

GRADUATE COMPETENCY-BASED ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Graduate Competency-Based Academic Policies and Procedures

Students enrolled in the University of Massachusetts Global MyPath competency-based graduate degree programs must adhere to the Graduate Credit-Hour Academic Policies in the catalog with the exception of the following policies and procedures that pertain to competency-based programs only. The catalog assigned to newly admitted students is determined by the student's enrollment period. Students must meet the degree requirements (including addendums) of the catalog under which they are admitted or may petition a later catalog for a year once they are enrolled. However, for all other policies (except degree requirements), students must adhere to the current catalog for each year they are enrolled. Statements in the catalog are for informational purposes and should not be considered as the basis of a contract between students and the University.

Academic Calendar

An academic year for the University of Massachusetts Global MyPath competency-based education program consists of the completion of at least 18 units and 48 weeks of instruction. Unlike the traditional academic calendar, the MyPath program has no semesters, trimesters, quarters, or other terms with set beginning and ending dates. Instead, the academic year begins on the day that a student completes the first substantive academic activity (starts attendance) and ends when both the minimum 18 units and 48 weeks of instruction have been completed. Since the program is self-paced, students may earn more than 18 units in a 48-week period, or students can take more than 48 weeks to earn the 18 units.

In addition, there is a one-week break scheduled for December of each year in which teaching does not take place; therefore, this week does not count toward completion of the 48 weeks of instruction.

The break for the 2024-2025 Academic Year is:

• Winter Break: December 21st, 2025 through December 27th, 2025

Tuition

University of Massachusetts Global reserves the right to change tuition and fee rates at any time without notice. Tuition is billed at a flat rate each billing period in the competency-based academic year. The competency-based academic year consists of two billing periods and is defined as a minimum of 18 units and 48 weeks of instruction. The student pays for the time, not by credit hour or by course. The student starts their competencies any time and completes as many as they would like, or are able to, during the billing period.

Students are required to pay their tuition in full before they can start their course competencies. If the student wishes to apply for financial aid, they must submit all forms required by the Financial Aid Office and have the aid applied to their student account bringing their balance owed to the University to a zero balance before they will be allowed to begin their competencies.

Tuition Refund Policy: Withdrawals

The date of withdrawal for purposes of tuition and/or refundable fees refunds shall be the date on which the student officially withdraws from the program through MyUMassGlobal Self Service.

Tuition Refund Policy

Students may drop all competencies on a date within 30 days of the start of the student's first billing period and receive a full tuition refund. This applies only to the first billing period. For all subsequent billing periods, a full tuition refund will be given prior to starting competencies, but no refunds will be given once the student begins.

Students with extenuating circumstances may be eligible for a tuition refund through the University petition process. Circumstances must be documented and are subject to review by the University.

No retroactive refunds will be given for prior academic years. It is every student's responsibility to review their student account every term to ensure that it is correct and that all applicable credits (Grants, Loans, Scholarships, Adjustments) have been applied to their account.

Academic Progression

University of Massachusetts Global MyPath students are expected to maintain timely academic progression. If a student does not successfully complete a payment period within 24 instructional weeks, the student must meet with the appropriate School Dean and/or Dean's Designee. During the meeting, the School Dean and/or Dean's Designee will review the Academic Progression policy, discuss the student's record of academic achievement, and develop a plan of action regarding their academic progression. After this meeting, the student will be provided a written summary of the meeting. Failure of the student to appear at the meeting without approved documented proof supporting extenuating circumstances preventing such attendance will result in the student waiving their opportunity to participate in the meeting.

If the student does not successfully complete a payment period within 32 instructional weeks, the student will be subject to dismissal from the MyPath Program by the School Dean and/or Dean's Designee and the action of dismissal will be placed on the official transcript.

The student has the right to appeal within 30 calendar days of notification of the dismissal decision. Appeal decisions will only be considered if there is relevant information that was not available at the time of the decision or if procedures were not followed in accordance with University of Massachusetts Global academic policy/guidelines. It is not a reconsideration of the merits of the decision. The appeal decision will be rendered by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The appeal decision will be final and binding.

