ACADEMIC POLICIES

2014-2015
Each student is responsible to know the contents of the College Catalog, particularly the sections which relate to the student’s major and general academic requirements. This section of the Student Handbook highlights learning opportunities and resources, as well as selected academic practices.

**ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION**

**SCHOOL OF THE ARTS**

**Richard Roberson, Dean, Room 102-01 High Center**

Kevin Hodes, Administrative Assistant, Room 102, High Center

**Department of Visual Arts**

Christine Forsythe, Chair, Room 136, Frey Hall

**Department of Music**

William Stowman, Chair, Room 101-01 High Center

Timothy Dixon, Assistant Chair, Room 062 High Center

**Department of Theatre**

Tymberley Whitesel, Chair, Room 148, Climenhaga Fine Arts Center

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, EDUCATION and SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Caroline Maurer, Dean, Room 104C, Boyer Hall**

Valerie Drobel, Administrative Assistant, Room 104, Boyer Hall

**Department of Education**

Don Murk, Chair, Room 405, Boyer Hall

**Department of Human Development and Family Science**

Raeann Hamon, Chair, Room 355, Boyer Hall

**Department of Management and Business**

David Hagenbuch, Co-Chair, Room 336, Frey Hall

Jenny Dose, Co-Chair Room 333, Frey Hall

**Department of Psychology**

John Bechtold, Chair, Room 377, Boyer Hall

**Department of Social Work**

Charles Seitz, Chair, Room 356, Boyer Hall

**Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice**

TBD

**Early Learning Center**

Stacey Griffiths, Director, Room 016, Hostetter Chapel – basement

**SCHOOL OF THE HUMANITIES**

**Peter Powers, Dean, Room 104A, Boyer Hall**

TBD, Administrative Assistant, Room 104, Boyer Hall
Department of Biblical and Religious Studies  
Brian Smith, Chair, Room 305, Boyer Hall

Department of Communication  
Nance McCown, Co-Chair, Room 251, Boyer Hall  
Kate Simcox, Co-Chair, Room 205, Boyer Hall

Department of English  
Matthew Roth, Chair, Room 208, Boyer Hall

Department of History  
John Fea, Chair, Room 260, Boyer Hall

Department of Modern Languages  
John Beaney, Chair, Room 151, Boyer Hall

Department of Philosophy  
Robin Collins, Chair, Room 455, Boyer Hall

Department of Politics and International Relations  
Paul Rego, Chair, Room 460, Boyer Hall

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING and HEALTH  
W. Ray Norman, Dean, Room 155, Jordan Science Center

Lori Zimmerman, Administrative Assistant, Room 157, Jordan

Department of Biological Sciences  
Sheri Boyce, Chair, Room 276B, Jordan Science Center

Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry  
Roseann Sachs, Chair, Room 309, Kline Hall of Science

Department of Engineering  
Randall Fish, Chair, Room 221, Frey Hall

Department of Health and Human Performance  
Jodie Haak, Co-Chair, Room 160, Sollenberger Sports Center  
Scott Kieffer, Co-Chair, Room 351, Jordan Science Center

Department of Information and Mathematical Sciences  
Angela Hare, Chair, Room 321, Frey Hall

Department of Nursing  
Nancy Woods, Chair, Room 121, Kline Hall of Science

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Kay Witt, Chair, Room 276A, Jordan Science Center

Please see the College Catalog for further information on academic schools.
ACADEMIC HONORS

COLLEGE HONORS PROGRAM
The College Honors Program is designed for students who demonstrate high scholarly ability early in their academic career. The program provides a series of interdisciplinary honors courses which satisfy selected general education requirements and a Senior Honors Project. In addition, various campus activities are designed each semester for honors students.

DEAN’S LIST
Students achieving a grade point average (GPA) of 3.6 or higher for 12 or more graded credits are placed on the Dean’s List at the end of each semester.

DEPARTMENT HONORS
Academic departments may provide selected honors courses for students who have exceptional academic ability. Graduation with honors in a discipline is recognized at Commencement and is noted on the student’s diploma and transcript. Juniors and seniors may participate in Department Honors.

GRADUATION HONORS
The College awards three levels of honors to seniors at Commencement: summa cum laude (for a cumulative GPA of 3.9 or above), magna cum laude (for a GPA of at least 3.6 but less than 3.9), and cum laude (for a GPA of at least 3.3 but less than 3.6).

HONOR SOCIETIES
The College is affiliated with several national honor societies in selected academic disciplines. Students who excel in their academic major may be invited to join the respective society. Nominations are made during the junior and senior years.

