

Academic Policies

The following university academic procedures, policies, and guidelines apply to all graduate students and all institution sessions. Students are responsible for determining their academic programs and for meeting all degree requirements. Clarification of any requirements for a master's degree or advanced certificate may be obtained from the academic adviser, department chair, or academic dean. Requirements and programs are subject to change, and students must be aware of current regulations.

Academic Calendar

Students should consult the online [Buffalo State calendars](#)—both the Administrative Calendar and the Academic Calendar—for important dates, deadlines, term start and end dates, course registration and withdrawal dates, graduation application deadlines, all-university events, and student events.

Academic Misconduct

Academic Standards Office

Twin Rise South Wing 510

716-878-5222

academicstandards.buffalostate.edu

All students are expected to display honesty and integrity in completing course requirements and university academic regulations. "Academic misconduct" refers to any form of plagiarism, fraud, or cheating in connection with academic coursework and is inconsistent with the aims and goals of Buffalo State University.

Examples of academic misconduct includes but is not limited to the following:

- **Aiding in academic dishonesty.** Knowingly taking action that allows another student to engage in an act of academic dishonesty including but not limited to completing an examination or assignment for another student or stealing an examination or completed assignment for another student.
- **Cheating.** Includes but is not limited to (1) use of any assistance not authorized by the course instructor(s) in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the course instructor(s) in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; or (3) stealing tests or other academic material belonging to the course instructor(s).
- **Falsifying academic materials.** Fabricating laboratory materials, notes, reports, or any forms of computer data; forging an instructor's name or initials; resubmitting an examination or assignment for reevaluation that has been altered without the instructor's authorization; or submitting a report, paper, materials, computer data, or examination (or any considerable part thereof) prepared by any person other than the student responsible for the assignment.
- **Misrepresenting documents.** Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any university or official document, record, or instrument of identification.
- **Plagiarizing.** Copying or receiving material from any source and submitting that material as one's own, without acknowledging and citing the particular debts to the source (quotations, paraphrases, basic ideas), or in any other manner representing the work of another as one's own.
- **Purchasing academic assignments.** Purchasing an academic assignment intended for submission in fulfillment of any course or academic program requirement.
- **Selling academic assignments.** Selling or offering for sale any academic assignment to any person enrolled at Buffalo State. No person shall offer any inappropriate assistance in the preparation, research, or writing of any

assignment, which the seller knows, or has reason to believe, is intended for submission in fulfillment of any course or academic program requirement.

- **Submitting previously submitted work.** Submitting academically required material that has been previously submitted, in whole or in substantial part, without prior and expressed consent of the instructor.

Faculty may require students to use textual similarity detection software (e.g. [Turnitin.com](https://turnitin.com)) in courses at Buffalo State University. This software may be used as an educational tool to assist students in learning how to properly cite resources, decrease instances of academic misconduct, or assist in the identification of acts of academic misconduct.

Students are to refer to the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) for the full policy that includes statements on notification, due process, and timeliness; composition of Academic Misconduct Committee; resolution of academic misconduct allegations; and the procedures for resolving an allegation of academic misconduct including potential outcomes. A statement outlining formal university policies and procedures to be followed in cases of alleged academic misconduct are available in each academic dean's office, in the Academic Standards Office, and in the Student Leadership and Engagement Office. Cases of severe infractions of acceptable standards may be brought before the Academic Misconduct Committee and may result in academic dismissal.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

All graduate students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (4.0 scale). A student is automatically placed on academic probation if the GPA falls below 3.0.

Matriculated full-time students are given one semester, and matriculated part-time students are given 9 credit hours to achieve a 3.0 GPA, provided total credit hours do not exceed the degree program by more than 6 credits. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA within the specified time results in academic dismissal. In addition, failure to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation results in academic dismissal.

Premajor (undeclared) students must have a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12 or more credit hours. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12 or more credit hours of graduate-level coursework results in academic dismissal. Students with fewer than 12 credit hours are automatically placed on academic probation should the GPA fall below 3.0. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12 credit hours results in academic dismissal. In addition, failure to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation results in academic dismissal.

After being placed on academic probation, nondegree students have until the completion of the next semester in which they are enrolled to achieve a minimum 3.0 GPA. Failure to do so renders a student ineligible for further registration.

Graduate students who have been academically dismissed must wait one full year from the time of dismissal before applying for readmission.

Graduate students may be readmitted to the university only once after an academic dismissal. If readmitted, a student automatically returns to academic probation should the cumulative GPA fall below 3.0. The student then has one full-time semester or 9 credits of part-time study to achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA and must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation. Failure to do so results in final academic dismissal.

Graduate students also may be dismissed from Buffalo State for determination of an academic misconduct offense.

Academic probation may also affect financial aid eligibility. Graduate students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards to receive federal financial aid. For more information contact the Financial Aid office (Moot 230, finaid@buffalostate.edu, 716-878-4902), or visit the [Financial Aid website](#).

Alternative Methods of Earning Credit

Course by Contract

Students who have been accepted to a graduate degree program and are in good standing may request to take a course by contract by contacting the department offering the course. The instructor must be a member of the university's graduate faculty, and the course must be among those already approved by the university. Courses may be taken by contract only if they are not offered in the regular schedule during the semester involved or if all course sections are filled and the student needs the course to graduate. Under this option, a graduate faculty member provides the student with a course outline, bibliography, and a statement of responsibilities and dates by which these are to be met. The number of student-instructor conferences, the type of evaluation, and the culminating activity are determined by the faculty member and the student prior to registration for the course. These requirements must be filed with the department chair. Before initiating a graduate course by contract, the student must register for the course using the [Individual Graduate Study Application form](#). This form must be signed by the instructor, the department chair, and the school dean prior to the Individual Study Application [deadline](#).

