Academic Dismissal: Frequently Asked Questions
Students in F-1 Status

Overview

What does "Academic Dismissal" mean?
Dismissal from ISU is a result of failing to meet the requirements of academic probation. After dismissal, a student must be approved for reinstatement and reentry before they are eligible to return to ISU.

What are the common reasons for being dismissed?
Students are most often dismissed for failing to maintain a required GPA of 2.0. Each College Academic Standards Committee is responsible for final decisions regarding the academic status of students in that college and any appeals to academic dismissal actions are considered by the college committee.

Other reasons that a student may be dismissed from the university are suspension or expulsion from ISU due to a Student Conduct hearing. In order for student to be able to return from a dismissal through the student conduct process, they will need to comply with the steps set forth in their dismissal.

What is the difference between being dismissed by ISU and withdrawing from ISU?
Academic dismissal is when a student fails to meet the academic or behavior standards of the university and is asked not to return the following semester. A student must be academically reinstated by their college before applying for reentry to ISU with the Registrar’s Office and ISSO.

On the other hand, it is a student’s choice to withdraw from classes at ISU. If a student withdraws mid-semester and would like to return the following semester, they must only apply for reentry with ISSO in order to receive a new immigration record. If a student chooses to withdraw from classes and is away for one entire semester or more, they must apply for reentry with the Registrar’s Office and ISSO.

Immigration Consequences and Options

What are the immediate consequences of being academically dismissed?
Students who have been academically dismissed have only a short period of time to pursue other options. By the end of the student's deadline, ISSO will terminate their F-1 immigration record and students must leave the United States.

After academic dismissal, what are my immigration options?
F-1 students who have been dismissed have the following immigration options:
- Receive admission and request a transfer to another U.S. institution,
- Change non-immigrant status, or
- Leave the United States immediately

What is my deadline to transfer or leave the United States?
Following notification from academic departments, ISSO will email students their options and timeline. The deadline to transfer or leave the U.S. can be found in this email.

Can I avoid academic dismissal by transferring to another college/major at ISU?
No. Students who are dismissed by one college/major cannot immediately transfer to another college/major. After the required time away from Iowa State (typically one semester), a student may choose to apply for reinstatement to their previous degree or a different degree.
If I am dismissed, can I request immediate reinstatement?
Normally, students can only be reinstated after being away from Iowa State University for at least one Fall or Spring semester. Students who have been academically dismissed two or more times are typically not eligible for reinstatement until they have been away for at least two academic semesters. In some rare cases, students may be eligible to be reinstated immediately. Speak with your academic adviser for more information about this possibility.

Returning to ISU
After being away from ISU, how can I return to the university?
Dismissed students must complete the following steps to return to ISU:
- Request permission to return to department/college by completing reinstatement application with academic adviser. Read more about this here.
- Request permission to return to the university by completing the Reentry form with the Office of the Registrar. Read more about this here.
- Request an I-20 from ISSO by completing the "Returning to ISU" electronic form in Cystart. F-1 students can read more about the Returning to ISU process here.

How long does it take for my reinstatement application to be approved?
Processing can vary depending on the individual college or departments. Students should apply at least three months in advance to allow enough time for processing.

When will I get my new I-20 from ISSO?
The timeline to get a new I-20 from ISSO depends on the student’s situation:
- Students who are outside of the U.S.: After a student’s reinstatement (by their college) and reentry (by the Registrar’s Office) applications are fully approved, ISSO will process the student’s Cystart e-form and issue a new I-20 within 10 working days.
- Students at another U.S. institution: Students wishing to transfer back to ISU must work with the international office at their current institution to request their SEVIS record be transferred to ISU. Transfer I-20s can only be issued after the student’s SEVIS record has been released to Iowa State University. Students may contact the ISSO at isso@iastate.edu with any questions or concerns regarding their immigration documents.

What happens after I am reinstated?
As a condition of reinstatement, students will reenter on academic probation and must meet whatever additional requirements are stipulated by the college Academic Standards Committee.

Are reinstatement requirements the same if you are dismissed a second time (or more)?
No. Students who have been dismissed two or more times are typically not eligible for reinstatement until at least two academic semesters have passed. In addition, students dismissed for the second time may be required to submit their petition for reinstatement earlier than those dismissed for the first time.

If I study at another college or university while I am dismissed, will those credits transfer back?
Students will want to consult with their college and academic adviser to discuss how specific classes will transfer back to ISU.

Disclaimer: This Frequently Asked Questions is intended for general information and guidance. Please consult with an International Student and Scholar Advisor in the International Students and Scholars Office regarding your individual request.