SMITH SCHOLAR INTERNS
The Smith Scholar Intern Program allows highly qualified upper-class students to work in apprentice relationships with faculty members, and to participate in a significant research project. Junior and senior students may participate. Additional information is available from the Office of Faculty Development.

GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ACADEMIC CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS
Students who are pursuing a degree program are classified according to the following guidelines:
• First Year—satisfaction of entrance requirements
• Sophomore—24 earned credit hours
• Junior—57 earned credit hours
• Senior—87 earned credit hours

ACADEMIC LOAD
Students who carry 12 or more credit hours are considered full-time students. Students taking more than 18 credit hours must first obtain the approval of faculty advisors and the Registrar. The typical load is 15 or 16 credit hours per semester. Overload tuition will be charged per credit hour beginning with the 19th credit.

ACADEMIC PETITIONS
Students who find it necessary to request an exception to any academic policy should secure and complete an Academic Policy Petition Form from the Office of the Registrar. After the petition is considered, the student and the appropriate faculty advisor are notified of the decision.

ACADEMIC WARNING
When a student’s semester GPA is less than 2.0 regardless of the cumulative GPA, the student will be given an academic warning. This notice will be copied to the student’s academic advisor as well as the parents of the student provided a signed records release is on file. The warning is intended to alert the student so that appropriate measures necessary for academic success can be taken.

APPLICATION FOR DEGREE
Students working toward a degree must file an application for degree with the Registrar’s office at the beginning of their senior year. This presupposes the completion of a minimum of 87 semester hours of credit. Applications require the approval of the Academic Council and the Community of Educators before students are formally admitted to degree candidacy.

AUDIT OF COURSES
Students who wish to attend a course but not receive College credit or a grade for their work may audit the course. Students who audit a course must attend classes on a regular basis but are not required to do the course work or take any tests in the course. When the course is completed, the audited course is noted on the student’s transcript. An additional tuition charge will be added if a student’s registration exceeds 18 credits. (Note: Courses taken as audit cannot be included for Financial Aid purposes. For additional clarification students should contact the Financial Aid Office.)
REPEATING COURSE WORK
A student may repeat any course in which a grade less than C– was received. Only the second grade and credits count toward the student’s cumulative GPA, but the original grade and course will remain on the student’s transcript. All repeat courses must be taken at Messiah College.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS
Satisfactory academic progress toward a degree as a full-time student is defined as completion of 24 or more credits per academic year and maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 1.8 while earning the first 23 credits, 1.9 for 24–56 credits, and 2.0 for 57 credits or more.

WITHDRAWALS AND TERMINATION OF ATTENDANCE
Students who intend to withdraw from college during the semester must do so officially. Completion of the Notification to Withdraw/Transfer form found online in McSquare is required. Students who intend not to return to Messiah College in a subsequent semester must also complete the Notification to Withdraw/Transfer form prior to the end of the final semester of enrollment. All students who plan to withdraw/transfer will be contacted for an in-person, one-on-one exit interview.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY
Personal integrity is a behavioral expectation for all members of the Messiah community: administration, faculty, staff, and students. Violations of academic integrity are not consistent with the community standards of Messiah College. These violations include:

1. Plagiarism: Submitting as one’s own work part or all of any assignment (oral or written) which is copied, paraphrased, or purchased from another source, including online sources, without the proper acknowledgment of that source. Examples: failing to cite a reference, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, misrepresenting another’s work as your own, etc.

2. Cheating: Attempting to use or using unauthorized material or study aids for personal assistance in examinations or other academic work. Examples: using a cheat sheet, altering a graded exam, looking at a peer’s exam, having someone else take the exam for you, sharing information about exams, using any kind of electronic mobile or storage devices (such as cell phones, PDA’s, Blackberry, iPods, iPhones, iPads, Flash drives, DVD’s, CD’s, photocopy pens) for unapproved purposes, communicating via email, IM, or text messaging during an exam, using the internet, sniffers, spyware or other software to retrieve information or other students’ answers, etc.
3. **Fabrication**: Submitting altered or contrived information in any academic exercise. Examples: falsifying sources and/or data, etc.

4. **Misrepresentation of Academic Records**: Tampering with any portion of a student's record. Example: forging a signature on a registration form or change of grade form.

5. **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty**: Helping another individual violate this policy. Examples: working together on an assignment where collaboration is not allowed, doing work for another student, allowing one's own work to be copied.

