC.

#### **K. Graduation**

1. The Chair, SPC reviews all students presented for graduation to certify that the students do not have any uncompleted SPC requirements. A list of proposed graduating students will be sent to the Chair, SPC by the GSN Registrar at least one month prior to graduation. The list will be returned to the Registrar with a memo stating which (if any) students have outstanding issues and what needs to be done to resolve these issues prior to graduation. All SPC processes as stated above apply to unresolved SPC issues for graduation.

#### **L. Definitions**

1. *Student Promotions Committee (SPC)*: An advisory body to the Dean and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, GSN, whose purpose is to provide an objective review of a student's record and performance and make recommendations as to the status of that student. Recommendations may include a return to full

student status, probation, setback, or dismissal.

2. *Program Director*: As used in this Policy & Precedent Statement, this means the Director of a Graduate School of Nursing program.
3. *Regular Student Status*: Status of a student who is progressing satisfactorily in their program of study.
4. *Academic Jeopardy Letter*: At the discretion of the Program Director a letter will be presented to a student who is not doing well in a course or program, identifying the specific issues or deficiencies that the student needs to address in order to appropriately progress in their program (i.e. academic and/or clinical performance).
5. *Remediation Program*: A process or plan of corrective actions designed to resolve academic or clinical deficiencies.
6. *Remediation Period*: The duration of the remediation program as described in the remediation plan.
7. *Probation*: A period of time and a designated status of students in academic jeopardy wherein the student must meet a certain set of conditions and / or attain a designated status within a prescribed time period to be allowed to continue in their academic or clinical program.
8. *Leave of Absence*: An approved temporary absence of a student from all academic activities including, but not limited to, classes, labs, clinical rotations and student activities.
9. *Setback*: An opportunity to repeat a block of study resulting in postponement of graduation.
10. *Interim Suspension*: An approved temporary removal of a student from all academic activities including, but not limited to, classes, labs, clinical rotations and student activities.
11. *Disenrollment*: Formal dismissal from the University and termination of student status.

**M. This Academic Policy Statement is effective upon USU review and ASD posting.**

**CAROL ROMANO, PhD RN BC NEA FAAN FACMI  
Dean and Professor**

**Enclosures**

Institution of Remedial/Probation Program  
Attachments RE: Institution of Remedial/Probation Program  
Request for Convening the Student Promotions Committee  
Student Promotions Committee Student Referral Form  
Student Promotions Committee Report Form  
Student Notification of the Appeals Process  
Associate Dean Signature Page  
Student Request for Voluntary Withdrawal Example Letter

**Appendices:**

Appendix A-Timelines/Sequence of Events  
Appendix B – Flow Chart

**P&P Approved by GSN All Faculty: 02 June 2000  
Revised and Approved by GSN All Faculty: 22 October 2012  
APS Revised and Approved by GSN All Faculty:**

## Appendix A

### Timelines/Sequence of Events

Steps	Item	Person Responsible	Forms	Timeline
1	Student Referral	PD, Advisor or Commandant	Encl 2	Initiation
2	Meeting Date & Time	Chair SPC		
3	Student Referral Form	ADSA, Faculty, CSD	Encl 3	At least 72 hours prior to meeting
4	Convene meeting	Chair, SPC		
5	SPC Report/Minutes	Chair SPC	Encl 5	5 days of meeting
6	Student Appeal	Student	Encl 4	5 days of receipt of SPC report/Minutes
7	Assoc Dean Signature Page	ADAA to SPC Chair	Encl 6	5 days of receipt of SPC report/Minutes
8	Assoc Dean Signature Page	SPC Chair to PD & Student		Upon receipt of Signature page
9	Appeal to Dean	Student		5 days of receipt of Signature page
10	Dean's Decision	Dean		5 days of receipt of student appeal

PD: Program Director

CSD: Clinical Site Director

ADSA: Associate Dean, Student Affairs (Commandant),

ADAA: Associate Dean, Academic Affairs

Days = Business Days

**Appendix B**  
**Simple Flow Chart**

**Student Promotions Committee (SPC) Flowchart**

