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# STATUS POLICIES

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## GRADUATE STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY

It is the intention of the Seminary to encourage the promotion and informal resolution of grievances as they arise and to provide recourse to orderly procedures for the satisfactory resolution of complaints. A grievance can include, but is not limited to, a complaint, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of stated or implied policies, regulations, or expectations.

Northeastern Seminary policy states that proceedings should be as follows: If a student has a grievance against another person, he or she should first speak directly to that person and then, if the matter is not resolved, to that person's immediate superior and, if necessary, through the chain of responsibility to the academic vice president and dean's office.

If it is necessary to file a written complaint and to process a grievance through the formal chain of responsibility, the process is as follows:

1. The student prepares and submits a formal grievance to the academic vice president and dean of Northeastern Seminary. The academic vice president and dean meets with the individual(s) involved and makes a ruling on the complaint. The ruling is given to the student orally and later in written form.
2. If the student evaluates that satisfactory resolution was not made in step one, the academic vice president and dean's office is responsible for appointing and convening an ad hoc committee composed of: three Seminary faculty members; one first-year student; and one second-year student. (It is understood that the faculty members included in the informal process to resolve the complaint, or close friends of the student submitting the complaint, will not be appointed to the ad hoc committee.) This committee shall conduct its hearings and report its actions within 60 days of the initial report of grievance.
3. Once the committee is appointed, the members are given a copy of the student's written complaint and a summary of the meeting(s) convened by the academic vice president and dean in order to resolve the complaint satisfactorily;
4. Once the committee members have had an opportunity to review the materials provided in step three, a meeting is arranged with the individual(s) involved. One of the faculty members is given the responsibility to arrange and chair the meeting(s). At the meeting, the student presents data supporting his or her grievance. It is the responsibility of the committee members to ask questions of the student or the faculty member involved in the complaint, in order to clarify the information provided in the written complaint or the summary of the previous meeting(s).
5. Once all the data have been collected, a ruling on the complaint will be made by the committee, using simple majority vote. (The committee cannot rule on a grade change without agreement by the faculty member involved.) This ruling is given to the student orally and later in written form.
6. If the student evaluates that satisfactory resolution of the complaint was not made in steps two—five, a complaint may be filed with the president of Northeastern Seminary. The president can involve any appropriate Seminary personnel in the process in order to resolve the complaint.

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7. Once the complaint is resolved, proceedings of the meetings involved are filed in the Northeastern Seminary academic vice president and dean's office.

NES encourages students to seek resolution to their grievances under the umbrella of a biblical society whose integrity merits that no action would be taken against the student for filing a complaint. The rights of both the accused and accuser are upheld during the complaint process and a student will be free from action being taken against him/her for filing a grievance in good faith.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT TERMINATION POLICY**

The academic vice president and dean's office will monitor each student's academic progress and professional development. When necessary, the academic vice president and dean shall appoint an academic progress committee (APC) (see "Academic Progress Committee" section in this catalog). Possible actions for failure to meet academic or professional development requirements are identified below.

Northeastern Seminary faculty will notify the academic vice president and dean's office of concerns about students who are not progressing appropriately in their professional development. Areas of concern may include the following: emotional stability, self-confidence and assertiveness, ability to accept constructive criticism, ability to form and maintain positive relationships, ability to work with diverse groups, and values and ethics consistent with the Seminary.

The formal process of evaluation related to concerns about non-academic issues begins upon signed receipt of the concern(s) in writing, addressed to the APC. The student will be asked to meet with the APC to respond to the concern(s). The committee will also interview other relevant persons as indicated or necessary. The outcome of the process will be one of two possible decisions:

1. Unfounded—which results in no further action by the APC regarding the complaint;
2. Founded—which results in amelioration or recommendation for termination as described in the options under "Failure to Meet Non-Academic Requirements."

## **FAILURE TO MEET NON-ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

Academic progress committee (APC) actions for non-academic issues may include but are not limited to the following:

- The student may be placed on probation and specific areas needing improvement are identified by the APC. A specific plan to address these concerns is developed by the student with his or her faculty advisor. This plan is submitted to the committee. If the committee does not agree with the plan, a committee member meets with the student and his or her academic advisor to develop an alternate plan. The student is allowed to continue in the program as long as he or she is making progress as based on the plan of action.
- The APC may recommend to the academic vice president and dean of the Seminary that the student be terminated. A student who is terminated from the program for non-academic reasons can reapply for admission following withdrawal for one semester (excluding summer). Students reapplying for admission will be reviewed by the APC, prior to review by the admissions committee.