6. **Computer Offenses**: Altering or damaging computer programs without permission. Examples: software piracy, constructing viruses, introducing viruses into a system, copying copyrighted programs, etc.

7. **Unfair Advantage**: Attempting to gain advantage over fellow students in an academic exercise. Examples: lying about the need for an extension on a paper, destroying or removing library materials, etc.

**EDUCATION REGARDING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

Messiah College is responsible to clearly articulate the Academic Integrity Policy to students by publishing it in the Student Handbook and by informing all incoming first-year students of this policy through the new student orientation program. Faculty should reference the policy in their course syllabi. However, primary responsibility for knowledge of and compliance with this policy rests with the student.

**RECORDS OF VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

As custodian for student education records, the Registrar will maintain records of academic integrity violations for all students in accordance with the College’s Schedule for Records Retention.

**PROCEDURES FOR PERCEIVED VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

1. If a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is suspected, the faculty member should discuss the incident with the student(s) and determine, to the faculty member’s satisfaction, whether or not a violation has occurred.

2. If the faculty member determines that it is more likely than not that the student is innocent, the student should be informed of this determination in writing. No report of the incident or of the faculty/student meeting should be filed with the Dean.

3. If the faculty member determines that it is more likely than not that a
violation has occurred, he/she should send a formal report to the student, and copy the Dean of the faculty member's school and his/her Department Chair. The formal report should include a complete description of the incident, including date of the violation, the nature or type of the violation, and the nature and type of evidence. The formal report should also include appropriate sanctions. The Dean will send copies of the faculty member's report to the student's advisor(s).

4. Faculty teaching a course that is not housed in an academic department should send the formal report to the Associate Provost, who will direct it to the appropriate Dean or supervisor.

5. The faculty member should keep originals of tests, papers, etc., that provide evidence of the violation.

6. With issues related to computer offenses or misrepresentation of academic records, the case may be referred to the Associate Dean of Students Office for processing.

7. If a staff member or an administrator discovers violations of the Academic Integrity Policy, he/she should contact the School Dean of the school in which the violation has occurred, who will contact the student.

8. The student may appeal in writing to the academic department in which the course is offered. A student's intent to appeal a faculty member's response to a violation must be communicated to the Department Chair in writing within one week of the receipt of the written notification from the faculty member dealing with the incident. The faculty member filing the initial report of a violation should be recused from the department committee handling the appeal. A student in a course that is not housed in an academic department should appeal to the Associate Provost, who will direct the appeal to the appropriate Dean or department. The Associate Provost should ascertain that a group of faculty, with a majority of ranked faculty, will hear the appeal.

9. The student may appeal the decision of the academic department in writing to the School Dean, whose decision will be final.

10. When the appeal process ends, the Dean will notify the Registrar, and determine if this is a first or second violation.

PROCEDURES FOR MULTIPLE OR EGREGIOUS VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

1. If the student has committed two or more violations of academic integrity, or if the Dean determines that the violation is egregious, the Dean of the school in which the violation occurred will meet with the student who has committed the violation. Unless the violation is
egregious, this meeting will take place after the appeals process ends.

2. The Dean of the school in which the violation occurred will consult with the faculty member who first determined that a violation had occurred; with that faculty member's Department Chair; and with the Dean of the school of the student's major, if other than the reporting Dean. The Dean of the school in which the violation occurred will determine appropriate sanctions.

3. The Dean of the school in which the violation occurred will notify the student in writing of the sanctions determined, and send copies to the student's advisor(s) and to the Dean of the school of the student's major, if other than the reporting Dean.

4. The student may appeal the decision of the School Dean in writing to the Provost, whose decision will be final.

PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

1. In all instances of violations of the Academic Integrity Policy, the faculty member will assign sanctions within the context of the course. If the violation is a second offense, or it is determined to be an egregious offense, the School Dean will assign appropriate sanctions that go beyond the course. In the case of an egregious offense, the Dean may temporarily suspend the student before and during any appeal process.

2. For a non-egregious first offense, a faculty member may exercise broad discretion when responding to violations of the Academic Integrity Policy. The range of responses may include failure of the course to a grade reduction of the given assignment. The typical consequence for violations will be failure of the assignment. Some examples of serious offenses which might necessitate the penalty of the failure of the course include cheating on an examination, plagiarism of a complete assignment, etc.