The Academic Progression policy is separate from and in addition to policies governing dismissal for violating academic integrity, academic dismissal, or dismissal for inappropriate student behavior.

Students dismissed under this policy seeking to be readmitted to MyPath may do so after one year from their effective date of dismissal. Students seeking readmission must submit a written request to the appropriate School Dean and/or Dean's Designee and submit a new application. The School Dean and/or Dean's Designee will make the re-admission decision. Alternatively, if the student wishes to transition to a credit hour program, they should contact their MyPath Academic Coach.

Change of Graduate Degree Modality

Students wishing to transfer from a competency-based modality to a credit hour modality or from a credit hour modality to a competency based modality within University of Massachusetts Global should consult with their academic coach and One Stop Student Services. A maximum of two modality changes will be allowed at the graduate level. A modality change as a result of an academic dismissal from a competency based modality will not be considered as one of the two allowed changes.

Transfer Credit Policies

Articulation/Transferability

Transfer courses will be evaluated for articulation of competencies through the following methodology:

1. Coursework, with a minimum of B- or better from institutionally accredited institutions, will first be evaluated against University of Massachusetts Global's credit hour-based courses.
2. Once prior credit has been determined to be equivalent to University of Massachusetts Global's credit hour-based program, the university will then determine whether or not the student will receive transfer credit for any of the competencies in the competency-based program.
3. Transfer credit for competencies will not be granted for coursework where the content addresses some, but not all, of the content for a particular competency or block of competencies.
4. The number of graduate transfer equivalent credits authorized may vary from program to program. Specific transfer policy guidance can be found within the Transfer of Coursework section of each degree program.

Transferring from University of Massachusetts Global

The purpose of the University of Massachusetts Global's competency-based programs are to prepare students for career opportunities and advancement. This purpose does not include preparing students for transfer to another institution for further college study. Since the competency-based programs are based upon direct assessment of competencies rather than credit hours, the competency units completed during a billing period may not equate to a credit-bearing course for transfer purposes. Students should be aware that transfer of credit is always at the discretion of the receiving institution. Any student interested in transferring credit hours should check with the receiving institution directly to determine to what extent, if any, competency units can be transferred. University of Massachusetts Global students who may be interested in transferring to another institution—either before or after completing their studies at University of Massachusetts Global—should keep in mind the following points:

1. All institutions reserve the right to determine their own transfer policies, and not all academic work completed at one institution may transfer to another.
2. Students should check the transfer policies at the institution or institutions they are considering by consulting with the admissions or registrar office at those institution(s).
3. Students who transfer from University of Massachusetts Global to another institution should order an official transcript of their University of Massachusetts Global academic work. An official transcript may be sent directly to the transfer institution upon request by the student. Transcript ordering information can be found at <http://www.umassglobal.edu/transcripts> (<http://www.umassglobal.edu/transcripts/>).

4. The University of Massachusetts Global transcript will be a straight line listing of competencies completed with the corresponding "M" grade for Mastery. Upon request, a corresponding conversion record (credit hour transcript) reflecting courses and credits will be developed

Attendance Policy

All competency-based students must adhere to the attendance policy as described in the Student Handbook for the Competency-based program.

Add Policy

Students may accelerate their studies by adding additional competencies once they have successfully completed the initial group of competencies. Students who desire to add additional competencies must seek the advice and approval of their academic coach.

Drop Policy

Students may drop all competencies on a date within 30 days of the start of the student's first billing period and receive a full tuition refund. This applies only to the first billing period. Given the integrated nature of the competency-based curriculum, students may not drop less than all competencies within any billing period.

Interrupted Enrollment

Students may find it necessary to interrupt progress during their course of study, leave University of Massachusetts Global and decide to return at a later date. Students who leave the University in good standing and are absent no more than two years do not need to reapply, and will retain the program requirements of their designated catalog year. Students who have no remaining course requirements, are absent more than two years, and leave in good standing, do not need to reapply, but will be required to meet the current catalog year requirements.

