University Policy 3.04.01	Academic Readiness

Revised Policy Approval Date: June 4, 2009
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Revised Procedure Effective Date: April 1, 2025

POLICY STATEMENT

To participate in Capella University programs, all students must demonstrate academic readiness by successfully completing Capella's first course. In addition, undergraduate students must demonstrate fundamental writing skills and logical reasoning competence as described in the procedures contained within this policy.

RATIONALE

First course is a course that all students must successfully complete to continue participating in all Capella University programs. It is designed to assist students with identifying the areas of support they need in order to be successful and to ensure that they are prepared to continue their studies.

Undergraduate students must possess adequate competency in the areas of writing and logical reasoning in order to be successful in their program. Therefore, a minimum level of writing and logical reasoning competence is established as a requirement for participating in Capella programs as defined in this policy and procedures.

DEFINITIONS

Administrative Withdrawal

Administrative withdrawal is a university-initiated separation of a student from the university.

Concurrent Course

A concurrent course is a course that runs simultaneously, either in its entirety or partially, with another course, including first course.

First Course

First course is the student's initial course, which provides the disciplinary foundation of each program. It is required for all students in degree programs and some certificate programs and is designed to ensure students demonstrate sufficient academic readiness for subsequent Capella courses.

PROCEDURES

I. First Course Registration for All Students

At the time of admission, enrollment counselors register students for their required first course and discuss with them the importance of its successful completion.

II. Successful Completion of First Course for All Students
   A. Undergraduate students must receive a passing grade, or passing FlexPath competency evaluations, in first course, which requires successful completion of the writing and logical reasoning assessments.
   B. Students who successfully complete first course may register for the next course(s) of their programs.

III. Failure to Meet Academic Readiness Standards in the GuidedPath and FlexPath Formats
   A. Students who earn a grade of "F" in first course, or a FlexPath evaluation of "non-performance" on any competency, have not demonstrated the standards of academic readiness. They will be connected with academic readiness tools and will work with their academic coach to develop a plan to strengthen areas in need of improvement. Students will remain registered in their concurrent course(s) unless they initiate a course drop or withdrawal. They will not be allowed to register for any additional courses or continue their program until they successfully complete first course.
   B. Students who receive an Incomplete ("I") grade in first course have not demonstrated the standards of academic readiness. They will be connected with academic readiness tools and will work with their academic coach to develop a plan to strengthen areas in need of improvement. Students will remain registered in their concurrent course(s) unless they initiate a course drop or withdrawal. They will not be allowed to register for any additional courses or continue their program until they successfully complete first course in compliance with university policy *3.04.08 Incomplete Grades*.
   C. Students who drop first course have not demonstrated the standards of academic readiness. They will not be allowed to complete courses in which they are concurrently registered at the time of the first course drop. They will not be allowed to register for any additional courses or continue their program until they successfully complete first course.
   D. Students who withdraw from first course have not demonstrated the standards of academic readiness. They will be connected with academic readiness tools and will work with their academic coach to develop a plan to strengthen areas in need of improvement. Students will remain registered in their concurrent course(s) unless they initiate a course drop or withdrawal. They will not be allowed to register for any additional courses or continue their program until they successfully complete first course.
   E. University policy *4.03.02 Tuition and Fee Refunds* remains in effect and does not provide any financial accommodation for first course failure.

IV. Second First Course Attempt for GuidedPath Students
   A. Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of all university policies to be eligible to register for a second first course attempt.
   B. Graduate students who fail first course on their initial attempt are allowed a second first course attempt at the beginning of a quarter at their discretion.
   C. Undergraduate students who fail first course on their initial attempt must request and obtain faculty approval for a second attempt from their school. If school approval is not granted for a second attempt at first course, undergraduate students will be administratively withdrawn and must wait one calendar year or complete eight additional

transferable quarter credits from another accredited institution before reapplying for admission.

D. Students who drop or withdraw from first course are allowed to register for first course at the beginning of a quarter at their discretion.
E. Students who register for a second first course attempt will not be allowed to register for any concurrent course(s) until after they successfully complete first course.
F. Students register for their second first course attempt by contacting their academic coach.
G. Students who fail first course on their second attempt will be administratively withdrawn from the university.
H. Undergraduate students withdrawn from the university as a result of failing their second attempt at first course are not eligible for admission into any undergraduate degree or certificate program or registration in non-degree courses at Capella University.
I. Students may appeal an administrative withdrawal pursuant to section VI.

V. Second First Course Attempt for FlexPath Students
   A. FlexPath students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of all university policies to be eligible to register for a second first course attempt.
   B. Graduate students in the FlexPath format who fail first course on their initial attempt are allowed a second first course attempt at the beginning of a month at their discretion.
   C. Undergraduate FlexPath students who fail first course on their initial attempt must request and obtain faculty approval for a second attempt from their school. If school approval is not granted for a second attempt at first course, undergraduate students will be administratively withdrawn and must wait one calendar year or complete eight additional transferable quarter credits from another accredited institution before reapplying for admission.
   D. FlexPath students who drop or withdraw from first course are allowed to register for first course at the beginning of a month at their discretion.
   E. FlexPath students who register for a second first course attempt will not be allowed to register for any concurrent course(s) or continue their program until they successfully complete first course.
   F. FlexPath students register for their second first course attempt by contacting their academic coach.
   G. FlexPath students who fail first course on their second attempt will be administratively withdrawn from the university and are not allowed to return to the FlexPath format.
   H. Undergraduate students withdrawn from the university as a result of failing their second attempt at first course are not eligible for admission into any undergraduate degree or certificate program or registration in non-degree courses at Capella University.
   I. Students may appeal an administrative withdrawal pursuant to section VI.

VI. Administrative Withdrawal Appeal Due to Extenuating Circumstances for All Students
   A. Within seven calendar days of the administrative withdrawal notice being sent to the student, the student may appeal the administrative withdrawal decision due to extenuating circumstances occurring during the quarter or billing session they made a second unsuccessful attempt at first course.
   B. Extenuating circumstances may include but are not limited to the death of a family member, job-required relocation, or severe physical injury or illness. Documentation of

the circumstance must be provided by parties other than the student; for example, a death certificate, a letter from the student's supervisor, or a letter from the student's physician must accompany the request.

C. Students must be able to demonstrate satisfactory, ongoing participation in first course up to the time the extenuating circumstances occurred.
D. If the appeal is approved, the student may register only for first course. Students will not be allowed to register for any additional courses or continue their program until they successfully complete first course.
E. Students whose appeal is granted but fail an additional first course attempt are subject to the same outcomes and impacts as students who failed first course on their second attempt, and the student is not entitled to any further appeals.
F. The decision of the school dean or designee is final. Matters that have been reviewed and have received a final decision under this policy are not eligible for further review under another policy.

POLICY OWNERS
Academic Owner: Deans
Operations Owner: Academic Advising

RELATED DOCUMENTS
University policy 2.01.01 Admission
University policy 2.02.02 Course Registration
University policy 2.02.10 Separation from the University
University policy 3.01.04 Academic Standing
University policy 3.01.05 Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress
University policy 3.04.08 Incomplete Grades

REVISION HISTORY
Original Policy Approval Date: January 1, 2006
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Administrative edits as result of ongoing review: 11-17-09; 2-22-10; 7-29-13; 2-10-14; 12-14-16; 7-26-17; 4-1-18; 1-13-22; 7-1-23; 1-1-25; 4-1-25
Formerly university policy 02.055 Academic Readiness