



COLUMBIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Student **2013**
Handbook

Nondiscrimination Policy

CSU provides equal educational opportunity and does not discriminate with respect to race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, physical handicap, age, marital status, gender or status such as a disabled veteran.

Policy Disclaimer

At CSU, we are committed to ensuring that our students are kept informed of the latest principles, theories, and applications pertaining to their studies. However, CSU reserves the right to make changes as deemed appropriate in our course offerings, curricula, academic policies, and other rules and regulations affecting students without prior notification.

A MESSAGE FROM THE *President*

Dear Students,

The CSU family of administrators, faculty, and support staff are excited you have chosen Columbia Southern University (CSU) to complete your educational goals. You join a diverse group of students located around the world, ready for a life-changing learning experience.

Our service-centered environment and student-centered staff enables each learner to achieve their educational goals and objectives through an online learning platform, driven by engaging faculty, quality courses, technical support, and affordable tuition.

CSU was founded on strong values of providing a family culture and work environment of caring and respect that provides a foundation for CSU faculty, staff, and administration to provide and create an exceptional student experience. You can expect caring staff that will support you during special circumstances and faculty that will challenge you, equating to a great learning experience. Understanding the culture and purpose of CSU is a primary step in developing a commitment to your academic endeavors and yourself.

Through the offering of quality programs and building longer term relationships with students and the industries we serve, CSU maintains a competitive and quality national and international reputation as an institution of higher learning. As a student, you have a team that is committed to your success.

The Student Handbook has been assembled to provide departmental information, policies, and procedures that will be important to your success as a CSU student.

Utilizing this handbook as an active resource will enhance your knowledge of institutional expectations, define policies, and expound on procedures needed to complete course and program assignments.

If you need further assistance, please feel free to contact your Academic Advisor or Student Services Representative. Thank you for choosing Columbia Southern University!



Robert Mayes, President
Columbia Southern University

Table of Contents

Introduction	3	Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)	18
The Student's Ultimate Resource	3	Enforcement and Penalties	19
Scope of the Student Handbook	3	Title IX	20
About CSU	4	Academic Policies	21
Mission Statement	4	Academic Integrity Policy	21
Core Values	4	Academic Course Load Policy	22
Vision	4	Accommodation for Disabilities	22
Board of Trustees	4	Assignment Make-Up Policy	22
Accreditation, Affiliations and Licensure	4	Attendance Policy	22
CSU Service Pledge	5	Book Grant/Loan-a-Book Policies	23
Gainful Employment Disclosure	5	Course Access Policy	23
Administration & Academic Officers	5	Course Completion Policy	23
Student Communications	6	Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy	24
Office Hours & Contact Information	6	Course Retake Policy	24
Holidays	7	Final Examination Proctor Policy	24
Official Mode of Communication	7	Graduation Requirements	26
Student Contact Information	7	Graduation with Honors	26
Admissions	8	Inactive Status	27
Admission Requirements	8	Incomplete Course Policy	27
International Admission Requirements	8	Incomplete for Special Circumstances Policy	28
Homeschooled Admission Requirements	8	Institutional Academic Progress, Probation,	30
Admission Status	8	Suspension, and Dismissal	30
Transfer Credit	8	Leave of Absence Policy	31
Transcript Request Service	9	Returning Textbooks for Dropped/ Withdrawn Courses	32
Temporary Status Enrollment	9	Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP) For Title IV Students	32
Tuition & Financing	10	Student Complaint and Grievance Policy	34
Tuition Rates	10	Student Conduct and Due Process	34
Tuition Refund Policy	10	Student Identity Verification Policy	35
Automatic Credit Card Payment Plan	10	Technology Policies	35
Federal Student Aid (FSA)	11	Unofficial Withdrawal Policy	38
Enrollment Status Requirements	11	Withdrawal for Special Circumstances Policy	38
Student Fees	11	Student Resources	39
Enrollment Options	12	Student Support Services	39
Term Enrollment Programs	12	Your CSU Team	39
Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans	12	Academic Advising Center	39
Per-Course Enrollment Programs	12	Student Services	39
Non-Federal Student Aid Programs	12	Career Services	40
Qualifications for Enrollment Options	12	Office of Disability Services	40
In-Program Student Requests	14	Library Services	40
Changing Degree Programs	14	Office of the Registrar	41
Degree to Certificate Transfer Request	14	Helpdesk Technical Support	41
Associate Degree Request for Bachelor Students	14	Alumni Association	41
Course Transfer Request	14	References for Students	42
Returning Students	14	Student Portal	42
Re-Admission	15	Term Course Schedule	42
Petition for Graduation	15	Full Course Listing	42
Institutional Transcript Request	15	Gainful Employment Information	42
Annual Security Report	16	Graduation Information	42
Clery Campus Security Policy	16	University Catalog	42
Drug & Alcohol Prevention	17	CSU Grading Rubric	42
Drug & Alcohol Prevention Policy	17	Additional Tutorials & Resources	42
Resources	17	Academic Term Calendar*	43
Your Rights Under FERPA	18		

I Introduction

The Student's Ultimate Resource

The CSU Student Handbook serves as the student's personal guidebook, assisting them in answering questions related to policies and procedures that are both academic and administrative in nature, support services available for student success, academic guidance and the responsibilities, expectations, and rights of students. We recognize the delicate balance of work, family, and other commitments while pursuing higher education. This resource was created to assist you while on your journey to degree completion.

The CSU University Catalog and CSU Website are resources for online degree program listings and other information not contained in the Student Handbook.

Scope of the Student Handbook

The policies and procedures contained in the Columbia Southern University (CSU) Student Handbook are applicable to all members of the CSU community, including students, staff, faculty, and administration. The Student Handbook is the official document regarding policies, procedures, and resources of Columbia Southern University.

The University conducts on-going benchmarking with similar institutions to provide the most relevant, useful information for the Student Handbook. The handbook is regularly updated to incorporate changes to University policies and/or procedures.

The University reserves the right to revise or update any provision of the Student Handbook with or without notice. The current edition of the Student Handbook supersedes all previous editions.



About CSU

Mission Statement

The Mission of Columbia Southern University is to change and improve lives through higher education by offering primarily distance education programs at the certificate, undergraduate, and graduate level, enabling a global student body to maximize their professional and personal potential and better serve the community in which they live and work. The mission provides for quality programs that enhance student learning and are flexible, affordable, and delivered with exceptional service by qualified and caring student-centered faculty and staff.

Core Values

The CSU mission rests on the commitment to and achievement of the following core values:

- Integrity, fairness, tolerance, and professionalism in all operations which support our mission;
- Focus on affordable, quality online instruction including undergraduate programs with a general education core that promotes life-long learning and the success of its graduates;
- Receptivity and respect for a diversity of cultures, ideas, experiences, and people by all areas of the university;
- Accessibility, flexibility, and the use of appropriate technology in the delivery of its online programs, services, and operations;
- Encouragement of scholarly pursuit and creative endeavors of students, faculty, and university staff;
- Provide student-centered support services that are personal, responsive, and geared toward assisting students in achieving their educational goals;
- Collaboration with business, industry, the community, and governmental bodies to create affordable and accessible learning opportunities for employees;
- A focus on long-term relationships and serving constituencies with special needs that include members of the armed services, public service employees, law enforcement, fire, and public safety individuals;
- A professional outlook that values innovation, ongoing self-assessment, creative thinking, and a willingness to lead positive educational change;

- Provide staff and faculty with a stable and enjoyable work environment enriched by a family culture of caring, respect, and open communication;
- Fulfill the role of a good corporate citizen through community participation and support.