Veterans receiving an honorable discharge, who left the University in order to perform military services, will be readmitted with the same academic status that he or she had when last in attendance at University of Massachusetts Global. The length of absence from University of Massachusetts Global cannot exceed five years.

The University may require students to adopt the catalog year program requirements at the time of their return if a program has become impacted or changed by external regulatory agencies.

If students take coursework during their absence from the University, they must provide official transcripts of that coursework to the Division of Student Services prior to their return. Non-satisfactory performance or issues of academic integrity may nullify the student's eligibility to return.

Veteran and Active Duty Military Students: see Military and Veterans Services section of the catalog regarding interrupted enrollment.

Administrative Withdrawals

Regular engagement with the learning materials is integral to students successfully completing the degree requirements. To ensure student success, University of Massachusetts Global requires that students maintain close contact with their academic coach. If a student is not connecting with competency course material for seven days, the academic coach immediately sends an email to the student requesting to schedule an appointment. Students who do not respond to this email or other phone outreach within the next seven days will be deemed inactive, reported to the coaching team manager, and the "Return to Title IV" process will begin. The coaching team manager and academic coach

will contact inactive students via telephone and email during the next seven days and warn the students that continued inactivity will result in an administrative withdrawal.

Inactive students who fail to reestablish contact with the academic coach and the competency course material for 28 consecutive days will be administratively (unofficially) withdrawn from the program on the next business day. The "Return to Title IV" process will begin after fourteen consecutive days without educational activity.

If a student is administratively withdrawn from the program, they may return to the program within 90 calendar days from the last date of attendance. They must contact their academic coach to re-enroll. If the student does not return within 90 calendar days, they must submit a written request to the appropriate School Dean and/or Dean's Designee for approval to re-enroll.

If a student is administratively withdrawn from the program twice, they may return after one year from their last date of attendance. Students seeking re-admission must submit a written request to the appropriate School Dean and/or Dean's Designee and submit a new application. The School Dean and/or Dean's Designee will make the re-admission decision.

If a student does not return from a Leave of Absence (LOA) by the end of the date of the LOA, the student will be considered to have withdrawn from the University as of the student's last day of engagement in a substantive educationally related activity. Some of the student's financial aid award will likely have to be repaid by the student to the government and/or University. The student's loans may go into immediate repayment or shortly, thereafter, depending on the loan and length of the LOA.

Student Withdrawals

In addition to Administrative Withdrawal as noted above, students may formally request to be withdrawn from the competency-based program. The preferred means of notifying Student Services are:

1. Via the MyUMassGlobal portal
2. By email from the student's official University of Massachusetts Global email address
3. By facsimile

If a student withdraws completely from the University, some of the student's financial aid award will likely have to be repaid by the student to the government and/or University. The student's loans may go into immediate repayment or shortly, thereafter, depending on the loan. Students will be contacted by an academic coach to discuss if a credit hour program may be a better fit.

Grading System

In competency-based programs, grades are recorded as Mastered and a grade point average (GPA) is not calculated by the University.

M is for Mastery of Competency. Certifies successful completion of the course of study with a minimum grade of "B" or better or a 3.00 grade point equivalency (credit awarded, not calculated in GPA).

AR is for Administrative Review, a grade given when a student's work is under review (e.g., due to grade appeals). A grade of "AR" will be removed upon completion of the review.

NS is for Not Satisfied, a grade given when the requirements for the competency have not been satisfied.

W signifies that a student has voluntarily withdrawn from a competency.

WX signifies that the student failed to demonstrate mastery in a competency after the maximum number of summative assessment attempts allowed.

WA signifies the student was administratively withdrawn due to failure to engage within a required timeframe.

Academic Dismissal

If a student fails to demonstrate mastery in a competency after a maximum number of Final Assessment attempts allowed in a competency, the student must meet with the appropriate School Dean and/or Dean's Designee. For competencies with external certification exams as the Final Assessment, students are allowed the number of attempts as set forth by the certifying organization. For all other competencies, the maximum number of Final Assessment attempts is three.

