

Student Handbook

Course Policies and Procedures



SAINT JOSEPH'S COLLEGE
of Maine

Division of Graduate and Professional Studies
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<http://www.sjcme.edu/gps/policies>

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Course Resources and Information

What is a Proctor and How Do I Select One?

What is a proctor?

A proctor is a person who is approved to administer final examinations to you on behalf of Saint Joseph's College. The proctor must be qualified to serve in this capacity and agree to abide by the examination procedures and rules. Once approved, the proctor may serve in this capacity throughout your program of study or until circumstances arise that require you to select a new proctor candidate. (A new proctor form does not need to be completed with every new course). It is your responsibility to initiate and maintain an ongoing relationship with the proctor. If it is determined that the relationship needs to be terminated, you must find a new proctor candidate.

If you currently do not have a proctor on record, you will need to complete a Proctor Candidate Form, which can be obtained from our website at http://www.sjcme.edu/gps/forms_requests.htm or from your Academic Advisor. This form is to be completed by you and the prospective proctor with all of the necessary information. It is essential that the proctor's business address be accurate and that the form be signed by the proctor candidate. **Return the form to the College as soon as possible.**

You may assume that your proctor candidate has been approved if you do not hear from the College.

What are the qualifications for a proctor?

A proctor is a person whose academic and/or experiential background indicates to Saint Joseph's College that he/she has the ability to meet the responsibilities of proctoring an examination. Proctor candidates include the following:

- Academic faculty or advisors
- In-service educators
- Librarians
- Clergy
- Administrative personnel, including those in personnel or human resources offices

The proctor candidate should not be someone with whom you have a personal relationship. Unacceptable candidates include the following:

- Friend or family member
- Direct supervisor
- Someone who works under the student's supervision
- Current or past student of Saint Joseph's College

If you have any questions, concerns, or problems with the selection of a candidate for proctoring your examinations, please call Saint Joseph's College at 1-800-343-5498 or 1-207-893-7800.

The College reserves the right to require you to select another proctor candidate.

How Do I Access Disabilities Services?

Anyone who would like information or needs access to accommodations or services related to disabilities should contact the college's Accommodations Office located in the Academic Center in Alford Hall. The telephone number is 1-800-343-5498 ext. 7563 or 1-207-893-7563.

What is the College’s Grading System?

The following grading system is used by the College:

<u>Undergraduate</u>			<u>Graduate</u>		
Letter Equivalent	Quality Grade	Numerical Points	Letter Equivalent	Quality Grade	Numerical Points
A	4.0	93-100	A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.7	90-92	A-	3.7	90-92
B+	3.3	88-90	B+	3.3	88-90
B	3.0	83-87	B	3.0	83-87
B-	2.7	80-82	B-	2.7	80-82
C+	2.3	78-79	C+	2.3	78-79
C	2.0	73-77	C	2.0	73-77
C-	1.7	70-72	C-	1.7	70-72
D+	1.3	68-69	F	0.0	Below 70
D	1.0	63-67			
D-	.7	60-62			
F	0.0	Below 60			

- F Failure. Assigned when earned or when no final examination is taken. F’s are calculated into the GPA.
- I Incomplete. An incomplete that is not removed within six weeks after being posted becomes an F. Options are available for students with extenuating circumstances. Students should consult with their advisor.
- W Withdrawal within period of no penalty.
- WF Administratively withdrawn for non-completion/nonpayment or withdrawal by student after the last day to withdraw without penalty (a student may lose financial aid eligibility; a student receiving funds as a military educational benefit may be charged with an overpayment from the Veteran’s Administration). The WF is calculated into the GPA.

How Do I Access the Library?

Wellehan Library staff look forward to helping you find and access the information that you need for your coursework. For the most current information about library services available to distance students, please visit the library on the web at <http://www.sjcme.edu/library>.

In addition to the library services that Wellehan provides, you may also find it useful to see how your local public and academic libraries might be of assistance. While services vary, some will offer reference services, access to print journals, and/or allow you to use their electronic databases on site. Some may offer checkout privileges (you may have purchase a card) and/or Interlibrary Loan services. Use of these libraries is not meant to replace your relationship with the Wellehan Library, but to complement the services we provide.