Vision

The Vision of Columbia Southern University is to deliver a broad range of quality distance education opportunities that meet the needs of traditional and non-traditional students in a manner that is unparalleled in higher education. To achieve this, we are committed to providing a positive work environment, building long-term relationships, and offering programs with exceptional service at a reasonable-cost and in a flexible format.

Board of Trustees

Columbia Southern University is governed by an 8 to 15 member Board of Trustees, which establishes the mission of the University and determines the general policies and affairs of the University. The Articles of Incorporation and the By-laws of Columbia Southern University clearly define the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees.

A complete listing of Board of Trustees responsibilities and members can be viewed on the CSU website.

Accreditation, Affiliations and Licensure

Columbia Southern University (CSU) is an accredited member of the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC). The Accrediting Commission of DETC is listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a nationally recognized accrediting agency. All CSU programs have been reviewed and approved by DETC. The Accrediting Commission of DETC is a recognized member of the Council for Higher Accreditation (CHEA).

For additional information regarding CSU accreditation and licensure or other CSU higher education related memberships, please visit the Accreditation & Licensure page on the CSU website.

CSU Service Pledge

At CSU, students will find our staff ready to assist them. We pride ourselves on providing a high level of personalized service and for going “the extra mile.” We will work hard to solve any problems or issues that arise. If a student ever feels he/she did not receive this level of service, please let us know. In return, students are expected to be courteous and professional in their communications with CSU staff & faculty. Abusive language and rude behavior will be considered ethical misconduct.

Gainful Employment Disclosure

Columbia Southern University (CSU) self-discloses information pursuant to Gainful Employment Law. CSU is forthright in publishing gainful employment information so students have the information necessary to make informed, rational educational decisions. For information concerning median loan debt, cost of attendance, occupational information, or graduation rates, please visit Gainful Employment Disclosure on the CSU website.

Administration & Academic Officers

Columbia Southern University employs qualified administrative and academic officers who effectively lead the institution through expertise, experience, and competence. These foundational leaders of the CSU community are actively engaged in accomplishing the mission of the University through a combination of credentials and expertise associated with their positions.

A complete listing of Administration and Academic Officers can be viewed at the CSU website.



Student Communications

Office Hours & Contact Information

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 3110
Orange Beach, AL 36561

Shipping Address:

21982 University Lane
Orange Beach, AL 36561

Main Office: 800.977.8449
251.981.3771
Fax: 251.981.3815
Monday-Thursday, 8 am–5 pm
Friday, 8 am–3 pm

Academic Advisement: 877.316.0219
Monday-Thursday 8 am–5 pm
Friday, 8 am–3 pm

Admissions: 877.347.6050
Fax: 251.224.0540
admissions@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Friday, 8 am–7 pm

Bookstore: 877.323.4474
bookstore@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Friday 8 am–5 pm

Business Affairs: 877.323.4472
Fax: 251.224.0570
accounting@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Friday, 8 am–5 pm

Financial Aid: 877.316.8396
Fax: 251.224.0590
financialaid@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Thursday 8 am–5 pm
Friday, 8 am–3 pm

Learning Partners: 800.344.5021
learningpartners@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Friday, 8 am–5 pm

Online Library: 877.268.8046
librarian@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Thursday, 8 am–11 pm
Friday, 8 am–3 pm
Sunday, 3 am–11 pm

Quality Assurance: 800.977.8449
coursequality@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Thursday, 8 am–5 pm
Friday, 8 am–3 pm

Office of the Registrar: 877.316.0219
Fax: 251.224.0575
registrar@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Friday, 8 am–5 pm

Student Services: 877.323.4471
Fax: 251.224.0550
students@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Friday, 8 am–7 pm

Success Center: 877.875.0533
teamsucceed@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Thursday, 8 am–5 pm
Friday, 8 am–3 pm

Technical Support: 877.399.1063
techsupport@columbiasouthern.edu
Monday-Friday, 8 am–11 pm
Saturday & Sunday, 10 am–7 pm

Faculty: Individual faculty contact information is included in the course syllabus.

*Note: All published hours are Central Standard Time (CST).
Online Chat is available through the CSU website.*

Holidays

University offices are closed annually in observance of the following holidays: *(Specific date closure information is published in myCSU Student Portal under the Announcements section.)*

- New Year's Day
- MLK Jr. Day
- Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras)
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas

Official Mode of Communication

Columbia Southern University considers email as the official form of communication. Important student information and announcements are communicated through this method.

An appropriate, individual (non-shared) e-mail address is required for all CSU students. Students are expected to maintain a current email address on file with the University.

In the event a student's e-mail address is no longer valid, access to myCSU Student Portal may be restricted until such time the address is updated. This policy is officially published within Technology Policies.

Email communications are subject to all applicable university policies, including Student Rights and Responsibilities and Student Code of Conduct policies.

Student Contact Information

Students are expected to maintain updated contact information on file with the University. A convenient, online form is available to assist students in remaining current with personal contact information.

Note: Any name change will require submission of official supporting documentation; such as a marriage certificate, divorce decree, driver's license, Social Security card, passport, or court documented name change.

IV

Admissions

Admission Requirements

Columbia Southern University has an open admissions policy, however, some programs maintain specific program entry requirements. A complete listing of admissions requirements for our online undergraduate and graduate distance learning programs can be viewed by visiting the Admissions Requirements page on the CSU website.

International Admission Requirements

International students must provide an appropriately authenticated official transcript issued by a governmental authority that attests to the successful completion of a program considered to be equivalent to an accredited high school diploma or GED certificate. A detailed guide for meeting CSU admission requirements is available in the CSU International Admission Guidelines.

Homeschooled Admission Requirements

CSU requires homeschooled students to show proof of successful completion of his/her state requirements for high school graduation. The homeschooled student is responsible for compliance with all requirements for his/her state. An official transcript is required to demonstrate that high school graduation requirements are met. A detailed guide for meeting CSU admission requirements is available in the CSU Homeschool Admission Guidelines.

Admission Status

Columbia Southern University has an open admissions policy, however, students are admitted in specified statuses pursuant to the Admissions Status Policy. Please review the Admissions Status page on the CSU website for a complete listing of specific requirements.

Transfer Credit

CSU accepts transfer academic credit from institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and/or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). For prior undergraduate academic credit to be eligible for transfer, grades earned must be a "C"

or higher. However, a maximum of three courses in which a "D" was earned may be considered during the admission process. "D's" are not accepted as transfer credit for English Composition I, II or their equivalent. For prior academic credit to be eligible for transfer at the master's degree level, grades earned must be a "B" or higher. However, a maximum of one course in which a "C" was earned may be considered for acceptance.

Transfer Credit by Examination

CSU accepts credit by examination from the following organizations:

- The College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education (DANTES)

Professional Licenses, Certificates, and Training Programs

CSU uses guidelines established by the American Council on Education (ACE) to determine if certain training programs, certificates, professional licenses, and/or military training warrant awarding academic credit.

The following ACE publications are used:

1. *The National Guide to Education Credit for Training Programs*

For 30 years, this guide has been a trusted source of information on thousands of educational courses offered by business, labor unions, schools, training suppliers, professional and voluntary associations, and government agencies. These course recommendations provide academic credit to students for learning acquired at leading organizations. Each entry in the comprehensive National Guide provides: course title; location of all sites where the course is offered; length in hours, days, or weeks; period during which the credit recommendation applies; purpose for which the credit was designed; learning outcomes; teaching methods, materials, and major subject areas covered; and college credit recommendations offered in four categories (by level of degrees) and expressed in semester hours and subject area(s) in which credit is applicable.

2. Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces

This three-volume set of guidebooks is the standard reference tool used by most U.S. colleges and universities to award academic credit for military learning. The guidebooks contain more than 8,000 courses offered by the U.S. armed services and defense department between January 1990 and the present. The Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces is updated every two years. Every six months, ACE publishes a handbook to the guide. The National Guide to Education Credit for Training Programs, the Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces, and the handbook are available at most public libraries. The guide (Armed Forces) and the handbook are usually available at military education services offices.

Experiential Learning

CSU no longer offers credit for experiential learning for the following reasons:

- After learning of the criteria required to assemble a Prior Learning Portfolio, most students elected to take the required course instead.
- After spending a great deal of time and effort, students that did attempt to assemble a Prior Learning Portfolio became discouraged and dissatisfied when their portfolio was rejected.

Transferring Credit from CSU

Almost all institutions of higher learning, including CSU, restrict the acceptance of credits from other colleges and universities. This is also true of many agencies, companies, and organizations. It is, therefore, recommended that you seek prior approval of your CSU credits if you want to transfer them at a later date, or if you anticipate utilizing your CSU credits for credentialing, reimbursement, or similar reasons. For more information on CSU University Partners and transfer credit opportunities, visit our University Partners page.

Transcript Request Service

CSU will obtain domestic transcripts, including high school transcripts and GED scores, on your behalf. We will contact the prior colleges and/or universities you have attended to secure all the transcripts needed to make sure you receive transfer credit. Please visit the Transcript Request Service page on the CSU website for additional information.

Temporary Status Enrollment

Students who wish to begin enrolling in courses immediately after submitting their application may do so under "Temporary" Admissions Status unless they are planning to utilize Federal Student Aid or Veterans Benefits. While "Temporary," students may complete up to 12 undergraduate semester hours or seven graduate semester hours. Once all official transcripts are received and evaluated, an Application Evaluation Report will be issued and the student's status changed. All transcripts are subject to review, courses previously completed must meet quantitative and qualitative factors. Once all official transcripts are received and all requirements shown in "Conditional" Admissions Status, above, are met, the status will be changed to "Unconditional" Admissions Status.

V Tuition & Financing

Tuition Rates

CSU tuition rates are priced competitively to allow your dream of achieving a quality education to be within reach. Tuition and other student fees are payable in U.S. funds by check, credit card, money order, or other approved financing programs. A complete listing of Payment Options can be found on the CSU website.

Education Level	Cost Per Credit Hour
Undergraduate.....	\$200
Graduate*	\$265

* The tuition rate for graduate courses per-credit hour is \$250 for all active-duty military members (not applicable for CSU Learning Partners). The lower rate is offered to keep the tuition rate at the DoD cap of \$250 per credit hour.

CSU Learning Partners receive a tuition discount that is applied to the full tuition rate. Tuition rates are subject to change.

Tuition Refund Policy

Per-Course, Term and Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans

Refunds are subject to state policies. For information about refund policies in specific states, please see the State Licensure page of the CSU Website.

Students who wish to drop/withdraw from a course or withdraw from their program should complete the Course Drop/Withdrawal Form located in myCSU Student Portal. Alternatively, students may withdraw in any manner by contacting the Office of the Registrar. Any refunds due will be issued within 30 business days. All students that drop/withdraw from a course after the drop date (7 calendar days for a course in the Term Enrollment Programs or Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans and 2 calendar days for a course in the Per-Course Enrollment Programs) can be charged a 20 percent Registration Fee * (maximum of \$200 per degree program). The remaining tuition will be refunded based on the course start date and the tuition percentage amounts listed below or the applicable state refund policy, whichever is more student friendly.

Tuition Due Student in the:

- 1st week: 100%
- 2nd week: 80%
- 3rd week: 60%
- 4th week: 40%
- 5th week: 20%
- 6th week: 0%

Iowa State Refund Policy

The Iowa State Refund Policy applies when students who are residents of Iowa drop or are administratively dropped from a course or the institution and is calculated as follows:

- Remaining # of scheduled school days (up to 60% of the total scheduled school days)
- Divided by
The total number of scheduled school days (up to 60% of the total scheduled school days)
- Multiplied by 90% of the charged tuition

Maryland State Refund Policy

The Maryland State Refund Policy applies when students who are residents of Maryland drop or are administratively dropped from a course or the institution.

Tuition Due Student:

Proportion of Total Course, Program, or Term Completed as of

Date of Withdrawal or Termination	Tuition Refund
Less than 10%	90% Refund
10% up to but not including 20%	80% Refund
20% up to but not including 30%	60% Refund
30% up to but not including 40%	40% Refund
40% up to but not including 60%	20% Refund
More than 60%	No Refund

Automatic Credit Card Payment Plan

Term Programs

CSU offers an automatic credit card payment plan for students paying out-of-pocket. This plan allows students to spread tuition payments out over time by having them automatically charged to a credit card on a pre-set schedule.

The student’s credit card will be charged for half of the tuition due for the term upon registration and half at the start of the fifth week of the term.

To be eligible for this plan, the student must:

- Have declared an undergraduate or graduate degree as their academic goal
- Use a credit card as payment
- Have an acceptable credit history with CSU (New students automatically qualify if the first tuition payment is approved).

Military Educational Benefits

CSU is approved to offer Tuition Assistance (TA), and Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits through DANTES. In most cases, these benefits will cover the entire cost of your program. Students approved for these educational benefits are to pursue tuition payment through required official documents.

The following links are for informational purposes as students pursue these benefits:

- Military Tuition Assistance*
- Veterans Affairs Benefits: [VA Benefits](#)
- DANTES Tuition Assistance: [DANTES Tuition Assistance](#)

Federal Student Aid (FSA)

CSU is approved to offer Title IV Federal Student Aid (FSA) through grant and loan programs administered by the United States Department of Education. CSU participates in the following grants and loans available through FSA:

- Pell Grants
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Loans
 - Direct Subsidized Loans
 - Direct Unsubsidized Loans

A complete listing of available FSA programs can be found on the Federal Student Aid CSU webpage. Additional information can be found by accessing the following links:

- [Eligibility](#)
- [Preparing to Apply](#)
- [Types of Federal Aid](#)
- [How to Apply](#)
- [Awarding Federal Student Aid](#)
- [Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Current Students](#)
- [Consumer Information](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)

Enrollment Status Requirements

Term Programs

Students must be enrolled at least half-time in order to be eligible to receive federal student aid (FSA). If a student’s enrollment status changes during the first week of classes, or a student does not begin attendance in all courses, the amount of federal student aid awarded will be recalculated. A student must meet the minimum enrollment status in order to be eligible to receive federal student aid. Please refer to the chart below for enrollment status classifications.