During the meeting, the School Dean and/or Dean's Designee will discuss the student's record of academic achievement and will solicit the student's response to concerns regarding their academic performance. After this meeting, the School Dean and/or Dean's Designee will render the decision whether a student will be academically dismissed. If an academic dismissal has been determined, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the program and the action of dismissal will be placed on the official transcript. If the decision is not a determination to academically dismiss, the student will remain in the program. For each subsequent Final Assessment attempt in that same competency, if the student fails to demonstrate mastery, the student must repeat this process by meeting with the School Dean and/or Dean's Designee, who will render a new decision on whether the student will be academically dismissed. Failure of the student to appear at the meeting without approved documented proof supporting extenuating circumstances preventing such attendance will result in the loss of the right to request an appeal.

A student has the right to appeal within 30 days of notification of the academic dismissal decision. Appeal decisions will only be considered if there is relevant information that was not available at the time of the decision or if procedures were not followed in accordance with University of Massachusetts Global academic policy/guidelines. It is not a reconsideration of the merits of the decision. The appeal decision will be rendered by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The appeal decision will be final and binding.

The Academic Dismissal policy is separate from and in addition to policies governing dismissal for violating academic integrity or dismissal for inappropriate student behavior.

Assessment Retake and Grade Review Policy

Retaking Final Assessments

Any student who does not demonstrate mastery on a Final Assessment attempt must meet with the tutorial faculty to develop a learning plan for the student. This learning plan will be developed based on Final Assessment report feedback and will provide the student with a detailed description of areas the student should focus on prior to the subsequent attempt.

Grade Review Policy: Final Assessments

For project-based Final Assessments, students may request a second grading for competencies that are not mastered within 30 days from the date that the grade was posted and upon payment of the re-grade fee. The re-grade fee is refundable if the student demonstrates mastery according to the second grading.

Dual Enrollment Policy

Students enrolled in a competency-based program cannot be enrolled in a credit-hour program or take credit hour courses due to financial aid requirements and restrictions.

Standards and Policy of Academic Integrity

UMass Global is an academic community based on the principles of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Academic integrity is a core University value, which ensures respect for the academic reputation of the University, its students, faculty and staff, and the degrees it confers. The University expects that students will conduct themselves in an honest and ethical manner and respect the intellectual work of others.

To safeguard the conditions under which learning occurs, scholarship is performed, and academic work or projects are measured and evaluated, this policy will help faculty and academic leadership:

- Distinguish between general and specific methods of Academic Dishonesty and/or Plagiarism.
- Outline faculty/classroom procedures for investigating and reporting academic integrity violations.
- Outline the purpose and procedures for petition to Dean or Dean's Designee.
- Outline purpose and procedures for a Governance and Appeals Committee (GAC) hearing.
- Outline the purpose and procedures for an appeal to the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

Note: All other process/procedures for the GAC hearing are governed by the UMass Global Student Conduct Code, where applicable. The Student Conduct Code is available in MyUMassGlobal.

A. Academic Integrity Violations

Academic integrity violations can take a number of forms. They include, but are not limited to, cheating on a test or examination; claiming the work of another as your own; plagiarizing from any paper, or a portion of, research project, or assignment, including an online discussion board assignment; copying and pasting text from an online source directly into an assignment without properly citing the source; using a paraphrasing tool without permission; reusing your own work in the same or another course without written instructor permission; or falsely submitting material to fulfill course requirements.

Academic Dishonesty and/or Plagiarism include:

1. Copying from the work of another student, with or without that student's consent.
2. Using any unauthorized material or aids to complete a test.
3. Having another person do all or any part of the work unless explicitly specified by assignment instructions. Note: Working with UMass Global's Online Writing and Math Community, or other UMass Global resources is encouraged. Some courses or programs prohibit the

use of private tutors and so students are reminded to consult syllabi, assignment sheets/rubrics, program documents and their faculty.