What are the Criteria for Evaluating Student Assignments?

The following guide should be used by students and faculty. It describes criteria for preparing and evaluating student assignments in distance education courses.

For students, the criteria for reading, reasoning, arguing, documenting, organizing, and writing comprise a guide for the most effective completion of a given assignment. The guide enables faculty to provide specific evaluation and focused feedback to each student. It also promotes a more consistent approach among faculty in their review of students' written work. In addition, the guide may facilitate student-faculty dialogue about the strengths and weaknesses of assignments.

The criteria are general and subject to interpretation. They provide latitude for the exercise of judgment by faculty and students. Each category includes the range of work that meets the criteria. An assignment that fits particularly well may qualify for a higher grade (*e.g.*, the difference between a B and B+); work that fits less well may qualify for a lower grade (*e.g.*, a B-).

These criteria are particularly useful for formal papers but also will apply to many other written assignments. Instructors are encouraged to use these criteria as appropriate. The relative value of each criterion may vary according to the nature of the assignment.

Graduate and undergraduate assignments should be evaluated within their respective academic levels.

A CATEGORY

An "A" assignment may be described as "excellent," "superior," or "outstanding." "A" work fulfills the assignment with content that is specific, accurate, interesting, and relevant to that purpose. It demonstrates the following strengths:

I. Comprehension

A. Understanding

Understanding directions, readings, and other instructional materials; course substance as reflected in critical analysis, synthesis of ideas, and intellectual depth; and the relevance of outside sources when applicable.

B. Application

Demonstrating ability to apply concepts, principles, or methods to real- life situations or to interpretations of other course materials; offering pertinent examples and a defensible conclusion.

II. Presentation

A. Organization

Developing the topic logically and coherently; arranging written work with introduction, paragraphs, topic sentences, and conclusion as warranted.

B. Clarity of Expression

Identifying the topic and expressing ideas clearly; using appropriate words.

C. Research/Supporting Material

Integrating a range of high-quality reference sources as appropriate.

D. Mechanics

Using proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation; using proper formats for explanatory notes, documentation, and bibliography.

B CATEGORY

A 'B' assignment may be described as "very good" for undergraduate work and "good" for graduate work. It achieves a high level of competence relative to most of the criteria described in relation to "A" work but falls short of the consistent excellence of "A" work. It may not be as carefully reasoned but shows no serious errors in logic. There may be minor weaknesses in presentation, but the content is effectively organized into coherent units. The assignment is well written and is largely free from errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

C CATEGORY

A 'C' assignment may be described as 'satisfactory' for undergraduate work and "minimally satisfactory" for graduate work. It directly addresses the assignment but does so less completely than "B" work. It covers major points but may demonstrate weaker analysis or synthesis of ideas, less complete development of the topic, or less effective organization. It may contain occasional errors of logic or fact. The writing may demonstrate significant problems with spelling, grammar, and punctuation, but still may achieve general clarity.

D CATEGORY

A 'D' assignment may be described as 'minimally satisfactory' for undergraduate work. The grade is not applicable to graduate work. The assignment is seriously flawed. The topic may be poorly defined. Its development may be digressive or

insufficiently focused. The work may demonstrate serious weaknesses in analysis or synthesis of ideas, faulty development of the topic, or poor organization. There may be pervasive errors in logic or fact. Problems with spelling, grammar, and punctuation may seriously undermine the clarity of the writing.

F CATEGORY

An 'F' assignment may be described as 'unacceptable.' Problems described in the 'D' category are more severely in evidence.

I CATEGORY

An "I" or *Incomplete* assignment may be described as 'unfinished'. The "I" grade indicates that portions of the assignment are missing or not completed. The *Incomplete* assignment is returned to the student through the regular assignment tracking process. Upon receipt of the returned assignment, the student has 30 days to complete the missing portion and resubmit the assignment for grading. After 30 days, the "I" becomes an "F" if no resubmission has occurred.

