UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Operative Catalog

The Plymouth State University Academic Catalog is a general document that provides information regarding policies, procedures, academic programs and related costs. Every effort has been made to assure accuracy at the time of publication. However, Plymouth State, through the appropriate action of its Board of Trustees, the administration and faculty, reserves the right to make changes as educational and financial considerations may require. Any such changes may be implemented without prior notice, without obligation and unless specified, are effective when made. This Catalog should not be construed as constituting a contract between the University and any person. Students are subject to graduation/curriculum requirements in the Catalog which was in effect at the time of their matriculation. Typically, students may elect to fulfill the requirements in any subsequent Catalog, provided they were enrolled at the time the Catalog was published. The University reserves the right to make substitutions for courses which are no longer offered. In either case, the graduation requirements of the Catalog are to be considered in their entirety; students may not fulfill part of their requirements from one Catalog and another part from another Catalog. Administrative, academic and financial policies and requirements may change each year. These policies pertain to all students enrolled in the academic year in which each new Catalog is in effect.

Email and Electronic Signatures

Plymouth State University (PSU) maintains email accounts for all students. The University uses this email account as an official means of communication with students. University staff, faculty and departments will communicate to students directly through PSU email and in many instances will consider this email correspondence as the student's signature. Faculty may communicate to an entire class of students in the same email and may expect students to reply in kind. Students are responsible for maintaining their University email account so that it is open for new mail and are expected to read their PSU email regularly and respond appropriately. If students choose to forward their PSU email to another email provider, they are still responsible for receiving all University communications.

Student Athletes

Plymouth State University places a high priority on our student athletes making satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degrees. Our goal is that involvement in athletics helps ensure that students are on track to graduate. In support of this goal, the Athletics Department has established specific practices. Students should contact the compliance officer in the Athletics Department for complete details.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of the pursuit of knowledge. All members of the academic community are expected to be dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge in an honest, responsible, respectful, and ethical manner. Every violation of academic integrity is an affront to the academic community. Violations of academic integrity make fair evaluation impossible and cast doubt upon the seriousness with which students accept the responsibility of acquiring an education.

Members of the academic community are expected to report all instances of those violations which come to their attention. Both faculty and administration consider it their duty, as guardians of academic standards and intellectual honesty, to enforce the following policy by identifying, investigating, and bringing to a resolution all cases of violation of academic integrity. Students are urged to consider that it is the toleration of violations of academic integrity, and not the reporting of it that is dishonorable.

1. **Definitions**
   a. What is a Violation of Academic Integrity?
      A violation of academic integrity includes any act which portrays a member of the academic community as having acquired knowledge through legitimate study or research which, in fact, has been stolen. Violation of academic integrity includes also any act which gains one member of the academic community an unfair advantage over another. This includes any act hindering the academic accomplishment of another.
      Examples of violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, the following:
      i. Providing or using unauthorized books, notes, or other sources of information during an examination.
      ii. Submitting another person's work as one's own, that is, plagiarism. This includes, for example: copying during examinations; purchasing papers or taking them from Internet resources; copying papers, reports, laboratory results, or computer work; quoting or paraphrasing library or Internet sources without proper citations.
      iii. Using any "artificial intelligence" aid to complete assignments and academic assessments is a form of academic dishonesty, unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
      iv. Doing work for which another person will receive credit. This includes, for example, allowing one's examination answers, reports, laboratory results, or computer work to be submitted by another person as their own work.
      v. Falsifying, through forgery or other alteration, academic documents such as transcripts, registration materials, withdrawal forms, or grade reports.
      vi. Reading, removing, or copying, without authorization, or stealing any academic document, exam, or academic record maintained by any member of the faculty or administration.
      vii. Using unauthorized assistance in the laboratory, at the computer terminal, or on field placement.
      viii. Stealing, copying, or destroying another person's computer program or file, deliberately preventing or depriving another's access to the University computer system or resources, or impeding the system's performance.
      ix. Stealing, or removing without authorization, books or periodicals from the library, or mutilating library materials.
      x. Falsifying or fabricating data or results of research or field work.
      xi. Lying in connection with an academic integrity investigation.
   b. Who are Involved in Academic Integrity Cases?
      i. Complainant: The Complainant is the individual who makes the discovery of an alleged violation and initiates proceedings as described in the list of required actions by the Complainant.
      ii. Examiner: The Examiner is a designated academic colleague (e.g., department chair, program coordinator, or Cluster coordinator) who reviews allegations with the Complainant

to determine if the evidence is sufficient for taking prescribed actions.

iii. Student(s): The student(s) is the individual(s) alleged to have violated the Academic Integrity policy.

iv. Academic Student Advocate: The Academic Student Advocate is an independent campus resource who can advise both the Complainant and student on specific policy matters. The office of the Academic Student Advocate receives and maintains all electronic records from the beginning to the end of an inquiry.

v. Academic Integrity Appeals Panel: The Academic Integrity Appeals Panel is a body comprised of faculty and students. The panel hears appeals regarding findings of responsibility and sanctioning.

2. **What Steps Are Taken When a Violation of Academic Integrity Is Suspected?**
In cases where a violation of academic integrity in coursework is suspected, or in other cases of suspected violations, the individual making the discovery, the Complainant, must initiate proceedings as prescribed in the list of required actions.

a. Required Actions by the Complainant

i. Any alleged violation of academic integrity should be examined by at least two people. In the case of a violation of academic integrity associated with a class, these people shall include the instructor (Complainant) and an Examiner. In other cases, the people shall include whoever is making the complaint and whoever is in charge of the area of complaint. In the case of stealing, removing, or mutilating library materials in conjunction with a course, the library shall notify the course instructor of the violation. The course instructor shall pursue the complaint. Library personnel may be asked to appear as witnesses.

ii. Any supporting evidence shall be gathered and verified as thoroughly as possible. The examination shall be thorough enough to establish with reasonable confidence whether a violation of academic integrity occurred, who the parties involved are, and that allegations can be justly made and are supportable. The examination shall proceed as quickly as possible and should be completed within seven days.

iii. If the Complainant and Examiner determine through the review of evidence that the alleged behavior is not a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, no further actions are taken.

iv. If the Complainant and Examiner determine through the review of evidence that the alleged behavior violates the Academic Integrity Policy, the student, or students, shall meet with the Complainant and be made aware of any accusations and be given a copy of this policy. This shall be done in a nonthreatening manner. The student shall be provided with the evidence and given the chance to respond to the allegation. The Complainant must inform the student that they may consult with the academic student advocate before any further actions are taken. The academic student advocate is an independent resource who can assist the student with policy questions and who will review findings and outcomes to assure fairness and consistency in application of the Academic Integrity Policy.

v. The Complainant must file an online Academic Integrity reporting form with the office of the academic student advocate. The form describes the allegation, confirms that an Examiner has reviewed the evidence, reports all evidence pertaining to the allegation, and recommends sanctions (see Sanctions Options below).

vi. After presenting the allegation to the student the Complainant shall, within seven days, arrange a resolution meeting with the student. The purpose of the resolution meeting is to discuss sanctions for the academic integrity violation. If the student accepts responsibility for violating the policy and accepts the Complainant's proposed sanctions, the matter is resolved, pending final independent review by the Academic Student Advocate. If the student does not agree with the Complainant's allegation or does not agree with the proposed sanctions, the student may request an independent appeal hearing before an Academic Integrity Appeals Panel. If the student fails to communicate with the Complainant and/or attend the resolution meeting, the case will be decided per the judgment of the Complainant's and Examiner's review of evidence.

b. Required Actions by the Student

i. Honor any requests by the Complainant for evidence concerning any alleged violations of academic integrity. This is the first and best opportunity for the student to present ameliorating evidence and/or arguments of innocence.

ii. Continue to attend the course until notified otherwise.

iii. Read and review the Academic Integrity Policy. The student is encouraged to contact the Academic Student Advocate with any questions regarding the policy. The Academic Student Advocate will advise the student of their rights and responsibilities and provide guidance for further actions. If requested, the Academic Student Advocate will accompany the student to any subsequent meeting(s).

iv. Respond to requests from the Complainant to schedule and attend an Academic Integrity resolution meeting.

c. Academic Integrity Resolution Meeting Outcomes
There are three possible outcomes from the resolution meeting between the Complainant and the student:

i. A determination of an unintentional violation is made. This may be the outcome wherein it is determined that the alleged violation resulted from poor academic practice resulting from a lack of sufficient knowledge/training. In such cases the student and Complainant shall work together to give the student the opportunity to learn the correct academic practice. As with all grades, instructors will evaluate the assignment in question and may account for the violation in their evaluation.

ii. A judgment of an intentional violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is sustained. Based on the evidence, the Complainant will recommend a sanction (see Sanction Options below). If the student accepts responsibility for this outcome and the recommended sanction, the matter is officially resolved pending independent review by the Academic Student Advocate.

iii. A judgment of an intentional violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is sustained, but the student disagrees with the finding and/or recommended sanction. In such cases, a student may ask for an appeal hearing before an independent Academic Integrity Panel.

d. Role of the Academic Student Advocate
All cases are reviewed for consistency in sanctioning by the Academic Student Advocate. If the ASA determines that the outcome of a case is consistent with past outcomes for

violations of a similar nature, no further action is taken and the matter is officially resolved. If the ASA determines that an outcome deviates significantly from past outcomes for violations of a similar nature, the ASA will work with the Complainant to resolve the discrepancy. If the ASA and Complainant are unable to resolve the discrepancy, the case will automatically be referred to the Academic Integrity Appeals Panel.

