PURDUE UNIVERSITY | University Senate

To:	The University Senate
From:	Educational Policy Committee
Subject:	Academic Regulations Update for Academic Probation and Deficiency Policies
Reference:	[Academic Regulations: Academic Probation and Deficiency](#) Senate Document 13-11
Disposition:	University Senate for Discussion and Adoption

Rationale: The proposed changes to the language in the Academic Regulations stem from the work of the Probation Team (membership from Academic Advising, Academic Success Center, Office of the Dean of Students, Summer Programs, and Teaching and Learning). This Team has been engaged in several probation-related projects since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Key aspects of the work have been 1) collecting scholarly references related to probation/dismissal best practices and 2) reviewing themes from existing and newly launched surveys (by members of the Team) to students who have been on probation at least once during their course of study at Purdue University.

Adjusting to college is a process that involves determining if a major is indeed a good fit, navigating the intellectual demands of college, building a foundation to navigate the personal matters of well-being that naturally occur in a college environment, and forming a new community of support. The Probation Team has learned that many students who spend at least once semester on probation report a whole range of challenging life events and mental and physical health issues that interfered with their ability to focus on their academic performance and success.

As currently stated in Purdue's Academic Regulations [1], a student shall be placed on "academic probation" if the fall or spring semester cumulative GPA is less than a 2.0. The policy also outlines the "dropping of a student for academic deficiency" if both their semester and cumulative GPAs are less than a 2.0. The language used in the existing policy is not affirming or encouraging of students and does not address the evidence-based reality of what factors generally contribute to students' experience of probation or dropped status.

The current proposal indicates the need for Purdue to update the language of the existing policies to be aligned with best practices and existing scholarly literature. The roadblocks of life that students experience may temporarily shift their focus from academics to other life domains, but they are not an indication that students are deficient in their ability to pursue a Purdue education.

Current research [2] addresses the racial and cultural need to adjust language because the "antiquated norm of adhering to a criminal justice lexicon in one of our key academic standards that define student success impacts the students' sense of belonging and perceived ability to thrive as learners and future leaders." Studies have also indicated that [3, 4] placement on academic probation negatively affects the 4-year graduation rate. Students who have previously navigated academics in a successful manner may feel "surprised, disappointed, ashamed and/or stigmatized when learning that they could be one semester away from academic dismissal." These feelings further interfere with the perception that students can succeed or belong in college, which may reduce on-time graduation.

Research [5] has indicated that making an investment to assist enrolled students as they navigate a low GPA to ensure graduation is a worthwhile investment. Providing tools for students to understand what is needed for success and evaluating changes needed to earn this success is key. It may be that changing the language around this situation can be considered a university-level of support during a period that is often filled with dread. The question has been posed [6] whether the desired outcome for placing a student on academic probation is being achieved or rather undermining the trajectory of the student's road becoming a college-educated citizen.

Based on the scholarly literature and data collected from Purdue students on probation, the Probation Team argues that replacing the words "probation" and "deficiency" may improve the success of students who experience temporary roadblocks that interfere with their academic journeys.

Proposal: The University Senate revises the Academic Regulations and Procedures from the original policy on the left, to the policy on the right, in three areas:

- Part A: Academic Probation
- Part B: Dropping of Students for Academic Deficiency
- Part C: Readmission

Changes are bolded and highlighted. The revised regulation shall become effective for Fall 2023.

EXISTING LANGUAGE	NEW LANGUAGE
Header: Academic Probation	Header: Academic **Notice**
A. A student at Purdue University shall be placed on academic probation if his/her fall or spring semester or cumulative GPA at the end of any fall or spring semester is less than a 2.0.	A. A student at Purdue University shall be placed on academic **notice if the student's** fall or spring semester or overall or cumulative GPA at the end of any fall or spring semester is less than a 2.0.
• A student on academic probation shall be removed from that standing at the end of the first subsequent fall or spring semester in which he/she achieves semester and cumulative GPAs equal to or greater than 2.0.	• A student on academic **notice** shall be removed from that standing at the end of the first subsequent fall or spring semester in which **the student** achieves semester and overall GPAs equal to or greater than 2.0.
• Any grade change due to a reporting error will result in a recalculation of the GPA and determination of probation standing.	• Any grade change due to a reporting error will result in a recalculation of the GPA and determination of notice standing.
• Academic standing will not be assessed in summer sessions.	• Academic standing will not be assessed in summer sessions.