3. The policy of the college is to act, whenever possible, in redemptive rather than merely punitive ways. We believe that simply to ignore an offense is to be neither loving nor redemptive. Consequently, if a second report of a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is received, or if the Dean determines that violation to be egregious, the range of possible responses includes suspension of the student, disciplinary probation, or other appropriate sanctions.

TIME AND RECORD–KEEPING CONSIDERATIONS

1. Academic integrity violations should be processed in a timely manner:
a. Faculty should report academic integrity violations within a week of their discovery.
b. Student appeals must be filed within a week of receiving the written report of an academic integrity violation.
c. The recipient of student appeals should acknowledge receipt of the appeal within one week.
d. Timing constraints only apply when school is in session, but processing of violations may continue during breaks.

2. When violations occur at the end of the semester, faculty may file a grade of incomplete until the investigation and possible appeals are complete.

3. Academic integrity violations will continue to be processed if the student withdraws from the course in which the violation occurred.

4. Academic integrity violations may be reported within one semester after the course if first discovered at that time.

5. The final result of all academic integrity investigations, including all appeals would be filed with the Registrar.

6. A record of academic integrity violations will be maintained by the Registrar in accordance with the College’s Schedule for Record Retention. However, undergraduate records will not count against students who return as graduate students.

7. If a student carries two majors, notification of academic integrity violations will be sent to the Dean of the student’s primary major.

8. The School Dean will notify the faculty member filing the report and the student’s advisor(s) of the results of all appeals. In the case of multiple or egregious violations, the School Dean will also notify the Dean of the school of the student’s major, if other than the reporting Dean, of the results of any appeal.

9. On-campus program areas conducting required background checks of students (for example, teacher certification, professional advisor) should submit the students’ names and ID numbers to the Registrar’s Office for clearance. The Registrar will determine that an appropriate need to know exists under FERPA guidelines.

10. If a Department Chair and the Registrar have established that the Department Chair has an on-going need to know about academic integrity violations, the Registrar will automatically notify the Department Chair of any violations by students in that major after all appeals are resolved.

**ACADEMIC PROBATION, ELIGIBILITY, SUSPENSION, AND DISMISSAL**

The purpose of placing a student on academic probation is to help the student reorder his/her priorities and time commitments in the direction
of greater emphasis on academic studies so that he/she might quickly attain the College’s minimum standards for satisfactory academic progress.

Satisfactory academic progress toward a degree as a full-time student is defined as completing 24 or more credits per academic year and maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 1.8 while earning the first 23 credits, 1.9 for 24–56 credits, and 2.0 for 57 credits or more. Any full-time student who fails to maintain this minimum cumulative grade point average will be placed on academic probation. A student on academic probation will be advised to take a maximum of 14 credits per semester while on probation. A student who does not maintain the minimum cumulative grade point average for two consecutive semesters will be placed on academic suspension for two semesters. Any student taking six or more credits in a semester who receives less than a 1.0 (D) semester grade point average will be placed on academic suspension. After two semesters of suspension, the student may apply for reinstatement by providing evidence of probable success. Upon return, if a student fails to achieve the minimum cumulative grade point average in two semesters, the student will be dismissed from the College. A student who is dismissed for academic reasons may apply for readmission after two years. Such a student must present 24 credits of transferrable work taken after dismissal from Messiah.

A student who has been placed on academic probation shall be ineligible for participation in the following cocurricular activities:
- Intercollegiate athletics and club sports
- Theater productions
- Music ensembles
- SGA officers
- Officers in any SGA-chartered organization, including team managers of Outreach Teams
- Music Ministry Teams
- Residence Life staff

The only exceptions will be those cases where such participation earns academic credit in a college course and that course meets a graduation requirement for the student’s major.

The Registrar is responsible for notifying students of their being placed on or removed from academic probation upon completion of the grading process for the period of study leading to such status.
- Students placed on academic probation as a result of fall semester grades shall become ineligible for cocurricular participation on the first class day of J-term/ spring semester.
- Students placed on academic probation as a result of J-
term/spring semester or summer session grades shall become ineligible for participation on the first class day of the fall semester.

- Students who are removed from academic probation as a result of fall, J-term/spring, or summer grades shall become eligible for cocurricular participation as soon as grades are officially recorded for that period of study.

A student who is placed on academic probation may appeal for an exception to this policy. The appeal must be sent, in writing, to the Registrar by the end of the first week of the next semester (fall or J-term/spring), and must be accompanied by letters of recommendation from the student’s academic advisor, the person in charge of the respective cocurricular activity, and the student’s Residence Director (if applicable). The Academic Appeals Subcommittee shall act on the appeal, and the decision of that committee shall be final.