3. **Academic Integrity Appeals Panel**
   a. Composition of the Academic Integrity Appeals Panel
   The Office of the Academic Student Advocate will convene the Academic Integrity Appeals Panel. The Academic Integrity Appeals Panel will consist of:
      - A designated chair who shall be a faculty member recruited from the membership of the Academic Affairs Committee.
      - Two PSU faculty members recruited from a faculty pool.
      - Two student members.

   b. What Happens At an Academic Integrity Appeals Panel Hearing?
      i. At the student's request, a hearing before an independent Academic Integrity Panel will be scheduled within seven days of the resolution meeting described above. The appeal may be directed at the Complainant's allegation, the recommended sanction, or both. The Complainant, student, panel members, and witnesses shall be notified of the hearing date. The Complainant and student are required to attend the hearing.
      ii. The student should continue to attend the course until a decision is rendered at the appeal hearing.
      iii. The student may consult with the Academic Student Advocate regarding the appeal and may request the presence of the Academic Student Advocate at the appeal hearing.
      iv. The panel will hear the statements of the Complainant, student, and witnesses. Based on those statements and the evidence behind the allegation, the panel will decide on the merit of the appeal.
      v. If the appeal is denied, the student must comply with all requirements of the original finding and sanction as determined by the Complainant.
      vi. If the appeal is granted, the panel may rescind a finding of responsibility for a violation or may impose a different sanction.

4. **Sanctions**
   a. Determining an Appropriate Sanction
   The appropriateness of a sanction should, using the Complainant's best professional judgment, reflect the severity and extent of the violation. Complainants are expected to exercise fairness and consistency in determining sanctions. The Complainant may consult with the Academic Student Advocate to seek guidance about sanctions, but nonetheless should consider the following questions in making a decision:
      i. Does the violation entail a minor portion or a significant portion of an assessment?
      ii. Does the violation reflect carelessness/lack of knowledge or does it reflect a calculated and deliberate attempt to gain an unfair advantage?
      iii. Does the violation involve any external constituencies?
      iv. Does the violation entail any behaviors that would warrant investigation by other campus offices (e.g., Student Conduct Office, University Police—if a violation of academic integrity involves damage to University property or otherwise violates the law, legal or disciplinary action may also be taken)?

All findings of responsibility will result in a record of violation. Additional sanctions beyond that are classified as Level 1 or Level 2. In most cases when students are found to be responsible for violating the Academic Integrity Policy, whether by admission or by evidence examined by the Complainant, and where the incident occurs in connection with a specific course, the Complainant shall impose one of the following Level 1 sanctions:

- Resubmission of an assessment with no grade penalty
- Resubmission of an assessment with a grade reduction penalty
- Lowered grade or grade of failure for an assessment
- Record of violation only (In cases where a violation of academic integrity occurs apart from a particular course or where it has a minor or tenuous impact on a course, the penalty may be simply having a record of conviction. A record of conviction is a serious consequence of a first offense.)

If the Complainant judges an intentional violation to be egregious (e.g., extensive plagiarism; falsification of research data; forgery of a supervisor's signature), a recommendation for imposing a Level 2 sanction may be offered. A recommendation for imposing a Level 2 sanction will automatically require that the Complainant and student appear before the Academic Integrity Appeals Panel, which will determine the sanction.

Level 2 sanctions are:

- Failure for the course
- Suspension from PSU for a semester or for one academic year
- Expulsion from PSU

a. Second Offense
Upon receiving an Academic Integrity Incident Report Form, the Academic Student Advocate will review prior records to determine if the violation is a first, second, or third offense. If it is determined that a violation is a second offense, the matter is automatically brought for consideration to the provost and vice president for academic affairs, or designee, who will determine a sanction. The second conviction for violating academic integrity will normally result either in suspension from PSU for one semester or for one academic year, or expulsion. Also, if the second offense occurs within a particular course, an F will be posted on the transcript as the final grade for that course.

b. Third Offense
A third violation of the Academic Integrity Policy will result in an automatic and immediate expulsion from Plymouth State University. A student will be withdrawn from all courses.

Records

If the student has a formal resolution meeting with a Complainant and is found not responsible for an academic integrity violation, no official records shall be kept. Whenever students have been found in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, a record of the conviction shall be retained permanently by the Office of the Academic Student Advocate. The Academic Student Advocate, all faculty and principal administrators with legitimate need to know, and the student in question shall have the

privilege of access to the record. The Academic Student Advocate shall retain all evidence related to the case until three years after the student has left the University. A record of the conviction shall be reportable to the appropriate academic affairs administrator if the student is convicted of a subsequent violation of the Academic Integrity Policy and to any outside agencies legally requesting this information until the student graduates or five years after the finding.

Fair Grading

Fair and equitable grading reflects values to which all members of the Plymouth State University community commit themselves. Grades are used to assess the relative extent to which students achieve course objectives in all for-credit courses at PSU.

Academic freedom allows instructors

1. to determine course objectives, within the bounds of established curricula, and the means by which a student's mastery of those objectives will be evaluated, and
2. to evaluate the quality of work on individual exams or assignments.

Students have the right to challenge evaluations of their work, and hence instructors are accountable with regard to providing and explaining all relevant grades and grading criteria. Grading challenges are of two kinds. Those that question the accuracy of grades are resolved by means described under Grade Appeals. Questions related to the policy or process of making assignments and determining the final grade are addressed by Standards for Fair Grading.

Standards for Fair Grading

To achieve fair and equitable grading, instructors shall inform students, in writing, e.g., via a syllabus, of the course objectives and the means by which student mastery of those objectives will be determined. Instructors are expected to share this information with students during the first class meeting and to provide this information, in writing, no later than the second class meeting. These arrangements cannot be altered after the class has met for one quarter of its scheduled class meeting time if the changes disadvantage a student. The grade of a student shall be based solely on the criteria known to all students in the class, and all such criteria shall apply to mastery of stated course objectives.

Examples of violations of the fair grading policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- allowing alternate work to substitute for coursework assignments, for a particular student or group of students, when that option has not been stated in the syllabus as available to all students;
- allowing a student to perform extra work, over and above that described in the syllabus, to influence their grade, when that same opportunity has not been made available to all students;
- allowing any student to perform extra work after final grades have been submitted to improve their grade.

Exceptions to the above example violations may be allowed in cases related to documented learning disabilities when alternative testing arrangements have been made through the Campus Accessibility Services Office (CAS) and in cases where there are documented serious extenuating circumstances.

When a member of the Plymouth State University community believes that fair grading practices are not being followed in a particular course, they must raise the issue in the following way.

Raise the issue with the instructor of the course to consider whether the suspected violation of the fair grading policy did occur. If the facts of the matter are disputed, without resolution, the course's designated program coordinator (or, in their absence, the academic unit leader) shall be consulted; if unresolved, the Academic Student Advocate shall be consulted. If it is determined that a violation of the fair grading policy did occur, either through the above process or through the instructor saying so at the outset, the instructor shall change the grade accordingly and the matter will be considered resolved. If the matter remains unresolved following review by the Academic Student Advocate, the Faculty Academic Affairs Committee shall hear the facts and reach findings. If the Academic Affairs Committee determines that the faculty member violated the Fair Grading Policy, the faculty member shall comply with the finding and change the grade accordingly.

Barring matters related to the just administration of the fair grading policy above, final grades submitted to the registrar may only be changed due to an error in determining the grade or an error in recording the grade. Students may challenge the accuracy or completeness of their semester's academic record for a period of one year from the end of the semester in question. Therefore, faculty have the responsibility to either return work to the student or keep supporting documentation of graded student work (i.e., exams, papers, projects, spreadsheets, and grade records, etc.) for a period of one year. After this period the University shall have no obligation to alter a student's academic record.

Grade Appeals

Students who challenge a grade should begin by talking with the instructor of the course involved. If the situation cannot be resolved by that means, or if the nature of the problem precludes discussion with the instructor, students may bring the matter to the attention of the the course's designated program coordinator (or, in their absence, the academic unit leader). The designated program coordinator will attempt to resolve the matter either through discussion with the instructor alone or jointly with the student. If these meetings do not provide a solution satisfactory to all parties, the question may be taken to the Academic Student Advocate, where the matter will be reviewed. If the Academic Student Advocate is unable to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all parties, the Academic Student Advocate can ask the Academic Affairs Committee to hear the matter as described above in the Standards for Fair Grading.