	Undergraduate (Associate and Bachelor Degree Programs)	Graduate (MS and MBA Programs)
Full-Time	6 credits +	3 credits +
3/4 Time	4 - 5 credits	N/A
Half-Time	3 credits	N/A

Student Fees

Student Fees are charged when services are rendered. The following listing of fees may apply for specified services:

Fee	Amount
Online Library Fee*—Undergraduate and Graduate Students	\$20
Priority Evaluation Fee.....	\$25
Degree Program Change Fee	\$25
Concentration Change Fee	\$25
Graduation Audit Fee.....	\$75
Incomplete Course Fee** —Per-Course	
15 days	\$25
30 days	\$50
60 days	\$100
Incomplete Course Fee** —Term	
45 days	\$50
Return Check Fee	\$25
Late Payment Fee.....	\$15
Official CSU Transcript Fee	\$10
Bachelor to Associates	
Degree Request.....	\$100
Change of Payment Plan Fee.....	\$50

Fees are non-refundable and are subject to change

*We recognize that the sequester has resulted in the suspension of Tuition Assistance for the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Army. CSU’s staff is available to assist our military students and additional information is available to existing students in the CSU Student Portal.

VT Enrollment Options

An application for admission is required for all students; in addition, all applicable admission requirements apply. Per-Course Enrollment Programs are not eligible for Title IV Federal Student Aid (FSA) or Veterans Administration (VA) benefits. All of the online programs offered at CSU are available in the Per-Course Enrollment Programs option.

Term Enrollment Programs

CSU Term Enrollment Program courses are 8 weeks in length and have set start and end dates coinciding with the Academic Term Calendar. This enrollment option provides a more structured framework that facilitates on-time course completion while allowing the student flexibility throughout the week for assignment completion. Weekly, substantive interaction is required through submission of discussion board postings and other assignment types. Each week begins on Wednesday and ends on Tuesday. Discussion board assignments are due on Saturday and Tuesday. All other weekly assignments are due by Tuesday each week. All assignments are due by midnight Central Standard Time (CST) on the respective day. A term begins almost every month of the year allowing students to begin courses at a time that is convenient to them. The full academic term calendar and term course schedule can be viewed on the CSU website. Students utilizing Title IV Federal Student Aid are required to enroll in Term Enrollment Programs. All of the online programs offered at CSU are available in the Term Enrollment Programs option; with the exception of the Associates of Arts in General Studies, which is not available for students utilizing Federal Student Aid.

Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans

CSU Flexible Enrollment Program courses for Veterans are 8 weeks in length and have set start and end dates coinciding with the Academic Term Calendar. A term begins almost every month of the year, allowing students to begin courses at a time that is convenient for them. This enrollment option was designed for students using Montgomery GI Bill or Post 911 GI Bill benefits and provides a flexible structure for course completion. Between the scheduled start and end date, students can progress through coursework at their own pace. A suggested course schedule is provided, upon

enrollment, as a guide for course completion. Attendance verification is required by week 4 of all enrolled courses to maintain enrollment in Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veteran courses. All of the online programs offered at CSU are available in the Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans option.

Per-Course Enrollment Programs

CSU Per-Course Enrollment Program courses are 10 weeks in length and are designed with student flexibility in mind. Coursework is completed through an independent study model that allows students the flexibility to create study-time around other life commitments. This enrollment option offers added flexibility beyond what typical online programs offer. Per-Course Enrollment Programs have no semester start dates; therefore, students can begin courses at a time convenient to them. Students can progress through course assignments at a comfortable pace by creating a schedule for on-time course completion.

Non-Federal Student Aid Programs

Non-Federal Student Aid programs include all Certificate programs and the Associate of Arts in General Studies. Due to accreditation and/or U.S. Department of Education program eligibility regulations, the specified programs are not eligible for Federal Student Aid (Title IV). Students enrolled in these programs may choose to take the programs as a Per-Course Enrollment Program or a Flexible Enrollment Program for Veterans.

Qualifications for Enrollment Options

Columbia Southern University offers three convenient enrollment options. Enrollment qualification criteria are listed below; for a detailed description of each enrollment option, please navigate to the Enrollment Options page found within the Student Handbook.

Term Enrollment Programs

All students enrolling at Columbia Southern University are eligible to enroll in Term Enrollment Programs; however, students utilizing Title IV Federal Student Aid (FSA) are required to enroll in this enrollment option.

Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans

Students enrolling at Columbia Southern University are only eligible to enroll in Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans through utilization of Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) or Post 911 GI Bill benefits. Students who do not meet this qualification have the option of enrollment in Term Enrollment Programs or Per-Course Enrollment Programs.

Per-Course Enrollment Programs

Students enrolling at Columbia Southern University are eligible to enroll in Per-Course Enrollment Programs if they are not using Title IV FSA or MGIB / Post 911 GI Bill benefits as funding options.



In-Program Student Requests

Changing Degree Programs

Current and withdrawn students are eligible for admission consideration into a new degree program. Students requesting consideration must submit the following: [Program Change/Re-Evaluation Request Form](#). Associated fees are listed below:

Change Degree Program	\$25
In-Program Re-Evaluation	\$25
<i>(update to newest curriculum available for same degree)</i>	
Concentration Change.....	\$25
Transient Student to Degree-Seeking Student	\$0
Non-Degree Seeking to Degree-Seeking Student	\$0

Students wishing to change degree programs or concentrations, or who wish to be re-evaluated to a revised curriculum must complete the Program Change/Re-Evaluation Request Form. Official transcripts must be on file for any transferred courses before this request can be processed. Once received, CSU will review your file and provide you a new applicant evaluation report detailing which of the new program courses will be required of you. Additionally, this report will indicate if any of the courses you have previously taken through CSU will apply. Your new evaluation will be subject to current CSU Catalog requirements.

Note: New policies and tuition rates may apply if your original enrollment pre-dates university policy changes. This type of information will be included in the new applicant evaluation report.

Degree to Certificate Transfer Request

Students wishing to obtain a degree level certificate, while enrolled in the corresponding degree program, may request the certificate by submittal of the Degree to Certificate Transfer Request form. Students will be issued the certificate for completion of all courses required in a certificate program.

Associate Degree Request for Bachelor Students

While completing coursework toward the bachelor's degree, students can earn the necessary credits to satisfy the requirements of the associates degree. Students enrolled in a bachelor's degree program may petition for the corresponding associate's degree upon qualification. Qualification information and the Bachelor to Associate Degree Request Form are located in myCSU Student Portal.

Course Transfer Request

Students wishing to transfer completed courses into their program of study at CSU should submit the Course Transfer Request form.

Transfer Requirements:

- Official transcripts should be requested from each institution in which a course is being considered for transfer; the Course Transfer Request will not be processed until all official documents are received by the Office of the Registrar
- Courses being considered must have similar content to those offered at CSU
- Credits must have been earned at a nationally or regionally accredited institution
- Undergraduate courses must have earned a "C" (2.0) or better to be accepted as transfer credit
- Graduate courses must have earned a "B" (3.0) or better to be accepted as transfer credit
- When submitting a military transcript such as AARTS, SMART, or other military record, please support your request by entering the ACE Guide Number on the request form

Returning Students

Students returning for a subsequent degree program should submit the Application for Admission. A graduation audit must be passed for the previous program. Additional official transcripts/documents not previously submitted may be requested through the CSU Transcript Request Service. CSU cannot order copies of military transcripts, CLEP scores, or international transcripts. Returning students will need to

have an evaluation of credit complete prior to beginning their next degree program with CSU. Returning students cannot enroll under temporary status unless they are utilizing veterans benefits.

Re-Admission

Students in an inactive status or those formally withdrawn from the institution will submit the Re-Enrollment Application. Upon submission of the re-enrollment application, submittal of official transcripts not previously received by the university is required. Students may opt to use the Transcript Request Service for assistance in obtaining official documents. Students re-admitted to the university are subject to the current University Catalog, including academic policies and program requirements. Once all documentation is received by the University, an applicant evaluation report will be issued to the student. Students who are in receipt of an applicant evaluation report may register for courses. Academic advisement should be sought prior to enrolling.