An "I" or *Incomplete* grade should not be given for an unsatisfactory assignment in order to allow the student an opportunity to rewrite it; the grade earned by the assignment should be given and, should the instructor chose to give the student an opportunity to rewrite the assignment, the unsatisfactory grade will remain until the rewrite has been graded.

NG CATEGORY

A "NG" or *Non Graded* assignment may be described as an assignment that the instructor does not grade. The "NG" grade indicates that the assignment was part of an unauthorized multiple assignment submission.. The faculty member should grade the first assignment but return the additional assignments with a non grade of "NG". All of the assignments are returned through the regular tracking process for documentation. The student may submit the next assignment only after receiving and reviewing the Assignment Evaluation of the previously completed unit assignment.

Course Policies and Procedures

Course Enrollment

All course start dates will be the last day of the month, and all course end dates will be calculated as 15 weeks from the start date. The start date for eArmyU courses will be posted as the 1st day of the month.

For most courses offered at a distance, students have flexibility in scheduling coursework. For certain circumstances, this may include an extension of the course completion date for a small fee. However, the specific format of the course delivery method will determine the course enrollment period as well as the availability of an extension. This information is detailed in the following table:

Course Format	Enrollment Period*	Extension **	Deadline Withdrawal w/o Academic Penalty
Self-Paced Online Learning	15 weeks	Not to exceed 8 weeks	8 weeks
Classroom-Based	15 weeks	None	8 weeks
Special Course/ Special Term	Course Specific	None	Course Specific
Summer	Pre/post work 2 wk classroom	None	5 days after class start date
Capstone/ Practica	***Up to 6 months	Not to exceed 8 weeks	8 weeks

Course Load

In general, a student may enroll in a maximum of two courses simultaneously. After the student's first two courses are completed and as long as the student maintains, satisfactory academic performance and progress, the two course maximum load may be exceeded with the advisor's approval. Satisfactory academic progress is defined as regular participation in a course, submitting an assignment according to posted schedule or for self-paced courses, on average, every 2-3 weeks.

Assignment Submission, Self-Paced Courses

On average, a student should be submitting an assignment every two to three weeks. After submitting the first assignment in any course, a student should not submit the second assignment before receiving the instructor's evaluation of the first. Subsequent assignments may be submitted before the student receives the evaluation of the previous assignment, unless the instructor or advisor establishes different standards. Ordinarily, no more than two assignments per course should be submitted to an instructor simultaneously.

Grade Appeal Procedure

Students are encouraged to resolve any discrepancy in the course grade with the instructor. If resolution is not reached:

1. Students must submit the Student Request for Review of Grade form and supporting documentation to the appropriate Program Director within 30 days after the date recorded on the student's grade report.
2. The Program Director will render a judgment and inform the parties within 30 days.
3. If the student informs the Program Director within 15 days that the decision is not accepted, a Request for Review and supporting documentation must be submitted to Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies.
4. Within 15 days the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies will render a judgment that is final and the decision is filed and conveyed to the parties.

Grievance Policy

A copy of the student grievance policy and the appropriate forms may be obtained by contacting the Office of the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies at 207-893-7803, or by mail at 278 Whites Bridge Road, Standish, ME 04084.

Drop/Add Policy, Substitution Policy

In most programs of study, students may substitute one course for another through the drop/add process. The following table details the types of courses in which drop/add may take place and important timing considerations.

Course Format/Type	Deadline for Drop/Add
Self-Paced Online Learning (SOL)	Within 30 days of the official start
Cyber Classroom	Within 2 days of the official start date
Classroom-based (non summer)	Within 14 days of the official start date

Inactive Status

Students who do not register for subsequent courses within 15 weeks of the completion date of their last course will be declared "inactive" and withdrawn from active status.

All students who receive or have received financial aid in the past will be considered as "withdrawn" for federal reporting purposes if no new courses are started within 15 weeks of the official completion date of the most recent course.

Program Transfer

Students may request evaluation for a possible program change at any time. Requests must be made in writing to the student's academic advisor.

Reactivation Policy

Inactive status subjects students to any new admissions/program requirements instituted by the College since their original enrollment. Inactive students, therefore, are subject to re-evaluation. All delinquent accounts must be settled with the Office of the Treasurer before enrollment in subsequent courses can occur.