In circumstances where the instructor is no longer employed at Plymouth State University, a student should follow the procedures outlined below in the policy for Special Circumstances for Grade Appeals and Faculty Grade Change Procedures.

Faculty Grade Change Procedure

All grades are considered final when posted in myPlymouth by the instructor. The circumstances and procedures outlined in the Fair Grading and the Grade Appeal policies described above represent the only means by which a final grade may be changed. When a final grade change is warranted an instructor requests a grade change by submitting a course grade change form to the registrar for approval. Grades of Incomplete (IC) are submitted to the registrar in accordance with the University's Incompletes policy. Change of IC grades to letter grades are subsequently submitted through a course grade change form to the registrar.

In circumstances where the instructor is no longer employed at Plymouth State University, a grade change may be initiated through the procedures

outlined below in the policy for Special Circumstances for Grade Appeals and Faculty Grade Change Procedures.

Special Circumstances for Grade Appeals and Faculty Grade Change Procedures.

In circumstances where the faculty member is no longer employed at the University, grade change determinations will be made following inquiry and information gathering by the Academic Student Advocate in consultation with the designated program coordinator (or, in their absence, the academic unit leader) and the Associate Provost. If this investigative process determines that a final recorded grade is inaccurate due to an error in computation, an error in recording, or a violation of the Fair Grading Policy, the designated program coordinator or academic unit leader is authorized to submit a course grade change form to the Registrar.

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Rights Regarding Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA – 20 USC § 1232G; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the US Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents/legal guardians certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when s/he reaches the age of 18 or attends a postsecondary institution. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students". (Plymouth State University defines "attends a postsecondary institution" as the first day of classes of the student's start term; applicants who do not become students have no FERPA rights).

University personnel who have educational records in a personally identifiable form must comply with the administrative procedures outlined in this section.

Students may direct questions regarding FERPA and the regulations to the registrar.

Definition of Education Records, School Official and Legitimate Educational Interest

Educational records are defined as records, files, documents and other materials which contain information directly related to a student that are maintained by a Plymouth State University office, department, or University official. Educational records do not include personal files of faculty and staff, law enforcement records, or parent's financial records. Nothing in FERPA prohibits a University official from sharing information that is based on that official's personal knowledge or observation and that is not based on information contained in an educational record.

A "**school official**" includes any person employed by the University to fulfill the University's mission, such as, but not limited to, faculty, administrators, staff, counselors and health and safety personnel; people or companies contracted with the University such as, but not limited to, an attorney, auditor, consultant or collection agent; or a student serving on an official committee or assisting another school official in performing their official tasks.

A school official generally has a "**legitimate educational interest**" if that official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill their professional responsibilities as described in their job description. This means that education records that are needed for the school official to perform their duties as assigned by the university will be released without direct student permission.

As custodians of student records in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, amended in 1998, the university assumes the trust and obligation to ensure the full protection of student records which includes maintaining the confidentiality of educational records. The university has developed policy guidelines for access to educational records with respect to the rights of eligible students and parents of dependent eligible students. Educational records maintained by the university are considered confidential, except for directory information and information that is exempt from the need for consent.

To ensure that students have timely academic advising, PSU protocols allow for multiple advisors. This means that students may be advised by not only the faculty or staff member formally assigned to them, but also by other faculty in their program (major, minor, certificate), or staff from the Center for Student Success. PSU also offers varying levels of instruction for certain courses. As a result, students enrolling in these courses may find them to be combined, or stacked, for academic purposes such as skills-based instruction. Courses may include, but are not limited to, those related to instruments, performance, and band/ensembles.

PSU instructors may make the decision to combine courses in order to enable students to collaborate on a project, work on a similar topic or problem, meet with a visiting expert, or other academic purposes. These courses could be different sections of the same course, different levels of courses in the same subject area, or courses that are connected through a common theme. Students will be notified in the course syllabus if their course will be combined.

- For example, two sections of Tackling a Wicked Problem (IS 1115) may be combined, the undergraduate and graduate levels of a course topic such as Climate Change (MT 4440 & MT 5430) may be combined, or a course on Play & Learning in Early Childhood may meet periodically with a course on Creating Games.

*Concerning student-athletes: It has been determined, via the need-to-know element within FERPA, that the Athletic Events & Compliance Coordinator can receive information regarding all conduct matters involving student-athletes.

Directory Information

Directory Information is information concerning a student that may be disclosed *at the discretion of* Plymouth State University. If information is approved for release, it may be shared through verbal, printed, electronic or other form, without prior consent. The university includes the following as Directory Information:

- Student name
- Awards/honors (e.g. Latin Honors, President's List, Dean's List, Honors List)
- Dates of attendance and/or semesters attended
- Class standing (e.g. first year, senior, admitted to master's program)
- Dates of degrees and certificates conferred
- Commencement Program listings
- Enrollment status (full-time, part-time)
- Hometown

- Participation on athletic teams
- Physical factors (athletes only)
- Degree and major field of study (e.g. BS/BA, undergraduate major, graduate program)
- Names of previous institutions attended
- Past and present participation in officially recognized co-curricular activities (e.g. sports, music, drama)
- PSU mail box number
- PSU email address (internal use only)
- Birth date (internal use only)

Exceptions to Prior Consent

Educational records may not be released to a third party without written consent of the student except in the following situations.

- To University officials, including the University's attorney/s, who have a legitimate educational interest.
- To institutions where a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- To USNH branches in compliance with trustee policies.
- To parents of dependent students. (Appropriate IRS forms are required and generally students are notified of the request.)
- In response to subpoenas/court orders.
- Information considered "directory information" may be released at the discretion of the university.
- Notification of conduct outcome to victims of a crime of violence violation.
- Information that can be released to the public as explained in the student conduct section of the handbook.
- Parental notification in drug and alcohol related violations and threats to health and safety.
- Records of deceased former students may be released or disclosed at the request of a parent, personal representative, or other qualified representative of the student's estate, or pursuant to a court order to subpoena.
- Authorized representatives of the comptroller general, the Secretary of Education, the administrative head of an educational agency, state education authorities, or the attorney general when investigating government sponsored or affiliated program.
- Officials responsible for acting in conjunction with the student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid.
- Authorized individuals or organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of the University for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests; for administering student aid programs; and for improving instruction. These studies must be conducted in such a manner as will not permit the personal identification of students and their parents by persons other than representatives of the University or such organizations. This information is to be destroyed when it is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was collected. Authorization for such activities will come from the appropriate University administrator.
- Other entities with whom the university has directly contracted to offer/provide approved goods and services.
- If a parent or student initiates legal action against the University.

If educational records are released in situations where prior consent is not needed and a student may not be aware of the release, a reasonable attempt will be made to notify a student of what information was released and to whom it was released.

Rights Under FERPA

Students have the following rights regarding directory information and educational records:

Right to Inspect and Review Educational Records

Excluding financial aid records of the student's parents or guardian, confidential letters of recommendation where a student signed a waiver of right-of-access, or letters of recommendation written prior to January 1, 1975.

The University does not maintain a central repository for student records. Inquiries for access to specific educational records should be made to the University office or agency responsible for a particular record. Assistance in determining the location of individual educational records may be obtained in the Office of the University Registrar.

- To gain access a student may be requested to provide proper identification.
- Access to records will be given as soon as reasonably possible and no later than 45 days of the request.
- A designated University official must review and interpret the contents of the record with the student.
- If a student is unable to reasonably review the record in person, they may request a copy of a particular record, excluding tapes of hearings, and may be charged the reproduction cost of copies. The request for a copy must be in writing and may only be granted if the release of the record will not violate FERPA rights of any other students. The University has 45 days to respond to this request.

Right to Seek to Amend Records

If a student contests certain information contained in a specific record, they may seek to have the particular record amended. To do so, the student must request the amendment in writing to the office that maintains the particular record. The request does not guarantee that the amendment will be granted.

- The written request must state the specific data the student is requesting to amend and the reason for the request.
- The department or University official that received the request may or may not agree to amend the selected information. If the request is denied, the student may follow the procedures developed for that particular department in order to continue to seek amendment of the record. If the request is still denied, the student may request an appeal through the Office of Academic Affairs.
- The student will receive a written decision as to whether or not the record was amended.
- If the record is amended, an explanation of what was amended will be provided to the student and the amendment will be placed in the student's record.
- If the record is not amended the student has the right to place a written statement with the record they are contesting, explaining what information is contested, and why they are contesting it.

Right to Have Records Released to a Third Party

A student may give a University official or office permission, to release verbally or in writing, educational records to a third party. (Some copies of educational records may not be released to a third party. Such records are determined through the office maintaining the records.)