ACADEMIC APPEALS OF SUSPENSION OR DISMISSAL
Appeals of academic suspension or dismissal must be submitted in writing to the Academic Appeals Subcommittee and must include an explanation of why minimum academic requirements were not met and why an exception is warranted. Appeals must be received within the time limit stated in the suspension notification.

CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class attendance is important to student learning and hence central to Messiah College’s educational mission; therefore, regular class attendance is expected. However, the College recognizes that certain types of educational activities take place outside the classroom and can lead to conflicts with class attendance. Guidelines for student attendance and absence are provided below.

COURSE ATTENDANCE POLICIES
1. Individual course policies on class attendance are left to the discretion of the instructor (or academic department). Individual faculty members (or academic departments) are expected to design and implement attendance policies that are supportive of the College-endorsed educational programming outside of the classroom and, to the extent it is possible, provide ways a student can make up the portions of the courses missed due to student participation in College-endorsed educational activities without penalty.

2. Attendance policies must be conveyed to students at the beginning of the semester and must be delineated in the syllabus. Attendance policies must address the following: (1) the extent to which attendance is required, (2) the role absences play in the attendance policy, (3) the policy for
making up absences, and (4) the impact of attendance/absences on student evaluation.

3. Faculty should be respectful of student schedules and the class time assigned to other courses. Faculty have been given an assigned time for their courses, and it is, in general, expected that instruction will take place within this designated time. Any exceptions must be stated in the syllabus.

4. If an out-of-class requirement in one course conflicts with the class time of another course, the faculty member making the out-of-class requirement must provide other ways for the student to fulfill the requirement of the required out-of-class requirement.

PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOL FOR ABSENCES RELATED TO COLLEGE-ENDORSED ACTIVITIES

1. Steps will be taken to minimize student absences related to College-endorsed activities. Toward this end:
   a. All athletic contest schedules will be reviewed and approved by the Athletic Director and the Faculty Athletic Representative prior to the beginning of the semester.
   b. All artistic performance programming will be reviewed and approved by the Dean of the School of the Arts prior to the beginning of the semester.
   c. All academic field trips by faculty or departments will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate School Dean or the Assistant Dean of General Education and Common Learning (for IDS courses) at least one month prior to the activity.
   d. All student absences due to student professional presentations will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate School Dean at least one month prior to the activity.

2. All parties involved will be made aware of the scheduled absences well ahead of the date(s) of absence.
   a. To the extent it is possible, absences due to College-endorsed activities will be identified at the beginning of each semester or term.
   b. At the beginning of each semester the Faculty Athletic Representative will send all teaching faculty the approved dismissal times for all scheduled athletic contests.
   c. At the beginning of each semester the Dean of the School of the Arts will send all teaching faculty a schedule of approved performances which may result in class conflicts.

3. Upon receipt and approval by the appropriate supervisor, anyone sponsoring the College-endorsed educational activity must complete the “Instructor Notification System” that is available in Banner Self Service.

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under the Faculty and Advisors menu two weeks prior to the activity. This form must be filled out in full, and upon completion will be sent to each faculty member that is impacted.

4. Students participating in College-endorsed activities are still required to directly notify in advance the faculty member of any class they must miss. This must be done at least a week prior to the planned absence. Students are also responsible for meeting with the faculty member to work out the conditions for completing any work or assignments in advance with the attendance policy of the course.

5. No College-endorsed activities that result in student absences may be scheduled on the days before or after any College break or during finals week. Any exceptions must be approved by the Athletic Director, Vice Provost/Dean of Students, School Dean or Provost.

6. It is understood that flexibility in these procedures will be granted in the case of conference and NCAA playoffs, or approved late-developing opportunities for student performance or presentation.

ABSENCES DUE TO STUDENT ILLNESS OR CRITICAL ILLNESS/DEATH IN THE IMMEDIATE FAMILY
For class absence due to personal illness, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor(s) prior to the class, if possible. If prior notification is not feasible, the student should ensure that s/he notifies her/his instructors by the end of the day on which the class(es) meet.
For deaths in the family and similar emergencies, students should notify the Office of the Vice Provost/Dean of Students. Please email cbieber@messiah.edu or call (717) 796-5234 with the pertinent details. As the Vice Provost/Dean of Student’s Office will notify the faculty of the student involved, it is important that the student notify the office as soon as possible.

APPEAL PROCESS
If a student believes that the above policy has not been followed, he or she can appeal to the Provost.