4. Falsifying an academic record or document (examples: attendance reports, field-work/clinical practicum participation logs, or any other university document of record).
5. Having another/allowing another to participate in online courses' required activities in place of a registered student.
6. Submitting work completed in a course to satisfy the requirements of another course/a repeated course, or to satisfy a program requirement without permission from the faculty receiving the previously submitted/duplicated work and the former faculty having already graded the work (the previous class/es). Permission must be in writing from both faculty members. In the event that the faculty of the former course is unavailable, the current faculty may determine permission.
7. Consistent with #4 above, failing to meet the transcript submission requirements for admission to a program; particularly after indicating requirements for admission had been met.
8. Within the same course, submitting work done for one assignment to satisfy the requirements of another assignment, unless permission is given by the faculty. When an assignment in a class is scaffolded upon another assignment in the same class as designed by the faculty, permission may be assumed. Students are reminded to consult syllabi, assignment sheets/rubrics, program documents and their faculty.
9. Presenting forged or altered documents (including transcripts, add/drop forms, or any academic form that has been falsified or wherein a professor's signature, or anyone else's signature, has been forged or altered).
10. Providing/Furnishing/Selling/Transmitting one's academic/course work or assignment produced for credit or as a draft for a class to another student for their academic use (or other prohibited action above).
11. Course materials are the intellectual property of the faculty member and the university. Therefore, students may not provide, submit, or upload anything produced for or taken from a course to any "study resource" platform (for example Course Hero, Chegg, etc). This includes but is not limited to all student work as well as lessons, lectures, assignment sheets, rubrics, syllabi, study guides, etc. and applies whether the student is actively or formerly enrolled. A violation of this type may be considered an intellectual property rights violation.
12. Submitting to faculty work completed by the use of any artificial intelligence tool without permission and/or when prohibited by class policy. When faculty require the use of technology, including artificial intelligence, as a part of an assignment for the course, there is no violation. Students are reminded to consult syllabi, assignment sheets/rubrics, program documents and their faculty. Use of artificial intelligence, when permitted, must be correctly cited in the assignment.
13. Misleading a faculty member or administrator about the true nature of academic work, including how it was created, received, transmitted.

For more details on violations of academic integrity, please see the appropriate section in MyUMassGlobal.

In a certification-based Final Assessment, students must also adhere to rules and policies posted by the certification agency.

B. Investigating and Reporting

This policy and any procedures in it apply both to current students, and to former students for whom information is discovered after the time of a course completion, program requirement completion and/or degree completion regarding alleged academic integrity violations that occurred during the time of the student's enrollment.

Faculty discovering evidence of academic dishonesty/violation in their class in a given session shall be the person primarily responsible for investigating the incident(s), determining through evidence, subject matter expertise, and professional experience whether or not a violation of this policy has occurred, and reporting the incident upon their determination that a violation has occurred. The faculty has the discretion to determine that a suspected violation is an actual violation, or that a suspected violation is not an actual violation. Reporting: when the faculty has determined that an actual violation has occurred, and they will be acting in the form of imposing any sanction, the faculty shall report the investigation and their determination using the required report form (Academic Integrity Violation and Sanction Form). Any faculty unfamiliar with this policy or process are encouraged to consult with an Associate Dean in their school for guidance on carrying out this policy.

The following are the required procedures for investigating and reporting a single academic integrity violation occurring in a course:

1. The instructor must communicate with the student in private to address the possible violation. The instructor's communication may be through written feedback on an assignment, through UMass Global e-mail, by phone, or via a virtual meeting. The student is expected to meet with the instructor (by phone, in a virtual meeting, or via UMass Global email) for the purpose of clarifying the circumstances or settling the issue of responsibility. Students are not eligible to withdraw from the course until final resolution of the alleged violation.
 2. After this meeting, if the instructor is satisfied that the incident does not constitute a violation of academic integrity, then the matter is settled, no further action is required, and the Academic Integrity Violation and Sanction Form is not filed.
 3. If the instructor determines that there has been a substantiated violation of academic integrity, then the instructor completes the Academic Integrity Violation and Sanction Form on this single violation involving only one assignment, citing the sanction. The form can be found in the faculty area of MyUMassGlobal. The Director of Academic Support and Curriculum will determine whether this is the student's first, second, or successive academic integrity violation at UMass Global.
 4. If this is the student's first reported academic integrity violation at UMass Global, the following procedure is followed:
 - a. The completed Academic Integrity Violation and Sanction Form is emailed to the student, instructor, and appropriate office for processing, if required (e.g., change of grade). A record of the academic integrity violation and sanction is filed. The student may not withdraw from the program prior to final resolution of the case.
 - b. If the student does not agree with the sanctions imposed by the instructor, as articulated on the Academic Integrity Violation and Sanction Form, the student may work with an academic coach to submit a petition within 10 business days of being informed of the imposed sanction. If the student does not submit a petition within 10 business days, the student is ineligible to further appeal the academic integrity violation and sanction.
 - c. The Dean or the Dean's Designee will review the petition and contact the involved faculty member (and may also contact the student) in an effort to resolve the matter. The Dean or the Dean's Designee will initiate whatever action he or she sees fit to sustain, overturn or modify the instructor's sanctions. The Dean or the Dean's Designee will notify the student and instructor of the decision via email. Filing and further processing, if required (e.g., change of grade), will occur as necessary.
 - d. If there is dissatisfaction with the petition decision made by the appropriate Dean or Dean's Designee, the student may request a hearing with the Governance and Appeals Committee (GAC), within 10 business days of receiving the Dean's or the Dean's Designee's decision. A request for a GAC hearing must be completed and forwarded by the student requesting to academicsupport@umassglobal.edu. The request will be forwarded to the GAC for review and to render a decision. To render a decision, the GAC will appoint a quorum of three committee members. The GAC Chair will notify the student, the instructor, and the Dean or the Dean's Designee of their decision. If the student does not submit a hearing request within 10 business days, the student is ineligible to further appeal the academic integrity violation and sanction.
 - e. A student has the right to appeal within 30 business days of notification by the GAC of the academic integrity decision. Appeal decisions are based on relevant information that was not available at the time of the decision, or if procedures were not followed in accordance with UMass Global academic policy/guidelines. An appeal is not a reconsideration of the merits of the decision. The appeal decision will be rendered by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The appeal decision will be final and binding.
5. If this is the student's second or successive academic integrity violation at University of Massachusetts Global, the following procedure is followed:
- a. The most recently completed Academic Integrity Violation and Sanction Form is emailed to the student and instructor. A record of the academic integrity violation and sanction is filed. The student may not withdraw from the program before the resolution of the case. Since the student has more than one Academic Integrity Violation, the completed Academic Integrity Violation and Sanction Form and the students' prior Academic Integrity Violation and Sanction Form(s) are also sent to the Dean or the Dean's Designee to review. The Dean or the Dean's Designee will initiate whatever action she or he sees fit to sustain, overturn, or modify the instructor's sanctions based on the student's current and prior violations. The Dean or Dean's Designee will notify the student and instructor of their decision via email. Filing and further processing, if required (e.g., change of grade, academic dismissal), will occur as necessary.
 - b. If there is dissatisfaction with the petition decision made by the appropriate Dean or Dean's Designee, the student may request a hearing with the Governance and Appeals Committee (GAC), within 10 business days of receiving the Dean's or the Dean's Designee's decision. The request will be forwarded to the GAC for review and to render a decision.

To render a decision, the GAC will appoint a quorum of three committee members. The GAC Chair will notify the student, instructor, and Dean or Dean's Designee of the decision.