- To do so the student must provide, to the appropriate office, a written statement requesting the release or complete a release of information form. Individual offices may have a specific form for this request. The student must sign and date the request.
- The student must specify which records may be disclosed, the reason the records are to be disclosed, and to whom the records may be disclosed.
- If a student wishes to revoke a previous request for a release, they must do so in writing to the original office the release was implemented.

Right to Have Some Control Over the Disclosure of Information from Educational Records

There are general rights students have under FERPA that are entailed in this section such as having the choice to release information to certain third parties, requesting that directory information not be made public, etc.

Right to Request that Directory Information Not be Made Public

- To do so, a student must contact the Office of the Dean of Students by the tenth day of class in a semester (or between the first and fifth day of class in a summer session).
- The nondisclosure of directory information is an all or none option (either it all may be disclosed or none of it may be disclosed).
- This request will remain in effect until canceled by the student. During this time, the directory information will then be treated the same as educational records.
- Given the fluid nature of electronic information it is not possible to guarantee total nondisclosure but every reasonable effort will be taken to protect confidentiality.

Right to Waive Access to Records

A student may sign a waiver of right-of-access to confidential recommendations concerning admission, application for employment, references, and/or application for an honor or honorary recognition.

- In such cases, the student, upon request, shall be notified of the names of individuals making such confidential recommendations. These recommendations are used solely for the purpose for which they were intended.
- In the event a student chooses not to sign a waiver of access, such an act may not be considered as a condition for admission, receipt of financial aid, or any other service or benefit from the University.

Right to File a Complaint

A student has the right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202#4605

*FERPA Annual Notice to Reflect Possible Federal and State Data Collection and Use

As of January 3, 2012, the U.S. Department of Education's FERPA regulations expand the circumstances under which your education records and personally identifiable information (PII) contained in such records—including your Social Security Number, grades, or other private information—may be accessed without your consent.

First, the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or state and local education authorities ("Federal and State Authorities") may allow access to your records and PII without your consent to any third party designated by a Federal or State Authority to evaluate a federal# or state#supported education program. The evaluation may relate to any program that is "principally engaged in the provision of education," such as early childhood education and job training, as well as any program that is administered by an education agency or institution.

Second, Federal and State Authorities may allow access to your education records and PII without your consent to researchers performing certain types of studies, in certain cases even when we object to or do not request such research. Federal and State Authorities must obtain certain use#restriction and data security promises from the entities that they authorize to receive your PII, but the Authorities need not maintain direct control over such entities.

In addition, in connection with Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems, State Authorities may collect, compile, permanently retain, and share without your consent PII from your education records, and they may track your participation in education and other programs by linking such PII to other personal information about you that they obtain from other Federal or State data sources, including workforce development, unemployment insurance, child welfare, juvenile justice, military service, and student records systems.

Statement of Student Responsibility

The student is responsible for reading and adhering to academic policies and regulations in University publications, University documents and program materials. The student is also responsible for ensuring that their contact and biographical information is accurate.

Academic Calendar

Plymouth State University offers two full-length semesters: the fall semester (August through December) and the spring semester (January through May). Multiple parts-of-term are held within the semesters. Between these semesters is a term known as winterim which allows students to accelerate their programs, take courses missed during the regular sequence, or catch up in terms of academic progress. Courses offered in winterim run on condensed schedules to provide approximately the same number of classroom hours as when these same courses run during the fall and spring semesters. During winterim undergraduate students with a 2.33 (minimum) cumulative grade point average may enroll for eight credits. Students with a cumulative grade point average of less than 2.33 may enroll for eight credits, with approval from the Academic Student Advocate. Any student requesting more than eight credits must secure approval from the Academic Student Advocate and an academic affairs officer.

Courses are also offered in the summer term. Full courses running on variable schedules are available in these summer parts-of-term. A variety of courses are offered, which can accelerate students' academic progress. During the summer term, undergraduate students may enroll for a maximum of 18 credits. Any student requesting more than 18 credits must secure approval from the Academic Student Advocate and an academic affairs officer.

Class Attendance

Plymouth State University students are held accountable for meeting all course requirements, which may include both in-class and out-of-class experiences, as well as both individual and group-based activities. Students must therefore realize that they are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of courses in which they are enrolled.

Instructors outline attendance policies and explain the effect multiple absences have on final grades—whether or not unexcused absences will be used in computing grades—in the course syllabus. Course syllabi are distributed during the first class meeting, posted online, or can be requested from the instructor in advance. In classes that use online classroom management software (such as Canvas), online student activity is recorded and may be used to determine participation. Instructors maintain records to show the attendance policy is being followed.

Students are urged to recognize the importance of participation in class activities and to be aware that grades may be affected by absences or lack of participation during online coursework. Instructors shall determine the class attendance policies and to decide whether to allow students to make up missed work for unexcused absences. Unless the course instructor states otherwise, students should assume that there will be academic consequences for every absence deemed unexcused by the instructor.

Excused vs. Unexcused Absences

Student absences are defined as excused or unexcused. Unexcused absences are those that occur without adequate reason. Unexcused absences may be used in the computation of grades.

Excused absences are defined as absences stemming from

1. participation in University-sponsored activities and
2. compelling and extenuating circumstances beyond a student's control.

Documented excused absences may not be used in the computation of grades. Instructors must allow students to make up missed examinations, quizzes, writing assignments, and other coursework for documented excused absences. Any make-up work must be offered to students in as timely a manner as possible during the regular semester. Faculty should not delay make-up work to final exam week if it is feasible to schedule it earlier and if delaying it to final exam week is detrimental to a student's academic progress. Make-up work may be scheduled during final exam week if no earlier arrangement is possible in light of extenuating circumstances for a faculty member or a student.

Examples of excused absences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- documented student's participation in University-sponsored events,
- student's documented illness,
- student's documented injury,
- documented death in a student's immediate family,
- documented illness or injury in a student's immediate family,
- documented student's required military duty, or
- documented student's required jury duty.

Instructors are not obligated to excuse an absence if a student fails to provide requested documentation. Instructors also reserve the right to determine when the number of excused absences exceeds a reasonable limit to the extent that it significantly interferes with a student's satisfactory mastery of course content/skills. Excused absences do not exempt a student from course requirements, and therefore in circumstances that entail excessive excused absences the instructor may reasonably recommend that a student consider withdrawal from a course.

Procedures for Reporting Absences

It is the responsibility of the student, where possible, to notify instructors regarding absences for whatever reason or period of time. This should take place before leaving campus, during an illness, or upon return to campus. If there are extenuating circumstances that make such communication difficult, students should contact the registrar's office. The registrar's office will send absence notices to a student's instructors, but such notices are for information purposes only and do not serve as documentation or approval for excused absences.

Additional Attendance Considerations

Students are reminded that they have the responsibility to choose their extracurricular activities at times not in conflict with their academic classes.

Student teachers are subject to the same attendance rules as the regularly employed cooperating teachers, within the bounds of the University calendar. Absences because of sickness of the individual or a family member can be excused by the principal or superintendent of schools. Absences for other causes have to be agreed upon jointly by the principal or superintendent and the University's director of educator preparation.

Enrollment Verification

Plymouth State University has authorized the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to provide all degree and enrollment verification.

General Enrollment Verification

Current students may access the service by logging into myPlymouth (https://my.usnh.edu/dashboard/) and navigating to the Tools menu. The Enrollment Verification option is under the Academics submenu. The enrollment certificate options provided by the NSC include Current Enrollment, All Enrollment, and Advanced Registration (e.g., prior to the start of the semester).

- An Advanced Registration certificate for the fall semester may be obtained from the NSC website *one month prior to the start* of classes (at the earliest). Enrollment verification certificates will be available *two weeks after the start of classes.*
- Enrollment verification certificates for the spring semester will be available *two weeks after the start of classes.*

For verifications prior to that, students should submit a copy of their schedule – also obtained via myPlymouth (https://my.usnh.edu/dashboard/) – to the requester.

Enrollment Verification Form Supplied by Loan Company

If the loan company will not accept verification from the NSC, or requires addition information beyond what the NSC provides, please follow the steps below to request registrar assistance.

The student completes the Borrower Information sections and signs the form.

- If the form is for the FFELP/Direct Loan program, the student will complete sections (1-3) and sign the form.

- If the form is for another loan program, the student still fills out the borrower information and signs the form before submitting to the RO

Submit the ***entire*** deferment form to the registrar's office in person (Speare 115), by email (psu-registrar@plymouth.edu), by fax, or by mail.

CAUTION IF THE DOCUMENT CONTAINS SENSITIVE INFORMATION (IE: SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER), PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL UNLESS YOU CAN PASSWORD PROTECT THE DOCUMENT.