MAKE-UP WORK
It is the prerogative of the individual instructor to decide whether students who miss a class examination are granted make-up privileges. Any arrangements are to be made between the student and the instructor.

DROP/ADD
Students may add courses through the end of the second week of classes each semester. Any changes made in the second week of classes and beyond require the written approval of the instructor and the student’s academic advisor. Schedule additions after the second week of the
semester are not permitted with the exception of unusual circumstances. In those cases, the student must first receive the approval of the Registrar. Courses dropped during the first five weeks of the semester will not appear on the transcript. Courses dropped weeks six through ten will be indicated with a W on the student’s transcript. After week ten, students are not permitted to withdraw from courses except in cases approved by the Engle Center for medical/personal reasons. After the first five class days of a semester, a fee is assessed for each course change requested. Note: J-term/May term dates may be prorated.

EXAM POLICIES

Students are expected to attend their final exam period at the scheduled time. Any student having more than eight credit hours of final examinations in one day may request a change in his/her final schedule. All requests for change must be submitted to the Registrar's Office using the Request for Final Examination Change form. It should be noted that travel arrangements are not sufficient reason for exceptions to the exam schedule. All requests for rescheduling exams must be submitted to the Registrar at least one week prior to the first day of final examinations. Once the Registrar approves the request, exams will be rescheduled at a time mutually acceptable to both the instructor and the student.

GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURES

If a student disagrees with a grade which has been given in a particular course, and it has been determined that the grade recorded was not in error, the student may initiate the grade appeal process.

1. **Informal discussion between student and instructor.** If the discussion results in a grade change, a grade change request form is submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the instructor. If the matter is not resolved to the student’s satisfaction, the student is referred to the department chair.

2. **Informal discussion between student and department chair.** The student should informally discuss the matter with the department chair. The department chair should discuss the concern with the instructor. If the discussions result in a grade change, a grade change request form is submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the instructor. If the matter is not resolved to the student’s satisfaction, the student is informed that there is a formal appeal procedure. The first informal contact with the department
chair must be before the end of the semester following the semester in which the grade was earned.

3. **Formal discussion between student, instructor, and department chair.** The department chair should arrange a meeting to discuss the matter with the student and instructor together. If this discussion results in a grade change, a grade change request form is submitted to the Registrar's Office by the instructor. The student should be informed in writing of this decision. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student should be informed in writing of this decision, along with options available to the student.

4. **Student appeal in writing to department chair.** This written appeal must be made within ten working days of the written notification of the student by the department chair of the outcome of the formal discussions. Within ten working days of the student's appeal, the department chair must inform the instructor of the appeal and provide a copy of the student's appeal. The instructor has ten working days to provide a written explanation of the student's grade. The department chair has ten working days to convene a departmental meeting (without the instructor or student present) to review the case and come to a decision based on the student's written appeal and the instructor's written response. The department chair will inform the student of the departmental decision in writing, with copies to the instructor and the School Dean. If the decision results in a grade change, the department chair will submit a grade change request to the Registrar's Office with a copy of his/her response to the student attached.

5. **Student appeal in writing to the School Dean.** If the decision of the department is not to the student's satisfaction, the student may appeal the decision to the School Dean. This appeal must be made in writing, within ten working days of the department chair's letter to the student. The School Dean shall investigate carefully and render a decision in writing within thirty days, which shall be final.

6. **Cases involving the department chair.** In any case where the instructor is the department chair, another member of the department will serve in the role of the chair in these proceedings.
Letter grades (A, B, C, D, F) carry a graded credit hour value and are used in the computation of a GPA. Letter grades and their corresponding quality point values are as follows:

- A = 4.0
- A– = 3.7
- B+ = 3.3
- B = 3.0
- B– = 2.7
- C+ = 2.3
- C = 2.0
- C– = 1.7
- D+ = 1.3
- D = 1.0
- F = 0.0

The cumulative GPA is the ratio of the total quality points earned to the total graded credit hours attempted. Additional information on grading is located in the College Catalog.

Certain courses are approved by the faculty to be graded on the Pass/Fail option. Students may take four courses on a P/F option during their college career within certain guidelines. The cutoff grade for passing is a “C–.” Credit hours in which students receive a pass count toward graduation, but not toward the GPA. The College Catalog contains specific guidelines.

Courses may also be graded as incomplete when a student cannot complete a course on schedule for emergency reasons. An incomplete course must be completed within four weeks or before the beginning of the next term, whichever is sooner, or the grade of “I” is changed to a grade of “F.”