EXISTING LANGUAGE	NEW LANGUAGE
Header: Dropping of Students for Academic Deficiency	Header: **Students Separated from the University Due to Academics**
B. A student on academic probation shall be dropped from the University at the close of any fall or spring semester in which his/her semester and cumulative GPA is less than a 2.0.	B. A student on academic **notice shall be separated** from the University at the close of any fall or spring semester in which **the student's** semester and overall GPA is less than a 2.0.
• Any grade change due to a reporting error will result in a recalculation of the GPA and determination of drop status.	• Any grade change due to a reporting error will result in a recalculation of the GPA and

	determination of **academic separation** status.

Existing Language	New Language
Header: Readmission	Header: Readmission
C. A student who is academically dropped from the University for the first time is not eligible to enroll for at least one fall or spring semester. A student who is academically dropped for the second time is not eligible to enroll for at least one year.	C. A student who is academically **separated from the University for academic reasons** for the first time is not eligible to enroll for at least one fall or spring semester. A student who is **separated from the University a second time for academic reasons** is not eligible to enroll for at least one year.
• A student dropped by this rule must apply to the appropriate office or readmission committee for the Purdue campus of choice. A fee is assessed for processing the readmission application (Board of Trustees Minutes, June 5-6, 1970). Readmission is not guaranteed, but any student who gains readmission is readmitted on probation and is subject to stipulations in effect as a condition of readmission. (For more detailed information about readmission, visit the following web site: http://www.admissions.purdue.edu/readmission/)	• A student **separated** by this rule must apply to the appropriate office or readmission committee for the Purdue campus of choice. A fee is assessed for processing the readmission application (Board of Trustees Minutes, June 5-6, 1970). Readmission is not guaranteed, but any student who gains readmission is readmitted on **academic notice** and is subject to stipulations in effect as a condition of readmission. (**For more detailed information about readmission, see** http://www.admissions.purdue.edu/readmission/)

Works Cited

1. Academic Regulations, Section on Academic Probation and Deficiency: https://catalog.purdue.edu/content.php?catoid=13&navoid=15965#academic-probation-and-deficiency

2. Boretz, E., Gunn, K. S., & La Pietra, D. (2021). "Toward a Racially and Culturally Sensitive Renaming of 'Academic Probation.'" White Paper, California State University, Fullerton.

      http://itwebstg.fullerton.edu/aac/Academic%20Notice%20White%20Paper%20
2021.pdf

3. Bowman, N. A. (March, 23, 2022). "The Problems with Academic Probation."
   Inside Higher Education.
   https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2022/03/23/how-fix-problems-
   academic-probation-opinion

4. Bowman, N. A., & Jang, N. (2022). "What is the purpose of academic probation?
   Its substantial negative effects on four-year graduation." *Research in Higher
   Education*, 1-27. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11162-022-09676-w

5. Sneyers, E. & De Witte, K. (2018). "Interventions in higher education and their
   effect on student success: a meta-analysis." *Educational Review*, 208-228.
   https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00131911.2017.1300874

6. Steele, D. (April 18, 2022). "A Positive Change for a Negative Label." *Inside
   Higher Education.*
   http://itwebstg.fullerton.edu/aac/Academic%20Notice%20White%20Paper%20
   2021.pdf

Committee Votes:

For:	Against:	Abstained:	Absent:
Faculty	None	**Advisors**	**Faculty**
Thomas Brush		Jeffery Stefancic	Burton Lee Artz
Todor Cooklev			Steven Scott
Jennifer Freeman			Jeffrey X. Watt
Eric Kvam (chair)			
Erik Otárola-Castillo			**Students**
Alice Pawley			Elli DiDonna
Antônio Sá Barreto			Izzy Weber
John Sheffield			
Thomas Siegmund			
Howard Sypher			
Advisors			
Jeff Elliott			
Keith Gehres			
Jenna Rickus			

Non-voting Ex-Officio members:

Nathan Engelberth (present)
John Pearson (not present)