Fax Number:
(603) 535-2724

Mailing Address:
Plymouth State University
17 High Street, MSC #7
Plymouth, New Hampshire 03264

- If your form arrives *before* the term begins, the registrar's office will process based on advanced registration information, which may be different than your final enrollment.
- If the request/form arrives *during* the term, and it is an FFELP/Direct Loan Program form the registrar's office will forward to the NSC for processing.
- If the request/form arrives *during* the term, and it is not an FFELP/Direct Loan Program form the registrar's office will process.

For enrollment verification or certification purposes, the following categories are used for undergraduate students during the fall and spring semesters:

Credits	Level
12.0 credits or more	Full-time
9.0 credits to 11.99 credits	Three-quarter time
6.0 credits to 8.99 credits	Half-time
Fewer than 6.0 credits	Less than half-time

For enrollment verification or certification purposes, the following categories are used for graduate students during the fall and spring semesters:

Credits	Level
6.0 credits or more	Full-time
4.5 to 5.99 credits	Three-quarter time
3.0 to 4.49 credits	Half-time
Fewer than 3.0 credits	Less than half-time

Categories are based on the number of credits in which students are enrolled on the date the verification or certification letter is prepared. If the term has not yet started, where the student still has the ability to change their enrollment status, the verification will show "pre-registered" until after the add/drop period ends.

Class Cancellation

Course charges, fees, and academic regulations are subject to change without advance notice. PSU reserves the right to cancel, postpone, or combine class sections, and to limit registrations or change instructors. Students in cancelled classes will be notified so they may enroll in an alternative class or receive a refund.

Please note: All room assignments and course offerings, dates, and times are subject to change. New classes are added on a regular basis. Please visit Banner Self-Serve https://banadmin.plymouth.edu/StudentRegistrationSsb/ssb/term/termSelection?mode=search (https://banadmin.plymouth.edu/StudentRegistrationSsb/ssb/term/termSelection/?mode=search) for the latest updates.

Notifications of University-wide cancellations due to inclement weather are advertised on WMUR-TV Channel 9, and the PSU website at plymouth.edu (http://plymouth.edu). Call the PSU Storm Line (603) 535-3535 for the latest updates on weather-related issues or sign up for PSU Alerts through myPlymouth. Individual class cancellations are determined by faculty. In the event of an individual class cancellation, students will be notified through their PSU e-mail address. It is important for students to check their PSU e-mail for these and other important University announcements.

Leave of Absence and Return Policy

Undergraduate students may request a leave of absence from studies for one or two consecutive semesters' absence from Plymouth. This policy applies only to continuous fall and spring semesters; winterim and summer sessions are not considered to be a part of a student's regular continuous enrollment.

Graduate students matriculated in a degree program that requires continuous enrollment may interrupt their enrollment by requesting a leave of absence (LOA).

An LOA is appropriate if the student intends to return to the University following a temporary absence where compelling, extenuating circumstances arise. Examples of such circumstances include medical issues, military service, and family emergencies. Eligible students who apply for and are granted an LOA retain their Plymouth e-mail account, access to myPlymouth, and the ability to register online, as they are expected to return to active student status immediately following the expiration of the leave. No readmission application or fees are required if the student re-enrolls in the appropriate enrollment term that immediately follows the expiration of the leave. If there is no intent to return to the University, or if a student is unable to return following the leave of absence period, the regular withdrawal procedure should be followed.

Students on an approved LOA from Plymouth State University are considered ***withdrawn*** for financial aid purposes are are reported to the National Student Clearinghouse and the National Student Loan Database System as withdrawn.

Eligibility for a Leave of Absence

To be eligible for an LOA the following criteria must be met:

1. The student must be matriculated during the semester in which the leave of absence is requested.
2. The student must not be subject to University initiated disciplinary action.
3. Foreign visa students are not eligible.

Additional Conditions for a Leave of Absence

1. Students have the right to request an LOA more than once, but may not exceed a total of two years for all approved requests.
2. Students have the right to return earlier than the initially agreed upon return date.
3. Students who do not return to Plymouth at the end of the LOA period will be withdrawn from the University and must follow all procedures for readmission if, in the future, they seek to re-enroll as

a matriculated student. If readmitted, students may be required to follow updated program requirements.

4. Students are not eligible to receive financial aid payments from the University during the LOA period.
5. Students may not live in on-campus residential facilities, attend classes, or seek/maintain University-sponsored employment during an LOA. Students may not enroll in winterim or summer sessions if those alternative sessions fall within the time period of the requested LOA.
6. Students are responsible for understanding all implications of an LOA, including but not limited to the following:
   a. Potential loss of financial aid due to not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress standards
   b. Potential start of loan repayment
   c. Potential loss of health insurance coverage
   d. Students granted an LOA will not be penalized with regard to their time-to-degree requirement.

Process for Requesting a Leave of Absence

To request a leave of absence (LOA), a student must fill out a Plymouth State University request for Leave of Absence form available on the the Frost House webpage (https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.plymouth.edu%2Ffrost-house&data=05%7C01%7Ctblabrosse%40plymouth.edu%7C6f9c805330574e347a4408db77411be7%7Cd6241893512d46dc8d2bbe47e25f5666%7C0%7C0%7C638234893755565817%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=5VwR0wj8ZaXI8q0FmSK5jEm0SwjYDZ4os3sNmcUKlmo%3D&reserved=0). Upon completion, the form must be returned to the office of the academic student advocate in Frost House.

Prior to seeking an LOA, students are encouraged to review the Financial Aid section to review implications and federal loan repayment guidelines.

Returning from a Leave of Absence

Undergraduate students returning from a leave of absence are automatically reactivated for matriculation by the registrar, effective with the subsequent fall or spring semester following the leave. Graduate students matriculated in a program that requires continual enrollment must work with the program coordinator for proper steps to return.

Course Substitution Policy for Students Needing Accessibility Services

Course waivers will not be granted. However, appropriate course substitutions may be made if circumstances warrant and/or there is a history of previous effort to meet the requirement.

1. The student shall provide documentation of the disability to the Campus Accessibility Services office (CAS), located in the Center for Student Success, to review.
2. The student shall schedule an appointment with the CAS to discuss or verify the documentation of the disability.
3. The student shall submit a student request form to the registrar's office that includes the following information:
   a. request for specific course substitution,
   b. brief description of disability,
   c. history of previous efforts to complete the requirement, and
   d. signatures from the CAS and the chair/designee of the student's major department.

For example, American Sign Language I and II may satisfy the foreign language requirement of the bachelor of arts degree but they do not satisfy the Global Awareness Connection.

Alternative Testing Arrangements for Students Needing Accessibility Services

Students with documented disabilities who require alternative testing arrangements should contact Campus Accessibility Services (CAS) staff at least one full week prior to the scheduled test/exam date. This notification is necessary so that the student can contact the instructor and provide them with any necessary information from the CAS. This will provide the instructor with ample time to make needed arrangements.

Plymouth State University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all University programs and facilities. If students think they have a disability requiring accommodations, they should immediately contact CAS located in the Student Success Center to determine whether they are eligible for such accommodations. Academic accommodations will only be considered for students who have registered with CAS. If the student has a Letter of Academic Accommodation for a course from CAS, the student should provide the instructor with that information privately so that the student and the instructor can review those accommodations.

Degree Requirements

All students are responsible for meeting the academic standards established for the course of study in which they are enrolled. These standards shall be the only basis for evaluating students' academic performance. Students are responsible for completing all work required for degree completion and scheduling all necessary courses. If a required course is no longer offered, a substitute can be identified by the advisor and by the department in which the student is majoring. To do this, a student request form is completed and approved by the respective department chair/designee; Student Request forms are available on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/).

Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate Students have the personal responsibility for making sure that they meet the following requirements for degree completion:

- complete all General Education requirements
- complete the foreign language proficiency if seeking a BA
- complete all major degree requirements
- complete the number of credits required in the student's chosen degree program (minimum of 120 semester credits for a bachelors degree; minimum of 96 semester credits for an applied bachelors degree)
- complete at least 30 credits of coursework at Plymouth State University to earn a bachelors degree; complete all 96 credits of coursework at Plymouth State University to earn an applied bachelors degree
- earn an overall cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or higher in all coursework
- earn the grade point average required in the major (minimum of 2.00)

- earn the grade point average required in the minor if a minor has been declared (minimum of 2.00); the pre-law minor requires a 3.00 grade point average.
- Major and Minor Grade Point Averages: All students must earn a minimum grade point average of 2.00 in their major by the time of graduation. Some programs stipulate a higher major grade point average that must be earned in the main academic discipline of the major program. A student's major grade point average will be based on all specific courses listed as required (except EN 1200 or Composition (EN 1400)), any other courses elected beyond the required minimum number from an identified group, plus any others in the central discipline which are elected.

Graduate Students

Graduate students typically complete a degree program in one to three years; six years is the maximum time to complete a degree. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is required for degree conferral.