Withdrawal Policy

Students desiring to withdraw from the program or a course must submit a written withdrawal request to their academic advisor. Students withdrawing from courses with the required approvals prior to the Deadline Withdrawal without Academic Penalty Date will receive grades of "W," which are not computed into student GPAs. After the specified Deadline Withdrawal without Academic Penalty Date, students may withdraw from course(s) with the required approvals, but these withdrawals will result in failing grades of "WF," which are computed in the students' GPA.

Administrative Withdrawal

Within six months of acceptance into the program, students who have not completed at least one course with a satisfactory final grade may be withdrawn from the program. Students who exceed two administrative withdrawals may be withdrawn from the program for unsatisfactory progress and denied future reinstatement to the program.

Involuntary Withdrawal Policy for Active Duty Students

The college will consider a *retroactive refund* of tuition and fees on a case-by-case basis.

In order to be eligible for a refund under the conditions below, the student must submit the required written notification of withdrawal with sufficient authoritative evidence to document the reason for withdrawal to their Academic Advisor. A decision will be made based upon the documentation and conditions presented.

Specifically, involuntary withdrawal requests, from students who are called to active duty into the armed services, must be substantiated with copies of military orders that show proof of date of entry. The individual's commanding officer or another appropriate official must sign the orders.

Tuition Refunds

The College anticipates that enrolled students will complete the courses in which they are enrolled. Should it be necessary to withdraw from a Graduate and Professional Studies course, students must make their requests in writing to the Advisor. The Treasurer will

determine the amount of refund according to the following schedule for tuition (but not for special fees or room and board) based on the number and type of courses the student was enrolled in:

Self-Paced Online Learning (SOL) Courses:

- Withdrawal before official course start date - 100% of tuition, if paid in full.
- Withdrawal within 15 days of official course start date - 75% of tuition, if paid in full.
- Withdrawal within 30 days of official course start date - 50% of tuition, if paid in full.
- Withdrawal after 30 days of official course start date - No refund.

Cyber-Classroom and Classroom-based (non-summer) Courses:

- Withdrawal before official course start date - 100% of tuition, if paid in full.
- Withdrawal during first week of class - 75% of tuition, if paid in full.
- Withdrawal during second week of class - 50% of tuition, if paid in full.
- Withdrawal during third week of class - 20% of tuition, if paid in full.
- Withdrawal after third week of class - No refund.

Any student dismissed from the College for infraction of College regulations will not be granted refund of tuition.

Financial aid recipients who choose or must withdraw from the College are subject to federal refund regulations as well as the tuition refund policy. A student is generally able to keep aid that has been earned based on the length of time the student has been enrolled during the period of education. The refund calculation is performed within 30 days of the date the official withdrawal form is received by the Office of Financial Aid. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid at 800-752-1266 or 207-893-6612

Financial Aid and Deferment of Prior Loans

<http://www.sjcme.edu/gps/financialaid.htm>

The College offers federal financial aid for students enrolled in degree programs in the Division of Graduate and Professional Studies. Eligible students who have schedules that will allow them to complete courses on time, and who also plan to remain enrolled without breaks, may find that federal aid is a good option. Funding is available through both the Federal Stafford Loan and the Federal Pell Grant (for undergraduates only). For students who desire a more flexible financing option, please contact the Office of Financial Aid for credit-based educational loans that can be used to meet tuition and summer residency costs.

To apply for financial aid a student must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>) and the Graduate and Professional Studies Financial Aid

Application. A copy of the student's (and spouse's, if applicable) signed federal tax return and W2s must also be provided. These materials are reviewed and an award letter will be sent to the student once the student has been fully admitted to a degree program and the student's transfer credits, if any, have been evaluated. A policies and procedures sheet is included with the award letter. Financial aid for distance courses can be used to help meet the cost of tuition. During summer residency courses, financial aid may also be available to assist with travel, room, board, and book costs. Because financial aid can be paid only after coursework is submitted to the College, a student is required to use the payment plan (see Payment Options)

Financial aid for distance courses can be used to help meet the cost of tuition. Stafford Loan funds will be disbursed on approximately the 30th day after the official start date of the course. At that time the student is required to have submitted at least one assignment in each class for which the loan disbursement is being received. A student is eligible for Pell Grant payment only after 25% of the coursework has been submitted for the term.

