Academic Status and Regulations

Admission & Readmission

Admission is valid for one academic year. Graduate programs review students’ academic progress annually and recommendations for readmission are made. Programs may review academic records at the end of each semester if a student is not making suitable academic progress, however, and academic probation or withdrawal may result. Satisfactory academic progress in a program involves maintaining the professional standards expected in a particular discipline or program. Academic insufficiency or failure to make suitable progress toward the degree may require withdrawal.

A student who has not been enrolled in GSAS for more than one year and who did not obtain a leave of absence should consult with their former department to determine how to re-enter their former program. The student’s former graduate department will determine whether or not the student is eligible to be reinstated at Brandeis. If the program’s requirements have changed during the student's absence or the student is not deemed to satisfy current standards of the field, their former program may require them to repeat or supplement previous academic requirements (including foreign language or qualifying exams). If students are reinstated, they will be informed of their current academic progress in relation to their degree requirements.

Registering for the Fall and Spring Semesters

All students must register for each fall and spring semester by enrolling in courses. Ph.D. students in the Sciences and Computer Science, as well as Master’s students in Genetic Counseling, Education, Hornstein, and Biotechnology must register for the summer semester.

In addition to the registration period that runs for 2 – 3 weeks at the beginning of each semester, there is also an early registration period for the upcoming semester, for students who will be continuing their studies. For both enrollment periods, students will gain access to online course enrollment from their student home page in Sage, the University’s student records system.

Summer Term Registration

Students who are required to be on campus, at a related lab for the full year, or have a required summer internship, in addition to those students who intend to complete their degree program in time for an August degree, must enroll in CONT 250b (Summer Research) for the summer term. Students who are not required to be on campus during the summer but who are engaged in research may also wish to enroll to become eligible for loans. The summer term does not count towards residency, except for the Education and Jewish Professional Leadership programs. You must contact the Registrar’s Office in order to enroll for summer.
Academic Residence Requirements

Information regarding academic residence requirements can be located in the University Bulletin in the Academic Regulations in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences section. You can also use the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences section to learn more about each status type and respective tuition charges.

Inactive Student Statuses

Degree Pending
Graduate students who have completed all degree requirements including final defense of their dissertation or thesis, and who have had their dissertation or thesis deposit accepted by GSAS prior to the start of classes for the semester are assigned the status of Degree Pending. Student should request a change to this status upon depositing their dissertation or thesis. International students should check with the ISSO office prior to requesting this change. Students in this category are typically not eligible to use any academic services or University facilities, nor are they eligible for student loans or loan deferments.

Leave of Absence
Students may petition for a leave of absence using the form available on the GSAS website. The petition must have the approval of the chair of the program and the Graduate School. Leaves of absence up to one year will normally be granted to students in good academic standing who present compelling personal reasons. Returns from leave may be subject to conditions established at the inception of the leave as indicated on the leave of absence petition form. Time spent on authorized leaves of absence will not be counted toward the maximum time permitted to complete degree requirements.

Should a student need to go on leave for medical reasons, he or she can petition for a medical leave of absence by completing the appropriate form and submitting the required note from a healthcare/psychological service provider. Medical leaves of absence are typically granted for up to one year and students must follow the required steps to return from medical leave one month prior to the start of the semester they are expected back at the Graduate School. These steps will be outlined in a letter to the student upon approval of going on medical leave.

If, for any reason, a student must extend a leave of absence, he or she must request such an extension in writing before the leave of absence expires. Failure to do so will result in involuntary withdrawal from the Graduate School. Students who extend their leaves of absence beyond one year may lose departmental funding. Should a student wish to return, the student will be considered for funding as part of the department’s entering cohort of students.

Change of Status

GSAS handles all change of status requests. Should you need to request a change to your status, complete the Change of Status form and return it to GSAS in a timely fashion, typically before the close of the current semester’s registration period.
Time to Degree

**Doctoral Candidates:** The normal time allowed to earn a doctoral degree is eight years. Students who are granted credit for a year's work done elsewhere are expected to earn their degree in seven years. Students who require more time must apply to GSAS for an extension by the final semester before their time to degree lapses.

**Master's Candidates:** The master's degree should be earned within four years from the time the student begins the program at Brandeis University. The Master of Fine Arts candidate has five years to complete all requirements.

**Change of Graduation Expectation Date:** If you need to change your expected date of graduation, please contact the Registrar’s Office to do so.

Rights and Responsibilities

Every member of the University community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. All students are further required to abide by University standards of conduct as stated in the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook from The Department of Student Rights & Community Standards.

Voluntary Withdrawal

A student who wishes to withdraw voluntarily from the Graduate School during a semester must do so in writing to the program chair and the Graduate School on or before the last day of instruction in the term. Failure to notify the University in writing of a withdrawal may subject the student to loss of eligibility for refunds in accordance with the refund schedule outlined in the “Fees and Expenses” section. Permission to withdraw voluntarily will not be granted if the student has not discharged all financial obligations to the University or has not made financial arrangements satisfactory to the Office of Financial Services.

Involuntary Withdrawal

**Failure to Register:** Students who fail to register by the registration deadline (refer to the Academic Calendar on the Registrar’s site) and/or fail to meet their financial obligations with the Office of Student Financial Services will be administratively withdrawn. They may be readmitted for study in a subsequent term, but not for the term in which they were withdrawn for failure to register. Belatedly fulfilling financial obligations will not negate the effects of administrative withdrawal.

**Notification of Withdrawal and Appeal Process:** If a student has been formally notified that s/he will be withdrawn from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at the end of a semester, the student will have 48 hours to indicate to the Dean of GSAS whether s/he wishes to appeal. If a student wishes to appeal, the Dean will convene a review board composed of four faculty members from outside the student’s home department/program. The student will have seven (7) calendar days to file a written appeal to the Dean, indicating why the situation does not warrant withdrawal. Normally, the review
board will hear that appeal within seven (7) calendar days of the Dean’s receipt of the written appeal petition. The Dean will serve as a non-voting member of committee. The student and the director of graduate studies within the student’s department will both have the opportunity to meet with the review board if they so choose. The board will communicate its decision to the Dean of GSAS (or a designee), who will review the recommendation and communicate the final decision to the student. The Dean's decision shall be final.

**Academic Grievance Procedure**

Any student who has a grievance about a faculty or staff member regarding an academic matter should meet promptly with the persons directly involved. If that meeting results in a mutually acceptable solution, the matter is closed. If either party wishes to have a written statement of the outcome, the parties should put the solution in writing, sign it, and provide each with a copy. If the grievance is unresolved, the student should submit a written statement, specifying the complaint and remedy desired, to the graduate advisor or the chair of the department in which the faculty or staff members reside. The chair or graduate advisor is to seek to resolve the matter within 14 calendar days from submission of the complaint, either personally or by assigning the matter to one or more faculty members. Any settlement will be in writing and signed by the parties involved, with a copy to all. The student may appeal in writing the department’s decision to the Dean of Arts and Sciences within 45 calendar days of the decision. The appeal should specify why the proposed resolution is not acceptable. Final disposition of the appeal will be in writing to all parties involved; the Dean’s decision is final. The Dean of GSAS is available to consult with students at any step in the grievance process.