If after final grades have been assigned and submitted, an error in a student’s grade is discovered by the instructor or brought to the attention of the instructor by the student, the instructor should complete the Change of Grade form with the Registrar’s office. All changes of grades must be accompanied by a rationale and be approved by the Registrar by the end of the following semester.

A student’s final grade may not be raised by doing additional assignments after the course has concluded or by revising previously submitted assignments.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduation requirements are outlined in the College Catalog. Generally, students must complete a minimum of 123 semester hours of credit with a minimum GPA of 2.0. The last 30 credit hours must be earned through Messiah College.
JANUARY TERM

The January term is an integral part of the spring semester. Thus, students register for the spring term and January term simultaneously. Usually they take three or four credit hours in January and twelve or thirteen during the spring term. The credits earned during the January and the spring terms compose the total for the spring semester.

**While all students are expected to register for a January term course, first year and sophomore students are required to do so.** No tuition or room and board discounts are provided for students who do not enroll for a January term course.

MEDICAL LEAVE

Medical leave is available for students who, due to documented serious physical or psychological illness, need to leave the College during the semester without completing their course work or to withdraw from the College for no longer than two consecutive semesters. Students on medical leave are not regarded as having permanently withdrawn from the College and need not apply for readmission through the Admissions Office. However, students must be approved for fitness to return to campus through the process described in the policy. A student may request a more limited medically excused status if he or she is medically unable to complete the final forty percent of a semester but intends to return to the College at the beginning of the following semester. The request is initiated in the same manner as described below. A student approved for medically excused status need not request permission to return to the College for the following semester unless conditions for returning had been stipulated by the College at the time of departure.

**Initiation of request for medical leave**

A student requesting medical leave must make the request in writing to the Director of Counseling and Health Services. The request may be for either one or two semesters. The Director will notify the Registrar of the request and will direct the student to provide appropriate documentation from a physician, therapist, or other qualified caregiver.

**Determination of request**

A decision approving or disapproving the medical leave request will be made by the Director of Counseling and Health Services. If there is a pending academic or disciplinary preceding that could result in a suspension from the College, medical leave requests will not be considered until the proceeding has concluded. A student under suspension from the College is ineligible for medical leave.

As part of receiving medical leave for mental health reasons, if indicated,
the student may be asked to sign a behavioral agreement regarding ongoing treatment during the time he or she is on medical leave. Failure to comply with this treatment would result in a termination of the medical leave and mandatory withdrawal from school.

When a student has been approved for medical leave, the Director will provide a copy of the decision to the Registrar, the Academic Dean and the Vice Provost/Dean of Students. The Registrar will notify appropriate offices on campus of the student’s status and send a copy of the decision to the student for his or her records. Copies of the decision will be maintained in the student’s academic and student life files. Original documentation from the student’s medical records will be maintained by the Director of Counseling and Health Services.

A request for medical leave for the current semester must be made prior to the last week of class in the fall or spring semester, or prior to the last day of class in January term.

**Effective date of medical leave status**

A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the first sixty percent of the semester will be deemed to have medical leave status as of the date on which his or her request was made to the Director of Counseling and Health Services. The student will remain on medical leave status for the balance of that semester and may request an extension for the next semester by filing a request as described below.

A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the final forty percent of the semester will be deemed to be a medically excused continuing student for the balance of that semester, but will have medical leave status as of the first day of the following semester. The student may request an extension for one additional semester by filing a request as described on the following several pages.

**Extension of medical leave status**

A student on medical leave status may request a one-semester extension by providing new documentation to the Director of Counseling and Health Services by August 1 for the fall semester or December 1 for the spring semester. A decision approving or disapproving the request will be made by the Director of Counseling and Health Services. The Director will provide a copy of the decision to the Registrar, Academic Dean, and Vice Provost/Dean of Students. Medical leave status may continue no longer than two consecutive semesters. After this time, a student who does not return to the College will be deemed officially withdrawn.

**Grades and completion of medical leave work**

A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the first sixty percent of the semester will be given a grade of “W” (Withdrawal) in each course for which he or she is registered. No “I” (Incomplete) grades
will be given. No credit will be earned for any course, and a prorated refund of charges will be made as described below. A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the final forty percent of the semester may be deemed medically excused and may be given a grade of “I” for one or more courses with the approval of the faculty member(s). When a grade of “I” is not deemed feasible, a grade of “W” will be given. No refund of charges will be made for courses in which a grade of “I” is given. To receive academic credit for a course, incomplete work must be completed by the final day of the semester following that during which medical leave was approved. It is the responsibility of the student to contact individual instructors to arrange for the timely completion of course work. If the student does not complete work in a course within this time, the grade of “I” for that course will be changed to a “W.”