- c. A student has the right to appeal within 30 days of notification of the academic integrity decision by the GAC. Appeal decisions are based on relevant information that was not available at the time of the decision, or based on whether procedures were followed in accordance with UMass Global academic policy/guidelines. An appeal is not a reconsideration of the merits of the decision. The appeal decision will be rendered by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The appeal decision will be final and binding.
6. If the student has already completed the competency or program requirement in which the academic integrity violation is subsequently discovered, the following procedure is followed:
 - a. The Dean or the Dean's Designee will investigate the allegations and, when possible, attempt to contact the involved tutorial faculty member and/or Quality Assurance Manager, and the involved student, as part of the investigation. The Dean or the Dean's Designee will also review documentation from the student's prior academic integrity violations, if any. If the Dean or the Dean's Designee determines that there has been a substantiated violation of academic integrity in the case at hand, they will assess an appropriate sanction based on the violation at hand and on, if applicable, any prior violations. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, change of grade and/or retroactive dismissal resulting in revocation of the student's degree.
 - b. If there is dissatisfaction with the decision made by the appropriate Dean, the student may request a hearing with the Governance and Appeals Committee (GAC), within 10 business days of transmission of the Dean's decision. A request for a GAC hearing must be completed and forwarded by the student requesting to academicsupport@umassglobal.edu. Students may get support from their academic coach when needed for this process, however the request must be made by the student. The request for a hearing will be forwarded to the GAC for review and calendaring of the hearing. The GAC Chair shall communicate with the student the date/time of the hearing and how the hearing will occur (i.e. via Zoom or another forum). This communication will be done via UMass Global email. The student has 5 business days to respond to the email and accept the hearing date schedule or suggest a different date within a reasonable amount of time. Student may only postpone the hearing once, and the hearing may be postponed for no more than 10 business days. If the student does not respond within 5 business days, they forfeit their rights to a GAC hearing, and the grievance process ends. The student will not be allowed to take any further actions in the grievance process.
 - c. A student has the right to appeal within 30 business days of notification of the academic integrity decision by the GAC. Appeal decisions are based on relevant information that was not available at the time of the decision, or based on whether procedures were followed in accordance with University of Massachusetts Global academic policy/guidelines. An appeal is not a reconsideration of the merits of the decision. The appeal decision will be rendered by the

Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The appeal decision will be final and binding.

7. A formal dismissal for a violation of academic integrity will be recorded on the student's official transcript. Students dismissed due to an academic integrity violation are not eligible for readmission to the University.
8. Once an academic integrity allegation and sanction have been resolved and finalized, the competency grade cannot be challenged on the basis of grounds related to the academic integrity allegation and sanction.

For academic integrity violations that occur outside of a course setting, the applicable Dean or Dean's Designee shall investigate. If the Dean or the Dean's Designee determines that a violation of academic integrity has occurred, the Dean or Dean's Designee will notify the student and applicable academic personnel of the decision and sanctions by email. If the student is enrolled at the university at the time that the violation is discovered and is dissatisfied with the Dean's decision, they may request a hearing with the Governance and Appeals Committee (GAC) under the same parameters as in Step 4d above, and may subsequently appeal to the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs under the same parameters as in Step 4e above. If the student is no longer enrolled at the university at the time that the violation is discovered and is dissatisfied with the Dean's decision, they may request a hearing with the Governance and Appeals Committee (GAC) under the same parameters as in Step 6b above, and may subsequent appeal to the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs under the same parameters as in Step 6c above.

C. Governance and Appeals (GAC) Hearing

GAC is responsible for conducting hearings and ruling on students' appeals of academic integrity decisions and sanctions related to academic integrity violations.

The Chair of GAC, upon receiving a student's request for a hearing within 10 business days of the Dean's notice to a student, shall appoint a quorum of three committee members to comprise a hearing panel. The GAC Chair shall communicate with the student the date/time of the hearing and how the hearing will occur (i.e. via Zoom or another forum). This communication will be done via UMass Global email. The student has 5 business days to respond to the email and accept the hearing date schedule or suggest a different date within a reasonable amount of time. Students may only postpone the hearing once, and the hearing may be postponed for no more than 10 business days. If the student does not respond within 5 business days, they forfeit their rights to a GAC hearing, and the grievance process ends. The student will not be allowed to take any further actions in the grievance process.

The GAC panel hearing shall take the form of a three-person panel chaired by one of three (3) members. The Panel will focus on fact-finding, and review of any pertinent information/data. At a minimum, and subject to the chair's discretion the panel shall include:

- an introduction of the purpose of the hearing (defining the scope and purpose),
- an opportunity for the petitioner to speak respectfully, openly and freely regarding the rationale for their appeal and understanding of the issue,
- an opportunity for the panel to question the petitioner to gain clarity, additional information/details, and to respectfully challenge statements made,

- an opportunity for the student to offer additional information not available to the panel at any time in the process, and to offer respectful rebuttal to ideas/information from the submitting faculty report or any panel members' questions/comments.
- an opportunity for the chair to summarize the panel proceedings for adjournment.