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## **FAILURE TO MEET ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

Academic progress committee (APC) actions for academic issues (poor grades, plagiarism, etc.) may include but are not limited to the following:

- A student may be placed on probation for one semester, be given a specific action plan for making up unsatisfactory work, and allowed to continue in other coursework. Failure to complete all work satisfactorily in the time frame prescribed will result in the student being stopped-out of his/her academic program. Students may not have a probation extended.
- A student may be required to stop out of his/her academic program until such time the incomplete or unsatisfactory work is made up. In this case the student may be required to repeat the failed course or work with the professor to otherwise meet the requirements of the course failed at which time the student may apply for readmission.
- A student may be terminated from his/her academic program and not allowed to continue studies at NES;
- In some, but not all cases, the APC may stipulate when a student who has been terminated may reapply for admission. If allowed, and prior to readmission, the student will be interviewed by the APC.

## **FAILURE TO MEET ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

In cases where there are academic and non-academic reasons to consider termination, the actions identified above will be combined as appropriate. For example, the action may include the student retaking courses and developing a plan to address areas that need improvement.

Once the APC decides on the course of action as identified above, the student and his or her faculty advisor are notified of this action in writing. The student has the right to file a formal grievance with the academic vice president and dean of the Seminary. Procedures for filing a formal grievance are identified in the "Graduate Student Grievance Policy."

In cases of termination from the program, the APC will make this recommendation to the academic vice president and dean of Northeastern Seminary. The academic vice president and dean either concurs with the APC's decision and acts on their recommendation by notifying the student or, in cases other than those that are based on failure to achieve grade standards, may decide otherwise. This completes the termination process. If the student desires to appeal the decision, this must be done by submitting an appeal in writing according to the grievance process.

## **CHANGE OF STATUS**

### **Stopping Out and Dropping Out Policies**

Students sometimes must interrupt their seminary programs because of issues beyond their control such as health problems, unexpected family responsibilities, or financial stress. A student facing such issues should consult with the director of communication and enrollment, who serves as the NES retention officer, prior to making a final decision. This will enable the Seminary to provide whatever assistance possible or help the student develop a plan to reenter as soon as possible, should the interruption prove unavoidable.

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## Stopping Out

Students should always consult with the director of communication and enrollment, who serves as the NES retention officer prior to making any final decision regarding a break in their program. There are costs involved in time and finances that need to be considered. Often assistance is available to help a student through a particularly difficult situation or circumstance to avoid stopping out. There are times, however, when stopping out is unavoidable. In those cases, the following steps outline the process involved, the policy regarding refunds, and returning to the Seminary:

1. Students must notify the admissions office of their plans for stopping out of an NES program and to schedule a personal interview with the NES retention officer. Prior to or during the interview a change of status form must be completed and signed and then an exit interview conducted before the stopping out becomes official.
2. At the time of the stopping out, the student will be responsible for all tuition and fees up to the day the official change of status form was completed and signed, regardless of class non-attendance. If a new class has already begun at the time of stopping out, the refund policy available from student financial services will be used to determine the refund or balance due (see "Tuition Refund Schedule" section in this catalog to determine amounts refunded/due). The refund or balance due will be recorded on the change of status form before the student signs it.
3. Refunds apply to the tuition charges only. Fees and book charges are not refunded.
4. Students are responsible for the appropriate percent of tuition charges if they notify the NES retention officer that they are stopping out after the course begins, even if they did not attend classes (see "Tuition Refund Schedule" section in this catalog);
5. Within the first 12 months after stopping out, a student may reenter the Seminary with the next available cohort or course without having to reapply to NES. The student must, however, give the Seminary a 30-day notice to guarantee placement. A new deposit may be required.
6. After 12 months, the student must complete a reapplication "short form" to be readmitted. If a student's original admission status was under the special category, NES cannot guarantee readmission at the time the student requests. The student's reapplication will be considered against the available quotas allowed under ATS' 10% regulations.
7. Readmission to NES assumes the student is in good standing with student financial services;
8. Students returning to active status will reenter under the then-current financial aid and scholarship structure.

## Dropping Out

A student who, upon departure, develops no plan for returning to the Seminary:

1. Within the first 12 months after dropping out a student may reenter the Seminary with the next available cohort or course following a personal interview with the NES retention officer. The student shall give the Seminary a 30-day notice to guarantee placement.
2. Must reapply, if more than 12 months have elapsed and he/she has not returned with the next available course or cohort.