Course Challenge

A course challenge may be used to request university credit for a Buffalo State course when the course objectives and student learning outcomes have been previously met. Each department determines whether credit for a successful course challenge may be applied to the major.

The following rules apply:

1. A student must be matriculated to challenge a course.
2. Department determines challenge method, which may include but is not limited to examination, portfolio, performance, or presentation.
3. No credit will be awarded when the challenged course duplicates a course for which credit has already been earned (except in a specific case of repeatable course), a course for which a grade has already been earned, or a course in which a student is currently enrolled.
4. Credit earned will be recorded as credit (CR) only rather than as a grade.
5. A student may not receive more than 6 graduate credits through course challenge.
6. Course challenges for awarding micro-credentials are to be evaluated on a case by-case basis at the discretion of the awarding department/school.

Cross Registration

The SUNY Cross-Registration Agreement is for active matriculated graduate-level students who wish to cross-register at another SUNY campus. Cross-Registration is available in fall and spring semesters and on a limited basis in summer and J-term. Transcripts are forwarded automatically to Buffalo State at the end of the semester. Courses are recorded as credits earned (credit hours count toward program completion and final grades count in cumulative GPA). Students participating in cross-registration at another SUNY college or university are charged tuition and fees by Buffalo State. Cross-registration eligibility is determined through an application process.

Detailed information about cross-registration can be on the [Registrar's website](#).

Independent Study (XXX 590)

Independent study provides an opportunity for a student to pursue a topic that may be covered only briefly or not at all in a regular course offering. Independent study is never a substitute for a regular course.

Independent study may be offered by any member of the university's graduate faculty. All independent study is listed by the appropriate content area prefix and the number 590 (e.g., CRJ 590). A maximum of 6 credit hours of independent study may be included in a master's degree program. Students must register for graduate-level independent study by completing the Individual Graduate Study Application. The application must include a written paragraph describing the proposed course, including the purpose, objectives, method of instruction (e.g., readings, individual consultations with instructor, etc.), and method of evaluation (e.g., research paper, examination, etc.). The application must be signed by the instructor, the department chair, and the school dean by the Individual Study Application deadline.

Internship (XXX 688)

An internship is a credit-bearing applied learning experience where a student receives structured workplace activities that align with the major or area of interest. The minimum required GPA for a graduate student to register for an internship course is 3.00.

Topics Courses (XXX 587/687)

Special topics courses provide the opportunity for in-depth study and examination of rapidly and significantly changing disciplinary issues, topics, or practices, and may be used to accommodate requests of external agencies or the specialized resources of visiting faculty members. A maximum of 6 credit hours of special topics may be included in a master's degree program.

Workshops (XXX 594), Conferences (XXX 596), and Micro-courses (XXX 598)

Workshops, conferences, and micro-courses are graduate courses offered—at variable times and places—on particular themes outside the usual schedule of classes. These courses also carry variable credit. Special topics emphasize an in-depth examination of rapidly and significantly changing disciplinary issues, topics, or practices. Workshops emphasize process and implementation of theory, and they involve participants in the accomplishment of individualized objectives on a specific theme. Conferences emphasize a unique, one-time experience on a given theme. Micro-courses offer intensive instruction with a specific, limited objective. A maximum of 6 credit hours of workshops, conferences, and micro-courses may be included in a master's degree program.

Assessment of Student Learning

Buffalo State is committed to providing high-quality educational experiences to its students through a process of assessment and continuous improvement. Assessment of student learning and use of assessment results are core strategies used to continuously improve the effectiveness of all academic and support programs offered to students. Assessment processes are ongoing, systematic, and involve the use of direct and indirect sources of evidence that provide opportunities to recognize educational trends and develop a sound basis for academic planning. For more information, please visit the Institutional Research, Effectiveness, Planning, and Strategy Office in CLEV 519.

Auditing Courses

Persons may audit or take courses without earning credit on a space-available basis with the approval of the course instructor. The auditor's role beyond attending the course, such as completing assignments, receiving instructor feedback, and taking exams, should be agreed upon with the instructor but at no time will the student receive a grade in the audited course nor be charged tuition for the course. Non-degree-seeking auditor may be required to pay fees that could include, but are not limited to, a registration fee, a class or lab fee, and a fee to cover technology and library use on campus. All students wishing to audit a course must complete a Permission to Audit a Course form. Additionally, non-matriculated students must first complete an application process through the Admissions office. Additional guidelines, requirements, and forms can be found on the Registrar's website before being enrolled.

Buffalo State Student Email

Students are required to check their Buffalo State email accounts regularly, especially during registration. Students on a waitlist should check their Buffalo State email accounts at least daily. Email notifications are sent when a seat becomes available. All correspondence to faculty members or university staff should be sent from your Buffalo State student email account. The Student Email Policy is available on the [Dean of Students website](#).

Course Load

1. Full-time status: Full-time academic status typically consists of a course load of 9 graduate-level credit hours per semester. Some departments, though, require that students take more credits for accreditation purposes (check with your department).
2. Graduate assistants: Full-time academic status for graduate assistants is 6–9 graduate-level credit hours per semester. Final assignments are determined by the department supervising the GA appointment.
3. Last semester of study: Full-time academic status is granted to students in their final semester of study if they are working full-time on a master's project or master's thesis. Advisers and department chairs must verify the student's workload in these cases.
4. Finances: In determining billing status, students pay tuition based on the number of registered credits—up to 12 credits.
5. Financial Aid: To be eligible for financial aid, students must be enrolled as matriculated students in an eligible program of study. Other guidelines vary depending on the type of aid. Various state and federal financial aid programs require that students be registered for 12 graduate credits; loans typically do not. Students should contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) or [Graduate Studies](#) for details and personalized counseling.
6. It is advisable for fully employed part-time students registered in the fall and spring semester to limit themselves to a maximum of two courses each semester.