Deliberation by the panel shall be confidential, without the petitioner present and after the end of the hearing. If during the deliberation process, the GAC requires additional information from the student, dean, faculty involved, or university administration, the chair may request additional information.

Basic rules of decorum and professionalism shall guide the chair in running the hearing. All elements of the student conduct policy will apply during the hearing. The petitioner may have a support person present in the hearing who is a current member of the UMass Global faculty or staff. Any support person permitted in the hearing shall be a silent observer and shall maintain confidentiality. Silent observers from outside the UMass Global community shall not be ordinarily permitted. Active or former attorneys may not be present in a GAC panel hearing, as the process is not meant to be a hearing of law.

A GAC panel decision will be based on: whether or not a violation(s) actually occurred, evidence and appropriate information provided during the Dean's review and/or during the GAC hearing, university policies and procedures, and whether the Dean's sanction(s) should be upheld or modified. The GAC panel shall consider all available information and evidence and render a ruling in writing to the student and the required University offices.

A student has the right to appeal the GAC panel's decision to the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs if they disagree with the GAC ruling within 30 business days of notification of the GAC panel's decision.

D. Appeals to the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor

A student has a right to appeal a GAC panel's decision to the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs appeal decisions are based on 1) relevant information that was not available at the time of the GAC panel decision, or 2) whether procedures were followed in accordance with UMass Global's academic policies/guidelines. Students wishing to appeal to the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs should do so in their own writing and may seek guidance for processes related to an appeal from an academic advisor.

An appeal is not a reconsideration of the merits of the decision. The appeal decision will be rendered by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The appeal decision will be final and binding.

NOTE: In all cases of alleged violations of academic integrity, it is vital to maintain professional confidentiality among those involved. Students must also adhere to ethical standards set forth by professional licensing boards and discipline-specific criteria. Violations of ethical professional behavior may result in dismissal from the university. Refer to appropriate school for professional code of conduct policy.

Diplomas and Transcripts

The conferral is an automatic process that continuously runs each night; students do not need to apply for conferral. Conferral is the result of the official program evaluation from Degree Works reflecting all requirements

as complete; once the Degree Audit indicates 100% completion, the record will be flagged for processing. The Degree Conferral date is final and is not subject to a request for backdating. Each conferral is subject to a seven-day validation. This allows time for confirmation that all degree requirements have been met.

Once your degree is conferred, conferral fee paid and any holds cleared, you will be able to complete and submit a diploma form. The diploma and one official transcript will be mailed to the address you provide on your diploma form. Diplomas are mailed out approximately eight weeks after the date you submitted your diploma form. Under no circumstances will a diploma be released prior to the conferral date. Diplomas and/or transcripts will not be released if the student has an active hold, to view holds please visit MyUMassGlobal Self-Service.

Transcripts from other institutions which have been presented for admission or evaluation become part of the student's academic file and are not returned or copied for distribution.

A student's academic history (transcript) will be a straight line listing of competencies completed with the corresponding "M" grade for Mastery. Competencies in progress or not completed will not be reflected on the academic record/transcript. Competencies, that were not successfully completed, will be reflected on the academic record/transcript with a "WX" grade. Upon request, a corresponding conversion record (credit hour transcript) reflecting courses and credits will be developed. As a result, students will receive both a "competency transcript" that indicates competencies satisfied and a separate standard credit hour transcript which will list full credit hour equivalencies.

Currently enrolled students may order official copies of transcripts or print unofficial copies of transcripts at any time via MyUMassGlobal Self-Service. For further processing and fee information, please visit the following link: <http://www.umassglobal.edu/transcripts> (<https://www.umassglobal.edu/current-students/office-of-the-registrar/transcript-requests/>).