Petition for Graduation

Students within 12 hours of satisfying program requirements are encouraged to file a Petition for Graduation Form. By submission, an official audit of the student record will be performed. The audit will review several facets of the student record including, but not limited to, degree credits earned, financial standing, and official transcript record.

Institutional Transcript Request

Students may request an official transcript from the University by submitting the CSU Transcript Request Form. Please note only transfer credit submitted to the University via official documents will be included on the CSU transcript. Unofficial transfer credit is not notated on the CSU transcript. The transcript will be delivered to the institution or individual notated on the submitted form.

VIII

Annual Security Report

Clery Campus Security Policy

Columbia Southern University (CSU) is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe working environment. All employees, including supervisors and temporary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, a customer, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, including harassment that is based on an individual's sex, race, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.

All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor or any other member of management. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by customers, vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. All suspicious individuals or activities should be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. CSU will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and/or reporting to local law enforcement authorities.

The university must publish and distribute the annual campus security report each year. The report is distributed to students and staff and made available to prospective students and employees. The statistics contained in the report must include the following:

- Criminal homicide, including murder and non-negligent manslaughter and negligent manslaughter
- Sex offenses including forcible sex offenses and non-forcible sex offenses
- Robbery
- Aggravated assault
- Burglary
- Motor vehicle theft
- Arson

- By category of prejudice, crimes listed above and any other crime involving bodily injury reported to local law enforcement or to the campus that demonstrates evidence of prejudice based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or disability
- Arrests for violations of liquor and drug law violations
- Persons not arrested but referred for campus disciplinary action for liquor, drug, and weapons law violations

The Campus Security Authority personnel includes:

- Orange Beach office - Director or Assistant Director of Human Resources
- Gulf Shores office - Provost or Director of Military Programs, or in the case of harassment or discrimination should be reported directly to the Director of Human Resources
- Online Campus - Dean of Students
- Educational Fairs/Seminars - the senior staff person should report any crimes to the Director or Assistant Director of Human Resources

The Campus Security Authority previously mentioned will:

- File a report with the local police department when there is a theft of company property that has some type of traceable identification, or if there has been a pattern of thefts.
- Report homicide, rape, robbery, assault, illegal drugs and weapon possession to the local police department.

The CSU Crime Prevention program includes:

- All guests (including contractors/facility maintenance) are requested to sign in at the receptionist desk to receive a visitor's pass. All guests will remain in the receptionist area until a CSU employee comes to escort them through the building. Visitors should remain with the CSU employee or meeting area and escorted when leaving the building.
- On occasion, we will use video surveillance in the Gulf Shores location.
- In addition to the Orange Beach and Gulf Shores locations being routinely patrolled by local police, CSU utilizes the services of Hunter Security monitoring service.

IX

Drug & Alcohol Prevention

Drug & Alcohol Prevention Policy

Columbia Southern University is committed to providing a drug-free, healthful, and safe workplace. Alcohol and other drug abuse is a significant public health problem and has a detrimental effect on the community in terms of increased medical and workers compensation claims, medical disability costs, decreased productivity, injuries, theft, and absenteeism. Accordingly, CSU has the right and obligation to maintain a safe, healthy, and productive working and learning environment and to protect CSU property, operations, and reputation.

Students, faculty and staff must comply with the federal, state, and local laws concerning alcohol and illegal drug usage, whether on University property or otherwise. Violations will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials. Individual(s) will be subject to university disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or separation, pursuant to CSU policies and procedures.

Resources

Because our virtual campus does not enable us to provide on-site counseling or treatment, we provide the following information as a resource for those who need assistance with avoiding or recovering from alcohol or drug abuse. We encourage any student, staff or faculty member who needs information related to alcohol or drug abuse to use directory information, online searches, the telephone book, or referrals from friends and/or professionals. At a national level, there are also organizations dedicated to providing information and suggestions:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

An agency of the US Department of Health & Human Services providing information online regarding alcohol, drugs, and treatment programs.

General Address: www.samhsa.gov
 Specific Address for Treatment Programs:
findtreatment.samhsa.gov
 800.729.6686

The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information

Part of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & SAMSHA's Clearinghouse

<http://www.health.org/>
 800.729.6686

About.com Substance Abuse

Explore the complicated disease of addiction. Information on basic questions concerning drugs and addiction.

<http://search.about.com/fullsearch.htm?terms=substance%20abuse>

National Institute on Drug Abuse

General Link/Address: www.nida.nih.gov

Specific Link/Address on Club Drugs:
www.clubdrugs.org
 310.443.1124

Alcoholics Anonymous

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

Narcotics Anonymous

www.na.org
www.24houraddictionhelp.com

Local Resources for Staff/Faculty:

Baldwin County Mental Health Center

800.738.2871

Licensed Counselors listed in the Yellow Pages

Gulf Telephone Book

Posters found on CSU bulletin boards



Your Rights Under FERPA

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) affords a student certain rights with respect to their educational records. Columbia Southern University acknowledges this law as university policy.

Under the provisions of this law, students are entitled to the following privileges:

- Inspection and review of the student's educational records.
- Request of amendments to the student's records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights.
- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by CSU to comply with FERPA requirements in the instance that a complaint cannot be resolved within the University.

Requests by students to inspect, review, or amend must be submitted in writing and identify the following:

- Record the student wishes to inspect
- Purpose of the disclosure
- Records that may be disclosed
- The party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made
- Signature and date

Recently, the FERPA regulations have been amended to allow that request to be made electronically. In addition to the aforementioned information, the consent form must:

- Identify and authenticate a particular person as the source of the electronic consent; and
- Indicate that person's approval of the information contained in the electronic consent.

For requests to amend, students must clearly identify the portion of the educational record the student is requesting be changed, and specify why the record should be changed.

If the requested change is not approved, the student will be notified of the University's decision, and the student's right to a hearing. Students are informed of those instances where FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent in the Catalog information (electronically and in print). However, FERPA allows schools to disclose student records, without consent, to the following parties:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest
- Other schools to which a student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit of evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
- State and local authorities

Release of student "directory" information is also permitted by FERPA. CSU identifies "directory" information as name, address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, honors and awards, dates of attendance, major field of study, enrollment status, previous institutions attended, photograph or other comparable information.

Personally identifiable information (or non-releasable information) includes all information not defined as directory information and may not be released without expressed written consent of the student. Students may control the release of directory information by notifying the Registrar's Office at CSU in writing. Upon receipt of this request, a privacy hold will be placed on the student's record.

To Whose Record does the Act apply?

FERPA applies to the education records of persons who are, or have been, in attendance at CSU, including students in continuing education programs sponsored by the University. FERPA does not apply to records of applicants who are denied admittance or, if accepted, do not attend CSU.

To What Records Does the Act Apply?

The act applies to all education records maintained by CSU, and all parties acting for CSU, which are directly related to a student. Records containing a student's name, identification number, or other personally identifiable information, in whatever medium, are covered by FERPA unless identified in one of the act's excluded categories.

Enforcement and Penalties

The CSU Office of the Registrar is responsible for university compliance with this policy. Responsibility for administering the act by the federal government has been assigned to the Family Policy Compliance Office within the United States Department of Education. This office reviews and investigates complaints and attempts to bring compliance through voluntary means.