Academic status designation does not guarantee eligibility for financial aid. Students should consult the [Financial Aid Office](#) for eligibility guidelines.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

To earn a graduate degree or certificate, a student must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B grade) on a 4.0 scale in all graduate courses completed at the university. Transfer credits are not included in grade point average. Undergraduate coursework completed while working toward the graduate degree is not included in the average but is shown on the transcript. Grades received for coursework completed at another institution through cross registration are included in the average.

At the graduate level, grades of C (2.0) or higher may be applied toward credit requirements for a master's degree. Typically, no more than 9 credit hours with a grade of C can be accepted toward a master's degree, and some degree programs permit even fewer than 9 credit hours of C work. Grades of C– (1.67) or lower are not used to satisfy degree requirements. Grades of B– or lower may be repeated for a better grade.

Grading

The university uses letter grades to indicate the status of a student at the completion of a course. All grades are awarded at the sole discretion of the faculty member responsible for the course. A grade must be submitted for every student on the course roster at the end of the semester. Students will be apprised of evaluation policies in each class at the beginning of every semester. This information also will include notification, where appropriate, that the plus/minus grading system will be used as determined by the instructor. Instructors will inform students of their standing in each course by the end of the ninth week of the semester, or two-thirds of a Summer Session or January Term. Mid-term

grades are available in Degree Works and Banner when submitted by the instructor. Questions regarding grading policies or an individual grade received in a particular course should be addressed to the instructor or to the department chair.

Grading System

Letter Grade	Description
A	Superior
A-	Above Average
B+	Above Average
B	Average (required minimum cumulative GPA)
B-	Below required average, may be used to meet degree requirements
C+	Below required average, may be used to meet degree requirements
C	Below required average, may be used to meet degree requirements
C-	Below required average, may not be used to meet degree requirements
D+	Below required average, may not be used to meet degree requirements
D	Below required average, may not be used to meet degree requirements
E	Failure or unofficial withdrawal
EV	Failure, never attended
S	Satisfactory
SD	Satisfactory with Distinction (graduate thesis only)
U	Unsatisfactory

The following letters are used to indicate status:

Letter Grade	Description
I	Incomplete

Letter Grade	Description
IP	In progress
N	Grade Delayed
NR	Grade not required
X	Grade not submitted
W	Withdrawal

Change of Grade

In case of a clerical error or other extenuating circumstance resulting in an incorrect grade, a request for a grade change must be submitted according to the following policies and procedures. This policy applies to both undergraduate and graduate students. This policy does not apply to incomplete (I), in-process (IP), grade delayed (N), grade not submitted (X), or withdrawal (W) grades. Appropriate reasons for grade changes may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Demonstrable arithmetic, editing, or factual error in calculating the grade.
2. Omission of assignments or parts of assignments in calculating the grade.
3. A grade demonstrably based on impermissible factors unrelated to student performance, such as discrimination, bias, retaliation, or retribution.

Inappropriate reasons for grade changes may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Saving a student from some academic penalty such as dismissal, probation, warning, or academic integrity problem.
2. Enabling a student to graduate.
3. Enabling a student to maintain academic eligibility for financial aid.
4. Enabling a student to graduate with academic honors or meet some other established minima.
5. Personal issues unrelated to academics.
6. Enabling a student to maintain academic eligibility for athletics or any other co-curricular activity.
7. Managing enrollment levels in order to preserve programs or revenue, or to increase retention rates.

Once a student has completed a degree, a final average for that degree is computed. Courses from that degree may not be repeated and that final average is not affected by any subsequent coursework at Buffalo State. No changes will be permitted after a student's degree is conferred except to correct a documented university error.

Explanation of Grades

S (Satisfactory), and U (Unsatisfactory) grades are reserved for graduate theses, student teaching or other field experience that is not readily evaluated by the normal letter grades and basic skills courses.

SD (Satisfactory with Distinction) is reserved for graduate theses. S, SD and U grades may be given only for courses so designated.

P (Pass) and F (Fail) grades are given for undergraduate courses taken on a pass-fail basis. They may not be used for graduate coursework.

W (Withdrawal) grades may be submitted only when a student has officially withdrawn from a course.

I (Incomplete) grades may be submitted only when the department chair or program coordinator has been properly notified. An instructor may submit a grade of I (Incomplete) only when circumstances leading to a student's failure to complete course requirements are known to be beyond the student's control (e.g., serious illness or unavailability of material). The student must complete course requirements, and the instructor must submit a grade change by the 10th week of the following spring or fall semester or the grade automatically converts to an E (Failure). In the event that the instructor who granted the I grade is unable to evaluate whether the student has fulfilled the course requirements during the stipulated time period, the chair or program coordinator takes responsibility for evaluating the student's work and changing the grade.

IP (In Progress) grades are reserved for graduate students who have not completed their thesis or project requirements. When work is completed, the instructor submits a grade change, replacing the IP grade with a final grade. A grade of N (Grade Delayed) may not be submitted for a thesis or project.

N (Grade Delayed) grades may be submitted in the case of research work or internship that carries over from one semester to another and when it is necessary to delay grading to a subsequent semester. N grades may be submitted only with the permission of the department chair or program coordinator. A grade of N (Grade Delayed) may not be used for a graduate thesis or project course. When the work is completed, the instructor submits a grade change, replacing the N with a final grade.

NR (Not Required) grades must be submitted for any Thesis/Project Continuation (721) or Thesis/Project Extended (722) course.