Certification candidates must submit an Application for Teacher Certification/Specialist Credential form. Educator and specialist certification candidates can apply for completion at any time, as these certifications and endorsements can be awarded or endorsed outside of the official degree conferral dates listed previously.

Specialist certification can also be awarded at any time as long as the candidate already holds a master's degree. Students seeking specialist certification along with a master's degree will have their certification endorsed at the same time their master's degree is conferred.

Degree Conferral Applications, Audits, and Commencement

Please Note: There is a distinction between having your degree awarded ("graduating") and participating in the Commencement Ceremony. The degree is awarded and the student receives a diploma only after the registrar's office has certified successful completion of all degree and institutional requirements. Participating in the Commencement Ceremony is the act of honoring and celebrating academic achievement and *does not mean* the student has officially graduated and will receive a diploma. The Commencement ceremony is held once a year in May.

Plymouth State University awards degrees five times per year: January, May, June, August, and December. After all degree and institutional requirements have been satisfied, a final audit will be conducted and the degree will be conferred for the next available date. Students who were not enrolled but completed an incomplete from a prior semester will have their degree conferred for the closest available conferral date. Degree conferral dates coincide with the last date of the term except for June, which will be June 30.

Students who are completing their degrees need to file a Degree Conferral Application. Undergraduate students will be assessed a $100 graduation fee and graduate students will assessed a $150 graduation fee at the time of application. These fees will cover the student's regalia, tassel, hood, diploma printing and shipping, and commencement related activities such as the grad fair and the ceremony itself. This fee is charged regardless of the student's participation in the ceremony and will not be reduced if the student chooses not to attend or cannot attend.

The deadlines for submitting the Degree Conferral Application are as noted below. Students who submit their application after the published due date for their completion month will be assessed a late application fee of $75 in addition to the graduate fee.

Students completing their degree in:	Submit their Graduation Application no later than[1]:
January	October 31
May	December 1
June	March 31
August	May 31
December	September 30

Previous degree audits for readmitted students are no longer valid; a new audit will be conducted when a student files a new Degree Conferral Application. The official degree audit of a student who does not graduate expires when that student's catalog expires. The Academic Student Advocate, the registrar, and the chair/designee of the major department will consider appeals for exception to this policy.

Undergraduate Student Graduation Honors

Bachelor's degree recipients who have maintained a cumulative average of 3.75 or above for work done at Plymouth State University are graduated summa cum laude. Bachelor's degree recipients who have maintained a cumulative average of 3.50 through 3.74 are graduated magna cum laude. Bachelor's degree recipients who have maintained a cumulative average of 3.25 through 3.49 are graduated cum laude. Degree candidates must have **earned** at least 30 credits at Plymouth State University to be eligible for graduation honors. Recognition is noted on the student's diploma and final transcript.

For students who have yet to graduate, honors listed in the Commencement program and announced at the ceremony will be based on the student's grade point average (GPA) at the end of January of the commencement year.

Participation in Commencement Ceremonies

A student's eligibility to participate (walk) in the PSU Commencement Ceremony is determined ***separately from the completion of their degree requirements***.

In order to participate in our May Commencement ceremony, an active matriculated (degree-seeking) students must:

1. Submit a Degree Conferral Application (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/graduation/) no later than the first Friday in December preceding the ceremony. The registrar's office must review and approve all submitted applications.
   a. Late applications will be accepted, but one's ceremony eligibility will not be guaranteed.
2. Not have participated in any previous Plymouth State University Commencement Ceremony for this degree.
3. Fall into one of the following categories:
   a. Have already graduated the previous June, August, December, or January.
   b. Will complete all degree requirements by the end of the Spring semester.
   c. Have ***nine or fewer credits*** remaining to finish all degree requirements.* Along with the degree conferral application, submit an outline detailing the plan to complete all outstanding requirements by August of that commencement year to the registrar's office.

i. Students who seek to attend the ceremony prior to having all requirements completed will have their application and outline reviewed after the February deadline and will be informed of their status by the first Monday in March.
ii. Students who are approved and choose to participate in the ceremony prior to completing all degree requirements are responsible for following through with paperwork and responding to emails in a timely manner.

*Exception: education majors who complete all degree requirements *except for internship in teaching* by the end of the spring semester, and who will be student teaching during the subsequent Fall semester, are eligible to participate in the May Ceremony prior to degree completion. Adventure education majors who complete all degree requirements except for their internship capstone (AP4880) by the end of their senior spring semester, and who will be interning for 10 to 12 credits during the subsequent summer or fall semester, are eligible to participate in the May Ceremony.

Student names will be printed in the Commencement program the same year they participate, provided the Degree Conferral Application was submitted with sufficient time for inclusion in the program.

Students can visit plymouth.edu/commencement (http://plymouth.edu/commencement/) to access Commencement Ceremony information for the year in which they were approved.

Posthumous Degree

If a student dies prior to their completing all degree requirements, the following criteria will be used to determine whether the student is eligible for a Posthumous or an In Memoriam Degree.

Undergraduate

A deceased undergraduate student who did not complete all requirements for their degree at the time of death may be awarded a degree posthumously provided the following conditions are met:

1. The student was in academic and disciplinary good standing at the time of death.

2. The student has a minimum GPA of 2.0.

3. The student earned a minimum of 88 credits.

4. The faculty of the deceased student's primary major approves the awarding of the degree upon recommendation of the Academic Unit (AU) Leader after ascertaining that conditions 1 through 3 have been met.

Graduate

A deceased graduate student who did not complete all requirements for their degree at the time of death may be awarded a degree posthumously provided the following conditions are met:

1. The student was in academic and disciplinary good standing at the time of death.

2. The student has a minimum GPA of 3.0.

3. The student completed 75 percent of the credits necessary to complete the degree they were pursuing.

4. The faculty of the deceased student's primary major approves the awarding of the degree upon recommendation of the Academic Unit (AU) Leader after ascertaining that conditions 1 through 3 have been met.

In Memoriam Degree

If the student does not meet the criteria for a Posthumous Degree, or if the decision to award the degree is not approved, the Provost will have the option to award an ***In Memoriam Degree***.

An In Memoriam Degree is a recognition provided to honor a deceased student's progress to a degree for students ineligible for a Posthumous Degree. The In Memoriam degree is not included in the official count of degrees and is not reported nor recorded to the student's academic record and transcript. The In Memoriam degree may be awarded solely at the discretion of the Provost.

The Provost is responsible for communicating the final determination to the family and sending a condolence letter.

Transcripts

The University transcript is the student's permanent academic record. Ordinary transcript notations list courses taken and grades earned, as well as semester and cumulative grade point averages. Transcript notations are explained in the Grading System sections.

Transcripts cannot be faxed; official paper transcripts are sealed and stamped "Official Transcript—Void If Opened." A certified PDF option is available; please see the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/degrees-transcripts/requesting-transcripts/) for details. If ***current*** students or ***alumni*** merely wish to see their transcript for their own purposes, they may print an unofficial copy at any time using myPlymouth.

Please note that an official transcript cannot be sent if a student has a transcript hold. If this is the case, the student will be notified of the hold and the proper office to contact to clear the hold.

Catalog Policy

To plan a curriculum, students should use the academic catalog published for the year they entered the University or any subsequent catalog. It is the students' responsibility to use this catalog to outline course requirements in their curriculum. The University reserves the right to add, change, or delete curricular offerings.

The catalog to be used to determine degree requirements may be no older than the academic year of official admission. Students who have not been enrolled for one semester or more will return to the university under the degree requirements of the ***current catalog***. Students may petition the Office of Academic Affairs to use the requirements from a previous catalog that is no more than 3 academic years prior to the petition date.

Students may be allowed to use the general education requirements of their original catalog, or a previous catalog if the courses are still offered. The student must meet all general education requirements from one catalog.

Students being readmitted into the following programs must follow the catalog that is current at the time of their readmission:

- BS Nursing
- BS Social Work
- all programs leading to Teacher Certification.

Classifications of Students

Students at Plymouth State University may be either matriculated (degree-seeking) or non-matriculated (continuing education) students. To be a matriculated student at PSU means that the student has been admitted and is actively working on a formal degree program (ie a BS, MBA, or CAGS). Continuing education students have not been admitted into a formal program, they have been withdrawn, or are taking courses for the purposes of lifelong education, professional development, or to transfer credits earned into a degree program at PSU or elsewhere.

Matriculated Students

Matriculated students are classified as either part-time or full-time depending on the number of credits in which they are enrolled.

- Full-time undergraduate matriculated students are those who are enrolled in 12 or more credits in any given semester
  - Students should enroll in a minimum of 15 credits each semester - and complete all 15 credits - in an effort to graduate in four-years
- Full-time graduate matriculated students are those who are enrolled in 6 or more credits in any given semester.
- Part-time undergraduate matriculated students are those who have enrolled in 11.5 credits or fewer in any given semester.
- Part-time graduate matriculated students are those who are enrolled in 5.5 credits or fewer in any given semester.