IX

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. It reads: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

--Legal Citation: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX)

Statement of Policy

It is the policy of Columbia Southern University to prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sex or veteran’s status in regard to the administration of all programs, services and activities.

To ensure compliance with Title IX, the President of the University has designated the Title IX Administrator as the primary contact responsible for developing, adopting and/or assuring the dissemination of the University’s nondiscrimination policy and for making the policy available to the University community, to include students, faculty, staff, and to the public.

Contact Information

Columbia Southern University students, faculty, and staff with inquiries concerning the application of Title IX to the University’s programs and activities, or for inquiries, regarding allegations of discrimination or grievances concerning Title IX, are encouraged to contact:

Tina M. Shipp, MBA
Title IX Administrator
21982 University Lane
Orange Beach, AL 36561
251.981.3771, ext. 1103
tina.shipp@columbiasouthern.edu

XIII

Academic Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity is the demonstration of intellectual honesty by avoiding incidents including but not limited to cheating and/or plagiarism.

Statement of Policy

Ethical conduct is a foundation upon which a successful academic career at Columbia Southern University rests. The students, faculty, and staff must commit themselves to the highest standards of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Therefore, any deviation of these standards is a breach of the ethics that are the basis of Columbia Southern University's academic programs, and thus a violation of the university's Academic Integrity Policy.

A violation of the Academic Integrity Policy includes, but is not limited to:

- Using unauthorized materials (electronic or print) or receiving unauthorized assistance during an examination or in connection with any work completed (or submitted) for academic credit.
- Taking the work of another and offering it as one's own without proper acknowledgement of the true source, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.
- Unauthorized collaboration on a project, homework, or other assignment unless otherwise allowed by a course instructor.
- Sharing, selling, or buying information related to any graded learning activities.
- Using another student's graded work to complete assignment without professor consent.
- Using professor feedback for another student as the basis for an essay response.
- Resubmitting any portion of a previously written work by the student without professor consent. Falsifying information.
- Accessing or using unauthorized materials (electronic or print) and/or websites.
- Use of an alternate, stand-in, or proxy during an examination.
- Use of sources deemed as inappropriate by the professor.
- Actions by a proctor or student deemed as inappropriate per CSU Final Exam Policy and procedures.

APA Guidelines

Students are expected to follow the format of The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2009, 6th edition). The APA Publication Manual presents explicit style requirements for students in the preparation of written works which may include research papers, - projects, and other written assignments.

As required by APA, all sources used (directly or indirectly) must be referenced within the text and all appropriate sources shall be compiled together at the end of all applicable written works. Students and faculty should refer to all assignment instructions for specific guidelines. CSU has created an APA Guide and other resources to assist students in complying with APA standards. These resources are all located in the student portal linked to the Learning Resources tab.

Sanctions

Columbia Southern University regards violations to the Academic Integrity Policy as a very serious matter. Students who are found to be in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy are subject to penalties, which are based on the specific incident. The consequences can include point deductions, course failure, and/or a university dismissal and degree revocation.

Statute of Limitations

There shall be no 'statute of limitations' that precludes the university from acting on the discovery of alleged violations, either during the time in which the course in question is being offered or after the course has ended (and after the student has graduated).

Due Process

If a student is found in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the student is allowed due process and may contest the university's findings. All student appeals should be sent to academicintegrityappeal@columbiasouthern.edu within seven calendar days of notification. The appeal will go through the university's student appeals process.

Academic Course Load Policy

Per-Course Programs

At CSU, students are allowed to progress as quickly through their program of study as they are able, but within defined parameters. Because of personal and professional obligations, the majority of CSU students take seven to 10 weeks to complete a course. However, there are some students who may wish to progress through their program of study at a faster, but unacceptable, pace.

Accelerating course completion beyond what is academically sound defeats the purpose of study, because little is comprehended and even less is retained. The policy outlined below restricts students from setting a pace that is viewed as academically unsound.

Per-Course Enrollment Course Load Policy

Academic Advisors must approve all course loads over six semester hours. Students wishing to enroll in more than six semester hours (two courses) within a 10-week period must submit the Course Load Waiver form and meet the following requirements:

- All official documents/transcripts must be on file at CSU
- Must have completed at least 12 semester hours at CSU in current degree program
- Must have an established GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Must be maintaining reasonable academic progress
- Read and understand the CSU probation, suspension, and dismissal policies

The waiver is granted on an individual enrollment basis and students are expected to meet the above requirements for each waiver to be approved. The maximum course load allowed is nine semester hours within a 10-week period. Course load limits remain in place even if a student completes their course load before the end of the 10-week period.

(Note: Students who take six semester hours or more in any 10-week period are deemed to be full time students.)

Term Enrollment and Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans Course Load Policy

The academic advisor must approve all course loads over six semester hours. Students requesting course loads over six hours must submit the Course Load Waiver form and meet the following requirements:

- All official documents/transcripts must be on file at CSU
- Must have completed at least 12 semester hours at CSU in current degree program
- Must have an established GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Must maintain reasonable academic progress
- Read and understand the CSU probation, suspension, and dismissal policies

The waiver is granted on a term-by-term basis and students are expected to meet the above requirements for each waiver request to be approved. A student may not take courses in

overlapping terms. Course grade reports will be issued at the end of the term.

Note: A full-time load in an eight-week term is six semester hours for undergraduate and three semester hours for graduate.

Accommodation for Disabilities

It is the policy of CSU to provide reasonable accommodation(s) for persons defined as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and all other local and state requirements dealing with students who have recognized disabilities. A request for reasonable accommodation will be granted provided that the following criteria are met:

- The request for reasonable accommodation is based on individual needs.
- The request does not require a financial burden on CSU that is beyond what is viewed as customary and reasonable.
- The request does not compromise the basic requirements of the course.

The Office of Disability Services serves the special needs of students with permanent disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to identify the disability to a faculty and/or staff member and provide the appropriate documentation from a qualified medical or licensed professional in requesting specific accommodations for services. New students should submit this documentation at least 10 days prior to taking their first class at CSU.

Assignment Make-Up Policy

Columbia Southern University (CSU) delivers curriculum through a variety of assignment types and methodologies. Assignment types are unique and carry specific submission requirements. Assignment submittal information can be viewed within the assignment instructions in each course. In the event technical difficulty occurs, please refer to the Technology Policies located within the myCSU Student Portal. The CSU Technical Support Department is available to assist students in resolving technical issues.

On occasions in which special consideration is granted by the course professor to make-up or re-submit an assignment, specific instructions or assignment due dates for make-up work should be followed. Requests for special consideration to make-up or re-submit an assignment should be emailed to the course professor prior to the course end date. Requests will be reviewed by the course professor who will render a decision based upon the merits of the case.

Attendance Policy

Term Enrollment Programs

CSU will verify your attendance in each registered course at the end of the first week. The discussion board posting or Unit I assessment must be submitted to verify attendance and all Unit I assignments are due by the end of week one to receive credit. Students who choose not to attend the first week will be institutionally dropped from the course.

Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans

Students enrolled in Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans must show attendance by submission of an assignment for each course enrolled prior to the end of week four (4) in the enrolled term. Students failing to show attendance will be automatically withdrawn from the course and a grade of "W" will be posted. Please refer to the Tuition Refund Policy for any eligible refund due. CSU will file VA Form 22-1999b with the Department of Veterans Affairs indicating course enrollment termination due to unsatisfactory attendance. This action will result in the suspension of benefit payments on courses reported.