Repeating Graduate Courses

A student may repeat a given graduate course once for which a B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, E, EV, F, or U grade was earned. The course must be repeated in the same grading mode as the first attempt and have the same prefix, number, and credit. The repeated course must be taken at Buffalo State. When a course is repeated, only the higher grade earned and associated credit hours will count toward the GPA.

Repeating Courses Over Six Years

All coursework and degree requirements must be completed within a six-year period beginning with a student's matriculation term into their graduate program.

Courses completed more than six years preceding a student's graduation, regardless of grade earned, cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements unless a waiver is approved by the adviser and department chair. Without a waiver, such courses must be repeated to be applied to the degree requirements, and only the grade and credit hours earned on the last attempt will apply to the GPA and degree or certificate program requirements.

All grades remain on the permanent record. A passing grade will not replace a U grade, since the U is not computed in the GPA. Courses repeated outside of the parameters listed above will not be used in the calculation of the cumulative GPA, and the credit hours will not be applied to degree or certificate program requirements.

Courses with letter grades A through B cannot be repeated. Illegally repeated courses are not used to calculate the cumulative GPA.

Policies regarding practicum courses may differ. Contact the academic department.

Repeating courses can affect financial aid. Contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) for the current policy.

Once a student has completed a master’s degree or certificate of advanced study, a final average for that degree or certificate is computed. Courses for that degree or certificate may not be repeated, and that final average is not affected by any subsequent coursework completed at Buffalo State.

Graduate Certificate Programs

Buffalo State offers various graduate certificate programs. All programs are registered with the New York State Education Department as "Advanced Certificate" programs. The programs are offered and delivered by Buffalo State as Advanced Graduate Certificate or Certificate of Advanced Study. As required by NYS regulation, all graduate course work applicable to any of these certificate programs must be applicable to one or more graduate degree programs offered by Buffalo State.

Credit Requirement

Credit requirements for graduate certificate programs vary greatly and are established in program design at the time of establishment and registration. Generally, the Advanced Graduate Certificate requires in the range of 12–21 graduate credits; and the Certificate of Advanced Study, generally involving study beyond the master’s level, requires 15–43 graduate credits beyond the baccalaureate degree.

Program Regulations

Individual graduate certificate programs may include various additional requirements beyond those stated here. The official curriculum as detailed in the Graduate Catalog should always be examined to determine if additional requirements exist within the graduate certificate program.

Residence Study Requirements

For graduate certificate programs, at least 50 percent of the total credits must be completed through study at Buffalo State. Departments reserve the right to require more than 50 percent be completed through study at Buffalo State.

Statute of Limitations and Advanced Standing

All requirements for the certificate must be completed within six calendar years from the date of initial registration in the program. Prior course work completed and presented by the student for advanced standing in the program at the point of admission shall be subject to review and approval for inclusion by action of the program faculty.

Graduate Unit of Credit (Credit Hour)

The semester hour is the unit of course credit. It represents completion of one 50-minute class period per week for one semester. A course having three class periods of direct instruction per week will earn 3 semester hours of credit. Studio and laboratory classes usually earn 1 credit for each 2-3 hours of attendance unless otherwise indicated. The university expects student preparation of two hours for each hour in class.

Quality Point System

The quality point system is used for determining GPAs, as follows:

Letter Grade	Description
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33

B	3.0
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.0
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.0
E	0.0
EV	0.0

No other letters carry quality point value.

Term GPA

A student's term GPA is computed by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of credit hours attempted in one semester. Only grades carrying quality points are included. For example, consider a student with the following courses and grades at the end of a semester.

Course	Grade	Credit	Quality Point Value	Points
CRJ 602	B+	3	(x 3.33)	9.99
EDU 640	A	3	(x 4)	12.00
PSC 605	C+	3	(x 2.33)	6.99
SOC 501	A-	3	(x 3.67)	11.01
Total		12		39.99

The student has attempted 12 credit hours, successfully completed 12, and earned 39.99 quality points. The formula for computing this student's term average follows: $39.99 / 12 = 3.33$

$(\text{Term Quality Points} / \text{Term Credit Hours}) = (\text{Term GPA})$

Leave of Absence, Withdrawal from University

The Application for Leave of Absence/Withdrawal from University form is available online on the at the [Registrar's website](#).

Students should discuss this decision with their academic or professional advisor. Tuition refunds, if applicable, will be made on a prorated basis as outlined for that semester. Financial aid recipients who withdraw or take a leave of absence may owe a refund of aid they received for the semester. For additional information about financial aid, please visit the [Financial Aid Office](#) in Moot Hall 230.

Leave of Absence

Matriculated graduate students who wish to leave the university for academic, financial, medical, military, or personal reasons may be granted a leave of absence (LOA) for the fall and spring semesters only. A LOA is a temporary interruption in a student's program of study. A LOA cannot exceed 180 days in any 12-month period and may have a serious impact on a student's financial aid. Any student who received financial aid and is considering a LOA should consult with the Financial Aid Office to determine how their aid will be affected (e.g., grace period, repayment, failure to return as stipulated, etc.) prior to the LOA approval. In accordance with federal regulations, 34 CFR 668.22 (d), the following criteria outlines the requirements to process an approved LOA:

- The student must submit a completed Leave of Absence form for approval. The form must state the reason(s) for the LOA request. A LOA cannot be granted for academic reasons (i.e. to keep a student from failing).
 - When a student submits a leave of absence before the start of a semester, the leave will start on the first day of the next semester (fall or spring).
 - When a student wishes to take a leave of absence during a semester already in progress, they must submit the paperwork no later than the last day to drop without financial penalty. No leaves of absence will be granted after that date.
 - Retroactive leave of absence requests will not be approved.
 - Students can automatically remove their leave of absence by registering for the semester in which they had originally planned to take a leave or for the following semester after the approved leave of absence.
- There must be reasonable expectation that the student will return from LOA. A student granted a LOA is not to be considered withdrawn and no return of Title IV calculation is required.
 - Student borrowers are given a six-month grace period on most types of federal loans starting at the date enrollment ceases. During this time, lenders will treat the borrower's loans as if the borrower were still enrolled in school full-time
 - Once a grace period is used on a specific loan, it will not be given again.
 - At the end of this six-month grace period, the student will be required to enter repayment on their federal educational loans until they return to school. However, deferment or forbearance options may be available if the student makes a request to their lender.
- A student returning from a LOA must resume training at the same point in the academic program that they began the LOA.
- Students who change their majors when they return will be required to meet the curriculum of the new program in place at the time of their return.
- If a student does not register for classes within the 180 days requirement, the student is considered to have ceased attendance from the institution, and a title IV return of funds calculation is required if the student received federal aid.
- When a student returns from a LOA, the institution may not assess the student any additional institutional charges relative to reinstatement.
 - Students on an approved leave of absence who fail to return (for any reason) will be inactivated at the end of the following semester (fall or spring) and must apply for readmission to the university when they are interested in resuming their progress toward a degree.
 - Students who are not enrolled for three consecutive semesters will be readmitted using the catalog year of their readmittance.
- Students who do not register for courses for the semester after their leave expires will be deactivated as students and must apply for readmission to the University when they are interested in resuming their progress toward a degree.

- Upon return from a leave of absence, students will be allowed to complete the program requirements in place at the time they took the leave of absence. Students should seek financial aid eligibility consultation and academic advisement before registering for courses for their return semester.

Withdrawal from University

To maintain good academic standing and eligibility for readmission to the university, students finding it necessary to withdraw must do so officially. Failure to file for withdrawal will result in the recording of an E grade in each course in which the student is registered. Students withdrawing officially with no outstanding obligations or commitments to the university are considered to be in good academic standing.

Microcredentials

Microcredentials verify, validate, and attest that specific skills and/or competencies have been achieved and are endorsed by the issuing institution, having been developed through established faculty governance processes and designed to be meaningful and high quality. SUNY Buffalo State recognizes four types of microcredentials which can be credit or non-credit bearing and stackable.

1. **Curricular Microcredentials:** Curricular microcredentials involve minimally 1 credit hour and no more than 15 credit hours, and may combine credit-bearing courses and non-credit-bearing activities. These microcredentials must be reviewed and approved through the regular process of curriculum approval for their level. These microcredentials may be awarded and found on a transcript or co-curricular document.
2. **Professional Pathways:** Mapped to skills and competencies desired in a particular professional field, these pathways generally include academic courses and experiential learning. Often they will be interdisciplinary. Specific academic assignments will be identified in each course that map to the skills and competencies identified for the particular professional field.
3. **Skill and Competency Badges:** Offered to current students and complementing the curriculum, these are smaller badges that help earners obtain and demonstrate skills. These badges can be stand-alone or built into a course.
4. **Continuing Education Badges:** Used for lifelong learning, professional training in collaboration with employers, or a smaller version of a larger graduate or certificate program.

Anyone who is eligible to take the required credit or non-credit courses/programs or engage in the required co-curricular activities may earn a microcredential. At the discretion of the faculty, the eligibility requirements might include a minimum GPA or other criteria for matriculated students, and/or an application process for non-matriculated students. Microcredentials are awarded upon successful completion of the specific requirements for that credential. Microcredentials have clear, measurable outcomes, assessments aligned to the outcomes, and evidence of mastery of the outcomes through reliable and valid assessments. Only credit bearing microcredentials may be stacked for credit. SUNY Buffalo State microcredentials may or may not be transferable to other campuses. Verification of successful completion of a microcredential may result in a grade within a course or a notation of satisfactory completion.

Notification of Rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the university receives a request for access. A student should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The university official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place

where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the university official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. A student who wishes to ask the university to amend a record should write the university official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the university decides not to amend the record as requested, the university will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the university discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The university discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the university has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using university employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the University Council; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks; and National Student Clearinghouse officials. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the university. Upon request, the university also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

Buffalo State hereby designates the following categories of student information as public or directory information. Such information may be disclosed by the institution for any purpose, at its discretion.

- A. Name, address, electronic mail address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time), class level, and academic adviser.
 - B. Most recent educational agency or institution attended; major field of study; degrees, honors, and awards received.
 - C. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, date and place of birth, photographs. Currently enrolled students may withhold disclosure of any category of information under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. To withhold disclosure, written notification must be received by September 15 in the Registrar's Office, Moot Hall, Buffalo State, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222-1095. Nondisclosure of information will commence thereafter and be effective until September 14 of the following year. Written notification to withhold disclosure must be made each academic year. Buffalo State assumes that failure on the part of any student to specifically request the withholding of categories of directory information by the deadline date indicates individual approval for disclosure.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Buffalo State to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Registration

All currently registered students who will continue their studies during the next regular semester are expected to register within two weeks of their first day of registration eligibility. Procedures for registering can be found on the [Registrar's Office](#) website where course listings are posted in March for fall registration and in October for spring registration.

Students should check their Buffalo State email accounts regularly, especially during registration. Students on waitlists should check their Buffalo State email at least daily as email notifications are sent when seats become available. All correspondence to faculty members and university staff should be sent from a student's Buffalo State email account.

