Academic Student Progress – Recommended Practices for Graduate Programs
UW Graduate School – *Draft for Discussion January 16, 2019*

Getting Started on the Right Foot

- Define student success as connected to program goals and purpose.
- Develop and document policies regarding degree progress – milestones, timelines, communication plans, exceptions, etc.
- Develop and document policies regarding faculty advisor/student responsibilities.
- Provide students with accessible documentation of the policies at the time of first enrollment, when returning from an extended leave, reinstating, or when there has been a revision(s) to the policies.
- Faculty should also be up-to-date on policies, milestones, and resources.
- Provide links or a guide to frequently used campus resources to support student success. Effective advising includes personal, career, and academic support.
- Individual development plans (link) are an effective tool for planning, discussing, and tracking progress toward academic, career, and personal goals.
- Be clear if funding is contingent on satisfactory performance in offer letters, with documented policies that are clear and equitable.
- Clearly specify consequences if requirements are not met.
- Policies should be consistently applied, and if exceptions are permitted, the criteria for evaluating exceptions should be clear.
- Use clear and frequent feedback to support student progress (see handout).
- Connect with peer programs for examples of policies or practices, and ask the Graduate School (GEMS, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs) to review program policies.

Responding to Warning Signs

- Check-in with students regularly, and particularly to explore extenuating circumstances or barriers they may be experiencing. Provide students with resources tailored to students' needs (e.g., Disability Resource Services, Writing Center, Student Care Coordinator, etc.). Contact GEMS or Student Affairs if you need referrals.

- Follow up in-person advising sessions with an email or document summarizing feedback and next steps.
- Accommodations made within courses or program milestones based on student mental and physical health should be determined by Disability Resource Services.
- Use documented "Warn" letters to provide clear feedback about performance expectations to get back on a trajectory for satisfactory progress, including clarity around the consequences and timing of Probation status if progress is not demonstrated.
- Draft Warn or Probation letters can be confidentially reviewed by the Graduate School (GEMS, Student Affairs). We recommend this step prior to communicating with students.

Working through the Process

- Students in a probation status who are approved for an on-leave status should be advised of any potential consequences that may occur (e.g., lab research, joining a new cohort, etc.) and a timeline for checking in should be established.
- Students in a probation status returning from on-leave or inactive status should be notified of their status prior to re-enrollment (resending the original probation letter).