Required medical leave under extreme circumstances
A student who exhibits serious health problems (or behavior problems arising from physical or mental health issues) which threaten the health or safety of the student or others may be encouraged to take a voluntary medical leave. When possible, accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis as an alternative to medical leave. When accommodations are not appropriate or feasible and the student is unwilling to take voluntary medical leave, he or she may be evaluated for Required Medical Leave. A student seeking to return from Required Medical Leave will go through the same return process as do voluntary medical leave students.

Determination of fitness to return to campus
A student requesting to return from medical leave will be asked to sign a release allowing the Director of Counseling and Health Services to communicate with the physician, therapist, or other caregiver, as well as with other persons at Messiah College involved in determining the student’s fitness to return. The student must provide documentation from his or her physician, therapist, or other caregiver concerning current medical status by August 1 to be considered for approval to return for the fall semester, or by December 1 to be considered for approval to return for the spring semester. The student also may be required to have an interview with the Director of Counseling and Health Services and/or the Director of Disability Services. The College reserves the right to require the student, in order to return to and remain in classes, to be in ongoing, off-campus treatment as well as other necessary stipulations. All information will be reviewed and a decision regarding fitness to return will be made by the Director of Counseling and Health Services, who will notify the Deans and the Registrar. The granting of medical leave by the College does not guarantee that the student will be allowed to return. If approved, the Director of Counseling and Health Services will notify the
Registrar who will then notify the student and appropriate offices on campus. The granting of medical leave by the College does not guarantee that the student will be allowed to return.

**Seniority for registration and housing**
A student on medical leave will retain all accrued seniority for housing and registration purposes and may register conditionally for courses if he or she intends to return for the following semester. Any money paid to the College as deposits against tuition or charges anticipated for the following semester will be refunded in full if the student is not approved to return. Documentation for determination of fitness to return must be received by the deadlines listed above and approval to return granted in order for registration to be considered final. Seniority for housing preferences cannot be guaranteed for students who do not meet these requirements.

**Financial aid implications**
It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Financial Aid Office individually to discuss the implications of medical leave on his or her financial aid.

**Refund of tuition and fees**
Refunds for students who are granted medical leave during the first five weeks of a semester are determined as follows:

- Students who take medical leave during the first five weeks of the semester may be eligible for some refund. See the Business Office website for specific information:
  
  www.messiah.edu/offices/business/student_accounts/#refund

- No refunds will be given for students who are granted medical leave during the final 10 weeks of the semester.

This policy is maintained by the Engle Center and was last amended February 2007.

**PHILOSOPHY ON ACADEMIC ADVISING**
Academic advising is an important part of the learning process at Messiah College; it is perhaps best thought of as a partnership between students and educators. Although students are personally responsible for planning their academic program to meet all graduation requirements, academic advisors help students make good academic choices compatible with their life goals.

**Academic Advisors assist students to:**
- understand general education requirements, major requirements, and the overlap between the two;
- understand academic policies and procedures;
• establish academic goals compatible with the student’s life goals;
• enhance academic performance and seek academic challenges;
• create long-term academic goals;
• develop course schedules which consider the student’s academic goals and background.

**Academic Advisors also:**
• monitor student academic progress and encourage good academic work;
• refer students to appropriate resources available to help students solve individual problems (e.g. the Intercultural office, the Engle Center, the Student Affairs Office, the Learning Center, the Writing Center, and Disability Services)
• encourage student applications, if appropriate, for scholarships and awards—after discussion with the academic advisor;
• evaluate the advising system, when requested, in order to strengthen the advising process.

**Students Should:**
• accept full ownership for all academic decisions; academic advisors will assist by presenting options
• prepare for advising sessions and bring appropriate resources or materials (i.e., pen, timetable of classes, catalog, completed registration form, etc.)
• contact and make an appointment with an advisor when in need of assistance
• follow through on actions identified during each advising session or other communication
• clarify personal values, abilities, interests, and goals during their time at Messiah
• become knowledgeable of and adhere to institutional policies, procedures, and requirements
• review eligibility requirements for scholarships and awards and when appropriate, discuss options with advisor in a timely manner
• evaluate advisors and the advising system when requested, in order to strengthen the advising process