To receive accurate information about registration eligibility and to maintain registration eligibility, students should remember the following:

- Academic advisement is strongly encouraged for all matriculated graduate students. It is the student's responsibility to seek advisement prior to registration each semester.
- Students subject to possible academic probation or dismissal should contact their academic adviser for guidance regarding course selection and registration eligibility.
- Students on academic probation/dismissal will receive official notification from the Graduate Studies Office regarding their status and registration eligibility at the close of the semester. Students may contact the office for guidance and questions.
- Students with holds (student accounts, Weigel Health Center, parking, etc.) on their accounts may be prevented from registering. Students can view holds (if applicable) directly in self-service (SSB) Banner and should follow up with the respective office.
- Not attending the first class meeting does not withdraw a student from a class, however the student should follow up with the instructor before the next class meeting.
- Graduate students with 3.0 or higher GPAs may discontinue enrollment without taking a leave of absence for one semester (fall or spring) from which they were last registered without applying for readmission. Continuous enrollment is strongly encouraged.

Advisement

The department chair/graduate coordinator designates a member of the graduate faculty to serve as an adviser to the student and to assist in planning the course of study. It is the student's responsibility to seek a conference with the adviser before registration, moving into degree candidacy, and application for graduation.

Change of Name, Address

Students are responsible for notifying the Registrar's Office of any name or address changes so that registration information and other mailings can be properly directed. Visit the [Registrar's Office](#) to complete the appropriate form and submit any required documentation.

Adding or Dropping Courses

Registration is continuous from the opening of registration through the end of the first week of classes. Dropping a course during that time removes all record of the course from the student's transcript. Registration dates and instructions are updated each semester on the [Registrar's website](#). By the close of registration, students should recognize that they have made a commitment to complete the courses for which they are registered. It is expected that students will complete any necessary changes to their schedules before the first day of classes in a semester or Summer

Session. Changes during the first week of classes, or the first two days of a Summer Session or January Term are allowed, but should be the exception.

Immunization Requirement

All students must be in compliance with New York State law regarding immunizations to be able to register for classes. The [Weigel Health Center](#) provides measles, mumps, and rubella immunizations at no charge for students who need vaccinations. New York State Public Law and Buffalo State University also require all students enrolled to complete and return the Meningitis Information Response Form. The meningitis form and the New Student Health Form are available online and are to be returned to the health center. If vaccines were provided in NYS, Weigel Health Center should be able to retrieve the records from the state's immunization systems. Students should call 716-878-6711 to verify that Weigel can obtain their vaccine records.

Withdrawal from Courses

Instructors are required to notify students of their academic standing no later than the end of the ninth week of the semester, or after two-thirds of a summer session or January Term. A student who wishes to leave a course after the drop/add period and before the final withdrawal date may withdraw via Self Service Banner. If a student does not officially withdraw from a course and stops participating, a grade of E will be recorded. Non-attendance at the first meeting of the class does not withdraw a student from a class. Withdrawal deadlines for each semester are published on the [Registrar's website](#).

Under some conditions, students withdrawing from coursework may be eligible for a refund in accordance with the university refund schedule, which is posted each term on the [Student Accounts website](#). Beyond the end of the refund schedule's time limit, full charges are assessed. Student-teaching courses have different deadlines. These students should check with their departments.

Withdrawals remain on the transcript and are recorded with a W but do not count in credit hours or GPA calculations. Withdrawal from a course may affect eligibility for financial aid in the current semester and in future semesters. For additional information about financial aid eligibility, refer to the financial aid section of this catalog, or visit the [Financial Aid Office](#) in Moot 230.

Before withdrawing from a course, careful thought should be given to the reasons for withdrawing and possible consequences. Course withdrawals can have a negative impact on both progress toward graduation and eligibility for financial aid. Withdrawal from a course should be used infrequently and considered an action of last resort. It is to the student's advantage to meet with an advisor and the instructor before withdrawing.

State Mandated Seminars for Education Programs

In addition to academic requirements, students who are enrolled in teacher education programs leading to Initial Certification or Initial/Professional certification are required to complete all seminars specifically required by New York State for program completion and graduation.

Candidates should consult the [Teacher Certification website](#) for current seminar and workshop requirements.

Student Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals

Buffalo State complies with New York State Education regulations requiring that campuses have procedures in place for filing complaints and seeking resolution of perceived problems.

Academic Petition Appeals: Waiver of Academic Regulations

Students are expected to adhere to all regulations of the university. However, unusual and extenuating circumstances may warrant a modification of certain regulations.

Students should not request a waiver of any regulations without very strong evidence to justify the waiver. Requests for waivers are made by completing an Academic Appeals Petition from the [Academic Standards website](#). For assistance with filing an Academic Appeals Petition, students should contact their academic advisers or the Academic Standards Office, Twin Rise 100. with filing an Academic Appeals Petition, students should contact their academic advisers or the Academic Standards Office, 510 South Wing.

The Academic Standards Office makes decisions on requests for waivers that do not relate to a student's major after consulting with the Academic Appeals Committee. The Academic Standards Office decision is final. A minimum of one month is necessary to process academic appeal petitions.

Decisions on requests for a waiver related to a student's major are made by the appropriate department chair in accordance with procedures established by the department or area faculty. Requests for application of AP and/or transfer credit should be taken directly to the Admissions Office; these requests do not require an Academic Appeals Petition.

Student Complaints Regarding Discrimination

If the complaint involves alleged harassment or discrimination based on race, sex, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, disability, or marital or veteran status, the student should use procedures administered through the [Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#). Acts of discrimination should be reported immediately to this office for confidential discussion of the alleged acts. Students have 90 days from the alleged act of discrimination or 90 days after receipt of a grade to file a complaint. A copy of the procedures may be obtained in CLEV 204.