Many students choose to pay for coursework through means other than financial aid, but are still interested in deferring student loans borrowed previously. A student must be enrolled half-time in order to be eligible for most deferments. The College reports enrollment information through the Clearinghouse, a national student loan database, on a monthly basis. If your lender does use the services of the Clearinghouse, you must contact the lender or servicer for a deferment form for each 15 week period she/he is enrolled. This form (including the lender/servicer name and address) should be sent to the Office of Academic Records for completion.

- As an undergraduate you must be concurrently enrolled in at least six credits (a graduate student must be enrolled in at least three credits) and submit at least one assignment per enrolled class every thirty days. If you fail to submit the next required assignment within thirty days you will be considered less than half-time and ineligible for financial aid and/or deferment of prior loans. While your academic advisor may grant you an extension on your coursework, financial aid guidelines prohibit us from granting any extensions.

(Note: A change of a course's official start date will adversely affect a student's financial aid and loan deferment eligibility.)

For more information, application materials or the Graduate and Professional Studies financing brochure, please call the Office of Financial Aid at 800-752-1266 or 207-893-6612

Repeat Course Policy

A course may be repeated when a student does not meet a departmental or College requirement. A recommendation to repeat must be given by the Program Director. The course that the student is repeating is counted only once in fulfilling degree requirements. If the course is taken through Saint Joseph's College, both grades will remain on a

student's transcript; however, only the latter grade will be used in computing the grade point average.

Extension and Leave of Absence Policies

Each student is expected to complete course work within the allotted course enrollment periods stated earlier. One of the strengths of the distance education program at Saint Joseph's College is the recognition that extenuating circumstances may occasionally require a student to either request an extension to complete a course, or a leave of absence for a longer period of time. For that reason, formal policies have been adopted to meet these adult student needs. Students should contact their academic advisor for more information.

Extension

Students with extenuating circumstances, who have maintained satisfactory academic progress, may be eligible for a paid course extension. Satisfactory academic progress is defined as regular participating in a course, submitting an assignment according to posted schedule or for independent study courses, on average, every 2-3 weeks. Eligibility and approval for an extension is based upon: the specific course format, the satisfactory completion of a minimum of three assignments prior to the office completion date, the receipt of a written extension request and the accompanying per course extension fee <http://www.sjcme.edu/gps/tuition.htm> received prior to the official course completion date. Extensions cannot be used to extend financial aid and/or deferment eligibility

Leave of Absence

With appropriate documentation, students with extraordinary circumstances may be granted a temporary leave of absence from their program of study. An approved leave will ensure that the student keeps their "active" program status. Students will not be granted a leave from a course. Students enrolled in one or more courses who request a leave of absence will work with their academic advisor to determine what options are available to them.

Students active in the military who are subject to deployment should contact their academic advisor to discuss course extensions and leave of absence options.

Academic Honesty Policy

All members of the Saint Joseph's College community are expected to adhere to the principles of academic honesty central to the College's mission. Plagiarism, collusion, falsifying the results of one's research, cheating on examinations and any form of misrepresenting one's own work, or collaborating in the misrepresentation of another's work, are contrary to the traditions and goals of the institution. Instances of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and/or academic sanctions.

You are expected to cite any sources upon which your work is based through the use of bibliographical lists, footnotes, endnotes, and the like. All uses made of the content, style conceptualization, organization methods, and factual materials of others, or of other work you may have produced must also be documented.

As an educational institution, our primary goals regarding plagiarism are to help students understand the ethics of information in today's world and to give them the tools and knowledge they need to remain academically honest. Faculty may use plagiarism detection services, such as Turnitin.com, to help identify potential plagiarism in students' written work.

