



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Graduate School Academic Fresh Start Policy

Policy Name: Graduate School Academic Fresh Start Policy

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies the requirements for the Graduate Academic Fresh Start Program.

Applicability

This policy is applicable to applicants to the Graduate School. This policy does not apply to students who are exclusively enrolled in Quillen College of Medicine for the M.D. degree or the Gatton College of Pharmacy for the Pharm.D. degree.

Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation

The Dean of the Graduate School and Graduate Council are responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact the Dean of the Graduate School. The Provost, in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

Defined Terms

A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.

Academic Good Standing

A Cumulative Grade Point Average and Program Grade Point Average of 3.0 (B) or higher.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)

The average of grades from all graduate coursework at ETSU as described in the [Graduate School Determination of Grade Point Average Policy](#).

Program Grade Point Average (GPA)

The average of grades earned in courses included in the program of study for a specific graduate degree or certificate as described in the [Graduate School Determination of Grade Point Average Policy](#).

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Matriculation Limit

The time period in which course work can be applied to a graduate degree or certificate program as defined in the policy on [Graduate School Matriculation \(Time\) Limits](#).

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Graduate Academic Fresh Start provides an avenue for former ETSU graduate students to be admitted to their prior or to a new graduate program and omits coursework with grades of B- or less that adversely affected the individual's GPA.

A student may only be granted one (1) Graduate Academic Fresh Start. A student who was dismissed for academic misconduct is not eligible for the Graduate Academic Fresh Start Program.

1. Eligibility for Graduate Fresh Start Program.

A former ETSU graduate student is eligible for a Graduate Academic Fresh Start if:

- 1.1. the individual has not attended graduate classes at ETSU for at least two academic years;
- 1.2. The student's current Cumulative Grade Point Average is below Academic Good Standing and the student could not achieve Academic Good Standing by the end of one semester; and
- 1.3. has not previously been granted a Graduate Academic Fresh Start.

2. Application and Petition for Readmission.

A student applying for admission under Graduate Academic Fresh Start must:

- 2.1. Submit a petition for Academic Fresh Start by utilizing the Graduate Academic Fresh Start Petition. The petition is reviewed to determine if the student qualifies for Academic Fresh Start and if the courses requested are eligible to potentially be applied to the new program of study. The Dean of the Graduate School (or designee) accepts if the student qualifies, or denies the petition if the student does not qualify. The decision of the Dean (or designee) is final.
- 2.2. Follow all normal processes for admission to the Graduate School under the [Graduate School Admissions Degree and Certificate Seeking Students Policy](#). The graduate program admissions committee reviews the admissions application and makes a determination on program admission. The program makes a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School (or designee) to offer or deny the student admission. A student who is approved for Academic Fresh Start may not be admissible to specific programs based on program admission requirements.

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3. Unconditional Admission with Provisions.

If an individual is admitted under the Graduate Academic Fresh Start program, the individual receives an unconditional admission with provision(s). The required provision is that the individual must earn a final grade(s) of “B” or better in each graduate course taken in the first 12 credits. In addition, program admission committees may impose other provisions of admission subject to the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School (or designee). Requests for waiver of provisions set at the time of admission under the Graduate Academic Fresh Start will not be granted

4. Catalog of Record.

The student’s catalog of record will be the catalog for the year of the Graduate Academic Fresh Start admission/readmission.

5. Transcripts.

The student’s transcript will reflect all courses taken and grades received; however, previous graduate coursework that is not covered under the Previous Graduate Credits Section of this Policy will be excluded from the GPA calculations and earned credits calculations. The transcript will include one of the following designations: “Admitted under Graduate Academic Fresh Start” or “Readmitted under Graduate Academic Fresh Start,” as appropriate. Once the transcript is changed, the change cannot be reversed.

6. Previous Graduate Credits.

At the discretion of the program admission committee, up to nine (9) graduate credits (or three courses) for degree programs or six (6) graduate credits (or two courses) for certificates previously earned at ETSU may be applied to the student’s new program of study. These credits will be identified at the time of application and they will be included in GPA calculations. These credits will affect Matriculation Limits and cannot be considered for revalidation if they exceed Matriculation Limits. Thus, a student may need to retake a course if the degree is not completed within Matriculation Limits. All credits taken as part of a previously earned ETSU graduate credential will not be removed from the GPA calculations.

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7. Financial Support.

- 7.1. Graduate Assistantships** – A student admitted or readmitted under Graduate Academic Fresh Start Program may be considered for graduate assistantships if the student meets the eligibility requirements in the GA Handbook.

8. Financial Aid Generally.

This policy is independent of financial aid regulations. A Graduate Academic Fresh Start applicant should check with an ETSU Financial Aid counselor with regard to eligibility for financial aid.

9. Accommodations.

To the extent possible, the Dean of the Graduate School (or designee) may grant, in the Dean's discretion, reasonable accommodations to the requirements of this policy.

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Procedures

1. Student Procedures

To apply for the Graduate Academic Fresh Start Program the student must:

1.1. Submit a completed application, all required materials to the graduate program of interest, and pay the application fee by the program deadline; and

1.2. Complete a [Graduate Academic Fresh Start Petition](#) form.

1.2.1. The petition form requires a statement that addresses professional and/or personal growth during the time absent from Graduate School, as well as information that will inform the program of the current potential for academic success.

1.2.2. The petition form allows students to request up to nine (9) credits (or three courses) for degree programs and six (6) credits (or two courses) for certificate programs to be transferred from the prior graduate program into the new graduate program, subject to Graduate Coordinator approval.

2. Graduate School and Graduate Program Procedures

2.1. Academic Fresh Start has a two-part review process. The Graduate School review is the first step. Once the student submits a Petition for Academic Fresh Start, the Graduate School determines if the student meets the criteria for eligibility and if the courses potentially could be used for the new program of study (e.g., within the matriculation limit, grade is eligible). The Graduate School makes one of two decisions:

2.1.1. If the student is eligible for Academic Fresh Start and the requested courses are eligible, the Graduate School Dean (or designee) approves the petition. The petition is included along with the program application and application materials and are referred to the graduate program coordinator. If the student does not meet the requirements, the Graduate School will deny the petition for Academic Fresh Start.

2.1.2. If the student is not eligible for Academic Fresh Start but is potentially admissible to the program to which they have applied, the application is referred to the program without the Academic Fresh Start petition.

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- 2.1.3. If a student is not admissible to the program, the Graduate School denies the application.
- 2.2. The second step involves the graduate program. If the Graduate School approves the petition, the graduate program coordinator and the graduate program faculty admissions committee (if applicable) review the application and make a recommendation to the Graduate School to accept or deny the application for admission. Notification of admission or denial follows the same procedures as the [Graduate School Degree and Certificate Seeking Students Admissions Policy](#).
- 2.3. The program coordinator also determines if the coursework requested on the Academic Fresh Start petition can be used in the new program of study. The program coordinator can approve all, some, or none of the courses requested in the Academic Fresh Start petition. The program coordinator may consult with the Graduate School about other potential courses from the student's prior transcript to use instead. The determination of which courses to accept is at the discretion of the program.

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Applicable Forms and Websites

[Graduate Academic Fresh Start Petition](#)

Authority and Revisions

Authority: TCA § 49-8-203, et seq.

Previous Policy: Formerly part of the Graduate Admissions Policy

The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.