Students not currently admitted to the University should contact the Office of Admission regarding readmission.

All matriculated undergraduate students must be enrolled in at least one credit in each regular semester, spring or fall, or they will be withdrawn from the University. All matriculated graduate students must be enrolled in at least one credit each year. Graduate students who remain un-enrolled for 12 consecutive months will be withdrawn from the university.

All matriculated students who have been withdrawn but wish to return to complete a degree program must contact the Office of Admission to apply for readmission.

Continuing Education

Continuing education provides opportunities for students who are taking credit-bearing courses but have not been formally admitted to PSU (non-matriculated). Undergraduate students may take a maximum of 11 credits per semester. Graduate students may take up to 12 graduate credits before being officially admitted into a degree program. Graduate students interested in applying to the doctor of education program may exceed the 12 credit limit and enroll in 7000 level courses as an EdD Track student to fulfill prerequisites toward this degree program before being officially admitted.

Students applying to a master's program in athletic training, applied meteorology, biology or environmental science and policy, or a doctoral program in education or physical therapy must be officially admitted before taking any courses in those programs.

Students who are at PSU taking courses for the purposes of lifelong education or professional development only will have no limit on the total number of credits taken overall unless specified by the program. If a student subsequently decides to apply to a program, the requirements for their degree will be from the catalog in place at the time of enrollment for the first course as a matriculated student.

Undergraduate students who have left PSU due to academic difficulty may enroll in a maximum of 11 credits a semester as continuing education students in order to repair their GPAs so they can return as fully matriculated students.

Registration

Matriculated Students

After having had an introduction to Plymouth State University's degree programs and registration procedures, new matriculated undergraduate students register for courses through the New Student Orientation program.

New graduate students work with their academic advisor to select courses and register via myPlymouth.

Currently enrolled and matriculated students register for fall classes via myPlymouth the previous April and for spring classes the previous November. Students should consult their catalog and Degree Works (available on myPlymouth) as they begin to plan their schedule.

Continuing and returning students who start registering on or after the first day of the fall or spring semester will be charged a non-refundable $100 late registration fee.

- If the student is only registering for the second-half term in the fall or spring semester, and the student begins to register on or after the first official day of classes for the term, the student will be charged a non-refundable $100 late registration fee.
- Students who are registering for the 18 week term in the spring semester will be charged a non-refundable $100 late registration fee if the student begins to register on or after the first official day of classes for the term.

Undergraduate students register according to the total number of credits earned (graded) on their transcript, including credits transferred at the time the registration dates are assigned. Registration times and web registration codes (PINs) are available from their advisor. During the two weeks before registration, students should consult with their advisor and obtain their PIN. Students may then register for classes on the web based on their assigned time until the end of the add/drop period for the course(s).

Graduate students can register as soon as registration opens and in no particular order; no web registration codes (PINs) are needed.

Additional information on the Schedule of Classes, deadlines, and other important registration information is on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/registration-and-enrollment/).

Online Learning

Before taking an online course, it is important that students consider whether they will be successful with this type of format. Online courses require self-discipline. Students must regularly login to the online course in order to keep up with readings, assignments, and discussions. Online learning requires that students actively participate so that faculty instructors can assess whether students are learning. The main advantage of online learning is that students can login and work on their course 24/7, whenever it is convenient for them.

Undergraduate Seniors Registering for Graduate Work

Seniors with a 3.00 or better cumulative grade point average may take up to six credits of graduate work at PSU. The credits count toward completion of the undergraduate degree as well as toward the graduate degree and are graded according to the graduate course grading scale, not the academic level of the student. Permission of the instructor, the advisor, and the department chair or designee is required prior to course registration, using a Student Request Form; these forms are available on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/). (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/registration-enrollment/academic-forms-student-information-forms-policies/)

Non-Matriculated Students

Undergraduate non-matriculated students (continuing education) must be aware that successful completion of coursework does not guarantee acceptance to a degree program, and coursework taken may not be applicable to a particular program. Non-matriculated undergraduate students can register for a maximum of 11 credits per semester, starting with the third week after registration opens.

Graduate non-matriculated students (those who have not been admitted to a program) must be aware that successful completion of coursework does not guarantee acceptance to a graduate program, and coursework taken may not be applicable to a particular program. Non-matriculated graduate students may take up to 12 graduate credits before being officially admitted into a degree program. Additional coursework cannot be pursued until admission has been granted or the student has declared pursuit of professional development only. Students must notify the registrar's office of their intent and check individual programs for requirements and restrictions.

Non-matriculated graduate students interested in applying to the doctor of education program may exceed the 12 credit limit and enroll in 7000 level courses as an EdD Track student to fulfill prerequisites toward this degree program before being officially admitted. Students applying to a master's program in athletic training, applied meteorology, biology or environmental science and policy, or a doctoral program in education or physical therapy must be officially admitted before taking any courses in those programs.

Students who are at PSU taking courses for the purposes of lifelong education or professional development only will have no limit on the total number of credits taken overall unless specified by the program. If a student subsequently decides to apply to a program, the requirements for their degree will be from the catalog in place at the time of enrollment for the first course as a matriculated student.

Continuing and returning students who start registering on or after the first day of the fall or spring semester will be charged a non-refundable $100 late registration fee.

- If the student is only registering for the second-half term in the fall or spring semester, and the student begins to register on or after the first official day of classes for the term, the student will be charged a non-refundable $100 late registration fee.
- Students who are registering for the 18 week term in the spring semester will be charged a non-refundable $100 late registration fee if the student begins to register on or after the first official day of classes for the term.

Non-matriculated students are not eligible to enroll in independent study or individual enrollment courses.

Undergraduate students who have left PSU due to academic difficulty may enroll in a maximum of eight credits a semester as continuing education students in order to repair their GPAs so they can return as fully matriculated students.

Course Adds, Drops, Repeating Courses, and Course Withdrawals

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the add, drop, or withdrawal process - all of which take place in Banner Self-Service on the registration screens. Directions and steps are posted on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/registration-enrollment/).

Course changes are not official until processed by the registrar's office or accepted in our online registration system. All paper forms must be filled in completely, include the student's signature to be processed and be submitted by the indicated deadline in order to be eligible for the specific add, drop, or withdrawal. Forms are available on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/), and can be faxed, mailed, or delivered in person to the registrar's office. For complete details of the add/drop/withdrawal schedule, see Session Dates and Deadlines on the calendars found on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/academic-calendars-and-exam-schedules/).

Continuing and returning matriculated and non-matriculated students who request to add a course(s) after the published add/drop period of the fall or spring semester or part-of-term has ended will be charged a non-refundable $50 per course late add fee. The $50 per course fee will not be applied to students who have to pay the $100 late registration fee or the $100 reinstatement fee.

Students who have been dropped from ALL classes due to non-payment will be assessed a non-refundable $100 fee upon reinstatement to cover reenrollment processing.

Dropping Last Class

Before and during the add/drop period, students cannot drop their last course via the web*. Students dropping their last class are essentially withdrawing from PSU and must contact the Academic Student Advocate to finalize their withdrawal. A withdrawal survey and a PSU withdrawal form must be completed. The completed withdrawal form should be returned to the Academic Student Advocate, located in Frost House. To access the form and the survey, please visit the Academic Forms section of the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/registration-enrollment/academic-forms-student-information-forms-policies/) and select Student Info.

Any course dropped during the add/drop period will be removed from the student's transcript. However, if the student attended a class(es) during the add/drop period, the student's bill will be recalculated based on the student's last date of attendance. If the student never attended, the bill will be adjusted to reflect any outstanding charges (i.e. housing, dining, etc).

Graduate students who are planning on registering for the next part-of-term or semester (fall, spring, summer) are encouraged to discuss options with the Academic Student Advocate.**

*Students who are only in one course, and are seeking to drop one course and add another, are encouraged to **use the conditional drop/add**

option when changing courses to remain enrolled and not be seen as withdrawing from PSU.

**Graduate students may remain unenrolled, but active, for a period of 12 consecutive months.

See the Course Withdrawal section for adjustments made after the add/drop period ends.

NOTE: Dropping or withdrawing from a course may affect the student's progress toward degree. In addition, if dropping or withdrawing from a course or courses will drop a student to below full-time status, the student's eligibility for financial aid, on-campus housing, intercollegiate athletics, eligibility for loan deferments, insurance, and the like may be affected. Before taking such an action, students are strongly encouraged to discuss its impact with their advisors and/or representatives of the Student Account Services Office and the Financial Aid Office.

Prerequisite

Students will not be allowed to maintain enrollment in any course if they fail any prerequisite for that course. Students will be dropped automatically by the registrar.

Course Add/Drop

Attendance in a class does not constitute an official add. Failure to attend class, complete coursework, notify the instructor, or make complete payment does not constitute an official drop or withdrawal. Students may add or drop per the dates published on the academic calendar. (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/academic-calendars-and-exam-schedules/) Adding or dropping a course does not require the signature of the instructor. Courses dropped within the drop period will be removed from the transcript. All adds/drops take place via myPlymouth.