Attendance Policy for Non-Scheduled Term

Students enrolled in the term non-scheduled courses must show attendance by submission of a course assignment for each course enrolled prior to the end of week four (4) in the enrolled term. Students failing to show attendance will be automatically withdrawn from the course and a grade of "W" will be posted. Please refer to the Tuition Refund Policy for any eligible refund due. CSU will file VA Form 22-1999b with the Department of Veterans Affairs indicating course enrollment termination due to unsatisfactory attendance. This action will result in the suspension of benefit payments on courses reported.

Book Grant/Loan-a-Book Policies

Textbooks are provided for all programs at no cost through the Columbia Southern University Book Grant or Loan-a-Book. Select courses or programs, determined by the University, will utilize the Book Grant or Loan-a-Book. Books may be in new or used condition and may be in print or electronic format.

Book Grant

The Book Grant provides textbooks for select courses, at no cost. Textbooks are not required to be returned with the Book Grant; however, students must meet course completion requirements. Successful course completion is defined as earning a passing grade or not dropping/withdrawing from the course in which the textbook was granted. When a student drops, withdraws, or fails a course, a charge for the textbook and shipping will be posted to the student's account. The student may return the text within 30 days to have the charge reversed. The charge will be based on the textbook price listed at the CSU website and \$12 for shipping and handling. Alternatively, the student may re-enroll in the same course for the next consecutive term or enrollment period and indicate on the course re-take form that the previously provided text will be used. As long as the next course is submitted within 30 days of the course failure or drop/withdrawal, the text charge will be reversed. Students enrolled in Term Enrollment Programs or Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans should return the text if the course is not available in the next consecutive term. Students not successfully completing a course will be provided a textbook return form to print and enclose with the returned text. Students who return textbooks without the proper paper work to identify themselves will not receive

credit for the return. Students who do not return the text and do not pay the text charge, may not be allowed to enroll in future courses.

Loan-a-Book

Loan-a-Book provides textbooks for select courses, at no cost. Textbooks are required to be returned to Columbia Southern University through the provided return label, upon course completion. Students will be provided detailed textbook return instructions via e-mail. Textbooks not returned will be charged to the student's account.

Course Access Policy

Students enrolled at Columbia Southern University are subject to time-sensitive course access as stated in the Course Access Policy. At the conclusion of a completed course, students will retain course access for a period of 21 days. Any course which is unfinished, further defined as a course with outstanding assignments, will be closed for access at the conclusion of the enrollment period. Students who have been granted an Incomplete (I) will retain course access until the conclusion of the incomplete period; in addition, the student will retain course access for an additional 21 days in excess of the incomplete period for all completed courses. The final course grade will be calculated utilizing the weighted score assigned to each course assignment, as indicated in the course syllabus. Once the course access period has elapsed, all coursework submitted therein is archived and future access to the course through Columbia Southern University's Learning Management System is restricted. Students are encouraged to save their work through use of technology. Please review the Technology Policies for suggested methods of saving coursework. Course access will not be granted to archived courses unless approval is granted by the vice president for Academic Affairs.

Course Completion Policy

Students are encouraged to complete all assignments within a course; each assignment holds a weighted score that comprises the final course grade. Course assignments not completed by the original or adjusted course end date will be assigned a grade of zero (0). Final course grades are calculated utilizing the weighted score assigned to each course assignment. For example, failing to complete an assignment weighted at 25% of the course grade would earn a final grade no higher than 75%. Students who are unable to complete all course assignments prior to their original course end date are offered the option of requesting an Incomplete (I), or withdrawing from the course. Academic and financial consequences should be noted for students who withdraw after week one of the course. Students planning to withdraw from any course should review the Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy. In addition, academic advisement should be sought to address all consequential actions prior to submitting the withdrawal request. Students requesting additional time in a course must submit the online Incomplete Course Request Form located in the Student Portal under Online Forms. Students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0

in undergraduate programs and 3.0 in graduate programs. Academic standards of performance are established to ensure satisfactory academic progress toward an earned degree.

Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy

Students requesting to drop or withdraw from a course should submit the Course Drop/Withdrawal Form located in the Online Forms section of the Student Portal.

Course Drop

Students are allowed to drop a course through the term “drop date” as listed on the academic calendar (normally the first week of the course) without financial penalty. A grade of “DP” will be recorded for the course. Dropped courses do not appear on student’s official transcript nor do they count as hours attempted in the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) calculation. The course drop date is determined by the date the request is received.

Course Withdrawal

A course drop/withdrawal request submitted after the term drop date and before or on the original term/course end date will be considered a course withdrawal. A grade of “W” will be issued. The grade of “W” will appear on the student’s transcript but will have no effect on the student’s cumulative GPA. However, the course will count toward hours attempted and may affect Federal Student Aid (FSA) eligibility. Students using military Tuition Assistance (TA) must contact their Education Services Officer (ESO) when withdrawing from courses.

Course Retake Policy

Undergraduate students must earn a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale. Students earning a “D” or below in a course also have the option of repeating the course. In cases where a student repeats a course, the hours attempted are counted once, and the most recent grade is recorded as credit cannot be given twice for the same course.

Final Examination Proctor Policy

Columbia Southern University (CSU) degree programs contain a variety of assignment types and methodologies. Comprehensive sets of questions or exercises are used to evaluate knowledge, skills, and mastery of subject matter prior to and during the final examination. Numerous courses within a degree program may require a final examination; for which, a proctored solution is required. An approved proctor is defined as a credentialed organization, center, or individual, who verifies student identity and supervises examination integrity. CSU approves two, flexible proctoring options: a standard proctor, who is chosen by the student and approved by the University, or Remote Proctor Now (RP Now), an on-demand, third-party, virtual proctor. Students may elect to choose one or a combination of both available proctoring options based upon individual final examination needs.

The following are important facts concerning proctored final examinations:

- Students may retain up to three (3) approved standard proctors on file with the University, in addition to RP Now.
- Students should request to sit for a final examination during the last two (2) weeks of the course by submission of “Request to take Final Examination Online Form” located in the Student Portal.
- Final Examinations must be submitted for grading prior to midnight, Central Standard Time (CST), on the last day of class.
- Valid, government-issued photo identification, such as a driver’s license, is required for identity verification prior to examination administration.
- Compliance with all identified final examination violations is required. Violations are identified at the conclusion of the policy.
- Students are allowed short breaks during the examination. A total of 15 minutes break time is permitted during the 4-hour examination. No materials are allowed to leave or re-enter the testing area.
- Students are allotted 4-hours for examination completion. The time allotment is cumulative; therefore, short breaks taken during the examination administration are included in the time allotment.
- Fees incurred by use of proctoring services are the responsibility of the student.
- Final Examinations should be taken in an environment which the student is not likely to be interrupted during examination administration; i.e. the workplace or other interactive environment.

Standard Proctoring

A standard proctor is an unbiased, qualified individual, selected by the student, who agrees to supervise an examination by verifying student identity and ensuring examination integrity. Upon approval, the proctor will remain active with the University unless proctoring qualifications change, the student or proctor requests discontinuation, or the proctor is disqualified due to a violation of any applicable academic policies including Final Examination and Proctor Policy and/or Academic Integrity (AI) Policy. CSU reserves the right to verify proctor qualifications, require additional evidence of eligibility, or require an alternative proctor be selected. Falsification of proctor information is a violation of CSU Academic Integrity Policy and could result in proctor revocation and/or other sanctions identified in AI policy.