Student Complaints Regarding Nonacademic Issues

If the complaint involves nonacademic issues, the student should follow procedures administered by the [Dean of Students Office](#), Campbell Student Union 311. However, students are encouraged to seek resolution of the perceived problem directly in the unit in question before initiating processes that are more formal.

Student Complaints Regarding Academic Issues

The procedures outlined in the next section pertain to complaints about academic issues other than those pertaining to waiver of university -wide academic regulations or graduation issues, which are addressed by petitions to the Academic Appeals Committee. The university seeks to resolve student grievances as promptly and informally as possible. No adverse action will be taken against any student initiating a complaint.

Students who feel aggrieved regarding any aspect of the academic program have a right to request a resolution by bringing the matter to the attention of appropriate university personnel. The academic appeals process regarding a waiver of academic regulations is outlined under the Waiver of Academic Regulations section. If the perceived problem pertains to a grade or the conduct of a particular course, students should follow the Student Academic Grievance Procedures, below.

Student Academic Grievance Procedures

The procedures that follow pertain to alleged violations or misapplication of university and/or course policies. They are also directed at a student grievance alleging that the student has been treated unfairly, in violation of established academic policy or practice. These procedures reflect the university's commitment to a fair and prompt resolution of

student academic grievances. These procedures begin with an informal process but include a formal process that centers on hearings and recommended resolution of the grievance in a way that maximizes the opportunity for a full and impartial solution. Request to waive or otherwise alter university academic policies shall continue to be the province of the Academic Appeals Committee (see Waiver of Academic Regulations).

The procedures below do not deal with grievances that are based on issues of sexual harassment or discrimination. Such grievances are handled through the Equity and Diversity Office. Similarly, complaints that deal with other nonacademic issues are administered by the Dean of Students Office (see previous section).

For academic grievances, students are advised to retain all documentation from the course, including (but not limited to) the syllabus, tests, quizzes, papers, and any graded evaluations. These materials are required to substantiate any grievance.

1. Jurisdiction
2. A grievance shall include, but not be restricted to, a complaint by a student
 - a. that university regulations and/or policies have been violated or misapplied to him or her, or
 - b. that he or she has been treated unfairly, defined in terms of established academic policy or practice governing or affecting students at the university.
3. Time Limit
 - a. At the informal level before the fifth week of the following semester, or
 - b. at the formal level before the 10th week of the following semester.
4. Grievance Resolution Process
5. The process includes the possibility of hearings at two levels: the department and the faculty.
 - a. At the department level, a student with a complaint should attempt to resolve the complaint informally with the faculty or staff member involved. The assistance of the chair may be sought to resolve the dispute to the satisfaction of both parties. A student must initiate the process no later than five weeks into the following semester.

The student who is not able to achieve resolution with the instructor may initiate a formal grievance or grade appeal process no later than 10 weeks into the following semester by preparing a written statement, which includes the following:

 - i. a statement of the case in detail,
 - ii. all information about the conference with the instructor,
 - iii. a statement of the reasons the student believes he or she is aggrieved or, in the case of a grade, why it should be reconsidered,
 - iv. all relevant supporting materials, which should be identified and listed in an index.

The student shall submit complete copies of the written statement and attachments to the chair of the department and the faculty member identified in the grievance. The chair shall carefully review the statement, confer with the student and instructor, and attempt to reach a resolution of the dispute. The chair may ask members of the department to serve as a committee to review the materials and assist him or her in reaching a decision. The chair's response must be made within 10 academic days of the date of the student's request.

In conformance with state regulations, the department shall maintain adequate documentation about each formal complaint and its disposition for at least six years after final disposition of the complaint. If the department chair is the party against whom the grievance is brought, the student should initiate a review at the dean's level, which follows:

- b. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction at the departmental level, he or she may request a hearing at the faculty level by writing to the dean of the faculty and forwarding the

documentation to that office. The request must be made within 10 academic days of the receipt of the recommendation of the department chair. The dean or designee shall convene a three-person committee drawn from a panel of available faculty within 10 academic days. Such committee shall include one faculty member from the department in which the faculty member resides. Furthermore, after the committee is constituted, the faculty member and the student have the right to review the committee membership and request alternative members in the event it is believed a member of the committee is not neutral. The committee shall meet and review the materials presented and solicit a response from the instructor to each count of the student's case. In the case of a grade appeal, the committee will familiarize itself with the standards and objectives of the course and evaluative material presented. Concerns shall be limited to consideration of the fairness of the application of the standards and objectives, and whether the standards and objectives were made known to the student in a reasonable manner. The difficulty of the standards shall not be an issue.

The burden of proof shall be on the student, who may be asked to appear before the committee.

In the case of a grade appeal, if the majority of the committee feels no case can be made, the original grade will remain. If it finds that the standards and objectives were not reasonably known to the student or were unfairly applied, it may recommend a different grade and give its reasons for so recommending. The committee shall report its findings in writing to the student, the instructor, and the dean.

If the panel recommends a different grade, the instructor shall have 10 academic days from receipt of the panel's report to inform the dean of the faculty of the intent to change the grade. If necessary, the dean may direct that the grade be changed. A change of grade shall not be interpreted as an admission of unfairness in grading.

In the case of a grievance, if the majority of the committee members adjudge the grievance to be without foundation, written notification of their findings will be forwarded to the student, the instructor, and the dean of the faculty. If, in the judgment of the committee, there is a basis for the grievance, a written report will be forwarded to the dean of the faculty with specific recommendations for redress. Copies shall be forwarded to the student and the instructor.

The dean of the faculty will notify all parties of his or her final decision regarding the grievance within 10 academic days of receipt of the committee's findings and recommendations.