Late Course Adds are allowed with the signature of the instructor and must be finalized before 25% of the term or part-of-term has elapsed. For example, for a course in a 16-week term, adding late will require the form to be submitted to the registrar's office no later than the end of week four. The Late Add Form is available on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/). Forms received after the 25% mark will not be accepted.

Continuing and returning matriculated and non-matriculated students who request to add a course(s) after the published add/drop period of the fall or spring semester has ended will be charged a $50 per course late add. The $50 per course fee will not be applied to students who have to pay the $100 late registration fee or the $100 reinstatement fee.

Course Withdrawal

Students may withdraw from a course up to two weeks before the last day of the semester or part-of-term in which the course is scheduled (see academic calendar (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/academic-calendars-and-exam-schedules/) for dates). Course withdrawal is a student responsibility and the action is taken during the course withdrawal period, per the academic calendar, and via the online self-service Registration area. Details and steps are on the registrar website for registration information https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/registration-enrollment (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/registration-enrollment/).

Withdrawn courses will remain on the academic transcript with a withdrawal code of W for the grade. Grades of W do not impact grade point average but may impact federal financial aid eligibility as measured by the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy. See Financial Aid section for details.

Auditing a Course

Students who wish to take a course for their own interest or development, or to refresh knowledge or skills, and not earn credit may register to audit most courses. Auditors usually are not required to complete normal class requirements and will follow the plan set by the course instructor. No grades will be issued to students who have registered as auditors. An AU will be entered on the transcript for the audited course. Students wishing to change a graded course to audit must complete the transaction with the registrar's office before the end of the appropriate course add period (see the academic calendar (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/academic-calendars-exam-schedules/)). Forms are available on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/registration-enrollment/).

Permission of the instructor is required for all course audits. A status of audit must be clearly indicated on the course registration form for accurate processing.

For an undergraduate student, if an audit course causes an overload or if a course is taken for audit during winterim or summer, one-half of the regular tuition will be charged. Exceptions are skill, studio, and professional courses for which full tuition will be charged.

For a graduate student, full fees and half tuition are charged for auditing a class, with some exceptions determined by the offering department. Auditing is not permitted in MBA, CAGS, or doctoral-level courses.

Credits Attempted

If a student fails a course by earning either an F or an AF in a graded course, or an NP in a P/NP course, the credits that would have been earned if the course had been successfully completed are added to the transcript column entitled Credits Attempted. Credits attempted reflect the grand total of credits earned through successful completion of courses and credits not earned because of unsatisfactory performance, as well as transfer and credit-by-examination. Students' academic standing is based on the number of credits attempted, as described below. Students should be aware that if a minimum number of credits is not successfully completed each semester at PSU, financial aid awards may be in jeopardy (see the Financial Aid section).

Repeating Courses

Undergraduate students are allowed to retake any course in which they earned a grade of C- or below. Graduate students are allowed to retake any course. Before repeating any course, students are encouraged to speak with a financial aid representative.

Credits and grade points for the first grade will be deleted from the cumulative record, while the grade itself will remain on the transcript and the repeat noted with an "E" (Exclude) next to the grade. The course information will be listed in the usual manner the second time it appears on the transcript, with an "I" (Include) next to the grade. The most recent grade counts even if lower than an earlier grade.

If the course grade is F, AF, or NP, undergraduate students may also repeat the course at another college or university and transfer the credit into Plymouth State University. The transfer course must be equivalent to the course failed at PSU. Upon receipt of the transfer credit, the PSU grade of F or AF will be removed from the grade point calculation. The procedure that needs to be followed is detailed in the Transferring Credits to Plymouth State University section of this catalog.

This policy does not apply to courses that are repeatable, such as independent studies or special topics offerings.

Withdrawal/Inactivity from the University, Readmission, Reactivation

Prior to leaving, students must inform the Academic Student Advocate of their intention to withdraw from the University; a withdrawal survey and a PSU withdrawal form must be completed. The completed withdrawal form should be returned to the Academic Student Advocate, located in Frost House. To access the form and the survey, please visit the the Frost House webpage (https://www.plymouth.edu/frost-house/).

Undergraduate Students

- If the student withdraws from the University prior to the beginning of the undergraduate final examination period, W grades will be recorded on student's transcript. If the student withdraws after the beginning of the final examination period, without taking final examinations, failing grades will be recorded on student's transcript for the semester in which they withdrew. If the student withdraws in between terms, all grades will remain as is and the student's academic record will reflect withdrawn from the university.
- Students who wish to re-enter Plymouth State University as a matriculated (degree-seeking) student in a subsequent semester must reapply for admission through the Office of Admissions. Students who wish to be readmitted into the BS Nursing or BS Social Work majors or a teacher education program leading to teacher certification will need to follow program guidelines in the most recent academic catalog at the time of readmission. To qualify for readmission students must meet the grade point average requirement for the total credits attempted as indicated in the Academic Standing section.

Graduate Students

- If the student withdraws from the University during the term, W grades will be recorded on student's transcript. If the student withdraws in between terms, all grades will remain as is and the student's academic record will reflect withdrawn from the university.
- Students who wish to re-enter Plymouth State University as a matriculated (degree-seeking) student in a subsequent semester must reapply for admission through the Office of Admissions and will need to follow program guidelines in the most recent academic catalog at the time of readmission. Students in Doctoral programs should check program policies before withdrawing. To qualify for readmission students must meet the grade point average requirement for the total credits attempted as indicated in the Academic Standing section.

Students who have withdrawn from the University or who have been withdrawn by the University due to inactivity, and wish to resume coursework toward degree completion at PSU must apply for readmission through the Office of Admissions. Students who wish to complete their degree program with transfer credits, should contact the degree auditor in the registrar's office to be reactivated for graduation. The auditor will request a Degree Completion Application, available on the registrar's office website (https://www.plymouth.edu/registrar/), but students will not be placed on the graduation file until the Degree Completion Application is received and approved by the auditor. Students reactivated for Degree Completion only are not readmitted to take classes at the University. Degree completion via transfer credits must adhere to current transfer credit policies.

Inactivity

Undergraduate students who do not re-enroll in the next regular semester (summer and winterim are not included) will be considered inactive. Students who wish to re-enter Plymouth State University as matriculated (degree-seeking) students in a subsequent semester must reapply for admission through the Office of Admissions

Graduate students must be enrolled in at least one credit each year. Graduate students who remain un-enrolled for 12 consecutive months will be withdrawn from the university. Students who have matriculated at Plymouth State University but who have interrupted their enrollment must apply for re-admission through the Admissions Office. If admitted, students will follow the current catalog year requirements.

Inactive students will be withdrawn from the University and will lose access to PSU services provided to enrolled students.

Military Call or Order to Active Duty Policy

This policy is for students enrolled at PSU who receive a call or order to active duty.

PSU will follow the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations – Title 34 # Subtitle B # Chapter VI # Part 668 # Subpart B # §668.18, which applies to institutions that participate in any student financial assistance program authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

PSU recognizes the importance of supporting our military students who are called to service of this country. Students who are called to duty will need to present a copy of their mobilization/deployment orders* to the registrar's office and the Program Coordinator of their major, and work with their Academic Advisor to decide the best option for their studies during this time.

The following procedures will apply for PSU students. When a student is called to active duty during a term while enrolled in classes they may select from two options:

1. A student can elect to accept an **incomplete grade**, which will be recorded at the end of the term, provided that more than half of the class meetings have passed and both the student and faculty member agree to this option. A student selecting this option will have either the regular timeframe of the incomplete grade policy *or* 90 days after the completion of active duty, *whichever is longer*, to complete any missing assignments. Faculty of students electing the incomplete grade option must complete a grade contract that is an agreement of the terms and specifics about the deadlines and assignments. As per the policy on incomplete grades, if the course is not completed by this date, the grade specified by the instructor will be recorded. If no grade is specified, a default grade of F will be recorded.

If the student is still mobilized or deployed at the end of the term, the student will be placed on leave of absence.

2. A student can elect to **withdraw** from one or more courses with a grade of "W" if the official add/drop period for the university has passed, with no credit awarded. The student will be placed on leave of absence.

Any course that is already completed and graded will remain and charges for those courses will not be refunded.

Students who are deployed should work with Student Financial Services to discuss their financial options as soon as possible.

Students who are mobilized/deployed for longer than one year will be allowed to reactivate into their original program requirements as long as they can provide official orders corresponding with their absence from the University.

*In the rare event of emergency or rapid deployment where a student does not have the opportunity to contact the University or to provide orders, federal regulations for the situation will be followed. In the absence of another decision or regulation, course grades will be designated Incomplete and will follow the default timeline for such grades at that time.