Procedure in Cases of Academic Dishonesty

When a breach of the Academic Honesty Policy is suspected (or determined), the instructor shall contact the student and discuss the details of the charge. Subsequent disciplinary action shall be at the discretion of the instructor. For a minor violation, the instructor shall either:

1. decide to take no further action, or
2. require that the student's work be resubmitted with appropriate changes.
Beyond a minor violation, the instructor shall either:
3. assign a failing grade for the work submitted, or
4. assign a failing grade for the course.

When either of these last two options is chosen, then notification, along with supporting documentation, should be sent to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies where a record of the infraction will be kept. Depending on the particulars of the case and/or the student's prior history of infractions, the Dean may decide to extend the sanction to include:

1. temporary suspension from the College, or
2. permanent expulsion from the College.

A student accused of academic dishonesty may appeal his/her case in writing to the Dean of Graduate and Professional who will then convene the Academic Review Panel. The role of this Panel is to evaluate the accusation in light of the circumstances bearing upon the case, and then to advise the Dean. The decision of the Dean shall be final.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a person uses the words, ideas, opinions, research, or creative expressions of another as if they were her or his own.

Plagiarism can take many forms. One common type of plagiarism occurs when a person uses another's words without adding quotation marks around the words and clearly stating the source. The words of another may be used only when both of these conditions are present (quotation marks and clear citation of the source). Not using quotation marks implies that the words are created by the student.

Another common example of plagiarism is when an individual uses another person's ideas or opinions and expresses them in his or her own words (called paraphrasing) but fails to cite the source. Although in this case, the words may be the student's, the ideas have been borrowed from another, and that borrowing must be acknowledged.

Plagiarism can involve unacknowledged borrowing from any number of places, including published articles, a classmate's paper, graphs, charts, the Internet or a video production. To take anything owned by another without proper acknowledgement is theft, and plagiarism is intellectual theft. Plagiarism occurs in research papers through failures of documentation, but it also can happen in class reports, essays, tests, and in any other situation in which a student may use the words or ideas of another.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity; it always involves deceit, whether that deceit is intended or not. Ignorance and carelessness sometimes lead to plagiarism, but they are not acceptable excuses. Each individual student has the responsibility to understand and avoid plagiarism. Opportunities to learn about proper use of documentation include English Composition I, II courses and any number of college handbooks or research paper style guides.

The Wellehan Library's home page, accessed at www.sjcme.edu/gpslibrary, maintains a Ready-Reference page of useful links, including resources for reference citation formats.

Policy on Educational Rights and Privacy

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA/Buckley Amendment), Saint Joseph's College will not disclose "personally identifiable information" from a student's educational records unless certain conditions are met or the student consents to disclosure. The College may, however, disclose "directory information" from a student's education records, and the College may designate certain "personally identifiable information" as "directory information."

The College has designated the following information as "directory information":

- student's name, address, telephone listing, and e-mail address
- date and place of birth
- major field of study
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- the weight and height of members of athletic teams
- dates of attendance
- degrees and awards received

- the most recent previous educational institution attended.

Students have the right to refuse to let the College designate as “directory information” any “personally identifiable information” such as their name, address, or other information that would make their identity easily traceable. If students do not want the College to disclose any personally identifiable information as directory information, they must notify the Office of Academic Records and Student Advising in writing and state the information they do not want designated as directory information. The College reserves the right to notify College officials and/or family members of formal actions taken regarding student academic and disciplinary matters when appropriate.

Student Conflict

All forms of communications, written, e-mail, telephone, and face-to-face, within the Division of Graduate and Professional Studies shall be conducted with a mutual level of respect. Adherence to the generally accepted norms for human communications, especially avoiding communications that are false or are likely to be considered as discourteous, malicious, unwanted or causing unjustified loss of prestige is asked of all students, faculty and staff.

Disruptive classroom conduct negatively affects classroom environments as well as the educational experience for all of the students enrolled in the course. The Division of Graduate and Professional Studies defines disruptive classroom behavior as "any behavior that a reasonable person would view as substantially or repeatedly interfering with the conduct of a class". Disruptive classroom behavior will not be allowed. Faculty members have the ability to ask a student to leave a classroom for disruptive behavior; that student will be marked absent for the entire class time.

Students who exhibit disruptive conduct of any type may be put on notice and may be dismissed from the program.