In conformance with state regulations, the dean's office shall maintain adequate documentation about each formal complaint and its disposition for at least six years after the final disposition of the complaint.

Committees

Committee members shall be drawn from a list of faculty nominated by departments. In naming the committee to hear a grievance, the dean shall take care to ensure that no member has an interest in the case being heard.

Confidentiality

Once the grievance committee has been convened to hear a complaint, principals and committee members shall have the obligation to maintain the confidentiality of the proceedings and of all materials presented.

Review

This procedure must be reviewed after two years. The review process should identify any irregularities in grade changes. To facilitate this review, a copy of all documentation/findings at the formal level shall be retained in the department office.

Student Complaints Regarding Distance Learning

Student Complaints Regarding Distance Learning

Students should attempt to resolve any issues or complaints directly with Buffalo State by contacting the campus office responsible for the area relevant to the complaint. If dissatisfied with the response, the student may contact the relevant area supervisor, director, department chair, or dean for resolution. Please refer to the Student Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals section in the appropriate course catalog ([Undergraduate](#) or [Graduate](#)) on the [Academic Affairs](#) website which describes the appropriate complaint procedures or the [Online Student Complaint Process](#).

Buffalo State University is a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) and follows the complaint resolution policies and procedures outlined within the [SARA Policy Manual](#) and [summarized here](#). SARA is a voluntary agreement among its member states that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs. The purpose of SARA is to make it less challenging for students to take online courses and programs offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state.

Consumer protection complaints resulting from distance education courses, activities, and operations may be submitted to the [Provost/VP for Academic Affairs and the Director of Distance Learning for investigation and resolution](#) for investigation and resolution. If a student is dissatisfied with the campus-based resolution, a concern may be submitted to System Administration of the State University of New York as [outlined here](#). And, if still not satisfied, a complaint may be submitted within two years of the incident about which the complaint is made, [to the New York State Education Department as outlined here](#).

Please note, this does not include complaints related to grades or student conduct violations, both of which are to be fully addressed via campus processes, not through the NC-SARA complaint resolution procedures.

Complaints to State Education Department

Any individual who continues to feel aggrieved after pursuing the options outlined previously, is unable to resolve the problems, or believes the institution has not properly addressed the concerns may file a written complaint with one of the following:

New York State Education Department
Office of College and University Evaluation
Education Building
5 North Mezzanine
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

State University of New York
Central Administration
State University Plaza
Albany, NY 12246

Middle State Commission on Higher Education
3624 Market Street
2nd Floor West
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Students Unable to Attend Classes on Certain Days Because of Religious Beliefs

The following NY State law address conflicts that might arise between class and observance of religious holidays. For more information, contact the Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Cleveland Hall 204.

Section 224-A of the New York State Education Law

No person shall be expelled from or be refused admission as a student to an institution of higher education for the reason that he or she is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to register or attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirements on a particular day or days.

1. Any student in an institution of higher education who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes on a particular day or days shall, because of such absence on the particular day or days, be excused from any examination or any study or work requirements.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the faculty and of the administrative officials of each institution of higher education to make available to each student who is absent from school, because of his or her religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to register for classes or make up any examination, study or work requirements which he or she may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such equivalent opportunity.
3. If registration, classes, examinations, study or work requirements are held on Friday after four o'clock post meridian or on Saturday, similar or makeup classes, examinations, study or work requirements or opportunity to register shall be made available on other days, where it is possible and practicable to do so. No special fees shall be charged to the student for these classes, examinations, study or work requirements or registration held on other days.
4. In effectuating the provisions of this section, it shall be the duty of the faculty and of the administrative officials of each institution of higher education to exercise the fullest measure of good faith. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his or her availing himself or herself of the provisions of this section.
5. Any student, who is aggrieved by the alleged failure of any faculty or administrative officials to comply in good faith with the provisions of this section, shall be entitled to maintain an action or proceeding in the supreme court of the county in which such institution of higher education is located for the enforcement of his or her rights under this section.
 - a. It shall be the responsibility of the administrative officials of each institution of higher education to give written notice to students of their rights under this section, informing them that each student who is absent from school, because of his or her religious beliefs, must be given an equivalent opportunity to register for classes or make up any examination, study or work requirements which he or she may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to such student such equivalent opportunity.
6. As used in this section, the term "institution of higher education" shall mean any institution of higher education, recognized and approved by the regents of the university of the state of New York, which provides a course of study leading to the granting of a post-secondary degree or diploma. Such term shall not include any institution which is operated, supervised or controlled by a church or by a religious or denominational organization whose educational programs are principally designed for the purpose of training ministers or other religious functionaries or for the purpose of propagating religious doctrines. As used in this section, the term "religious belief" shall mean beliefs associated with any corporation organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes, which is not disqualified for tax exemption under section 501 of the United States Code.

At Buffalo State, we sharpen the mandate of the state and endorse the policy that prohibits administering evaluative examinations on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Good Friday.

Transcript of Academic Record

Official Transcripts

Official transcripts are ordered online. There is a \$9 fee per request. Online transcript orders that select the Buffalo State Registrar's Office pick-up option. There is a \$9 fee per request. Online transcript orders that select the Buffalo State Registrar's Office pick-up option require proper photo ID at the time of pick-up photo ID at the time of pick-up.

Unofficial Transcripts

Current students who know their Banner ID and PIN can access self-service Banner to view or print an unofficial transcript to assist in academic planning. There is no fee for viewing or printing an unofficial transcript. Unofficial Transcripts are not available to students in the spring and fall term during the final grading period. Unofficial transcripts are not available to students who do not have access to the Self-Service Banner (SSB) portal.

Verification of Records

Current students who have access to the Banner SSB portal (under the student records tab) can print online enrollment verifications through Self Service Banner.