The following are important facts and responsibilities concerning standard proctoring:

Students will:

- Select a qualified individual and submit the “Proctor Information Request Form” located in the Student Portal.

The following are examples of qualified and unqualified proctors:

Qualified Proctor

- College or University Professor, Dean, Director, or degreed professional
- School Principal or Vice-Principal
- University/College Testing Center
- Private Testing Center
- Personnel Officer
- Commissioned Officer or Senior Non-Commissioned Officer
- Educational Services Officer (ESO)
- Educational Services Specialist (ESS)
- Military Base Testing Offices
- Library/Librarian
- Teacher or School/Guidance Counselor
- Minister, Priest, Rabbi or any Religious Leader
- Remote Proctor Now

Unqualified Proctor

- Any individual that poses a conflict of interest
- Co-worker
- Employer and/or Supervisor
- Tutor
- Friend
- Neighbor
- Relative
- CSU Student
- Individuals paid for a personal service (doctor, attorney, consultant, etc.)

Proctors are required to:

- Present valid credentials for proctor certification and have a valid e-mail address from the organization which employs the proctor.
- Submit a completed "Proctor Agreement Form" to CSU for consideration of approval, along with credential certification. Approved credential certification includes:
 - Professional business card listing company name and title
 - Work badge notating title (excluding military identification card)
 - Teachers Identification or copy of a teaching certificate
 - Letter from proctor's supervisor or human resource manager, on company letterhead, stating proctor's position and relationship to the student.
- Maintain examination integrity through concealment of the final examination password. The password is delivered to the proctor who enters it into the examination on behalf of the student. At no time is the student allowed to view the password.
- Verify student identity through valid, government-issued, photo identification, prior to examination administration.
- Remain in proximity of the student through final examination completion.
- Confirm adherence to the four (4) hour examination time limit.
- Verify use of materials includes only a writing utensil, a course textbook, and a calculator. Other materials

are not permitted unless specified in the examination instructions.

- Use of MS Office Suite software, such as MS Word, MS Excel or MS PowerPoint or comparable iWork software, such as Pages, Numbers, or Keynote is permissible. Students must start all documents with a new page.
- Certify copies of the final examination are not distributed to the student.

Standard Proctoring/Testing Procedures:

- From the Student Portal, send the "Proctor Information Request" to the desired proctor.
- An e-mail containing a link is delivered to the prospective proctor. The individual will complete the request, attach credential certification, and submit.
- Student Services notifies both the student and proctor of approval/denial, via email. 2-3 business days should be allowed for notification.
- Upon approval, the student will submit "Request to take Final Exam Online Form" located in myCSU Student Portal.
- Student Services will send the final examination password to the proctor within 2-3 business days upon receipt of the request.
- The student and proctor will meet at a pre-determined, mutually convenient time and location for examination administration.
- The proctor must verify student identity by viewing a valid, government issued photo identification and ensure only permitted materials are used during the examination.
- The student will login to Blackboard and click on the "Final Exam" link within the course.
- The proctor will enter the password, guarding against student view.
- The student can begin the examination online or print the final examination and work offline.
- The student will complete the examination within the four (4) hour time allotment.
- Printed copies of the examination must be destroyed upon completion of the examination.

Remote Proctor Now (RP Now)

RP Now is an on-demand, third-party, virtual proctor which allows students to sit for an examination anytime, anywhere through use of video technology. Students choosing RP Now must have an operational webcam/video with audio, a high-speed internet connection, and appropriate system rights required to download and install software. During examination administration, RP Now will access the student's webcam and microphone to record the examination for academic integrity review.

The following are important facts and responsibilities concerning RP Now:

Students are required to:

- Access a computer, the internet, a microphone and a webcam for examination administration; the university does not provide this equipment.
- Download and install RP Now software.

- Register through RP Now, initialized during the first final examination.
- Submit payment to RP Now for each final examination administered through this proctoring option. Provide a clean desk in a lighted area, free of disruptive noises, including music and other people entering and leaving the room.
- Present valid, government-issued photo identification for identity verification purposes prior to examination administration.
- Comply with all prohibited final examination violations identified at the conclusion of the policy.
- Use of MS Office Suite software, such as MS Word, MS Excel or MS PowerPoint or comparable iWork software, such as Pages, Numbers, or Keynote is permissible. Students must start all documents with a new page.
- Students are allowed short breaks during examination. However, no materials are allowed to leave or re-enter the testing area. Printing the final examination is prohibited.

RP Now Proctoring/Testing Procedures:

- Students will request RP Now by submitting "Request to take Final Exam Online Form", located in the myCSU Student Portal. This process should be initiated when the student is ready to sit for the final examination, no later than the last day of class. A confirmation email will be sent to the student containing a direct link to RP Now. Examinations must be submitted for grading prior to midnight, Central Standard Time (CST), on the last day of class.
- The student will follow the instructions provided by RP Now to effectively register.
- During registration, permissible materials such as a writing utensil, course textbook, or calculator are to be present in the examination area prior to scanning the area with the webcam.
- Upon successful registration, students will be directed to the login page for Blackboard. Four (4) minutes is provided to login and access the final examination. In the event the time allotment is exceeded, the registration process begins again.
- A password will be required to access the examination. Therefore, the student will need to click 'Insert Exam Password' and then 'Submit'.
- The final examination will begin. A four (4) hour time limit is allotted for completion.
- Upon completion of the examination, the student will click 'Submit' and exit RP Now browser window to discontinue examination recording.

The following final examination violations are subject to sanctions identified in the Academic Integrity Policy:

- Use of materials or unapproved software/technology, other than a writing utensil, course textbook, and calculator or examination specific materials.
- Use of the Internet to access any site other than the Blackboard Learning Management System or RP Now Proctoring System.
- Speaking with another individual during examination administration.

- Use of a cellphone or technology other than the computer being used for examination administration. (Students encountering technical difficulty are allowed to access a cellphone to call technical support.)
- Materials exiting or re-entering the testing area.
- Exceeding the four (4) hour testing time limit.

Should any circumstances develop before or during a final examination, including natural disasters, emergencies, power or internet outages, etc., the student and/or proctor should contact Student Services immediately at 800-977-8449, ext. 6525 or Helpdesk Technical Support 877-399-1063. In the event the call is placed after standard operating hours, please leave a message or e-mail students@columbiasouthern.edu.

Graduation Requirements

Undergraduate Requirements

A 2.0 cumulative GPA is required for undergraduate students to be eligible for graduation. A minimum of 15 credit hours, or five courses, must be completed with CSU to be eligible to graduate in an associate program. A minimum of 30 credit hours, or 10 courses, must be completed with CSU to be eligible to graduate in a bachelor program.

Graduate Requirements

A 3.0 cumulative GPA is required for graduate students to be eligible for graduation. Master degree program students must complete at least 50 percent of the courses that comprise the program, 18 credit hours or six courses. No grade below a "C" is acceptable for credit toward a graduate degree. The graduate course in which a grade below a "C" is received must be repeated at CSU. There are situations in which a grade of "C" is unacceptable if the result of this grade is a cumulative GPA below 3.0. Consequently, students will be required to repeat courses in which the grade of "C" is earned until a 3.0 cumulative GPA is restored.

Note: Students who entered CSU prior to November 2007 must have completed the one credit hour CSU Student Orientation course.

Graduation with Honors

In order for a student enrolled in a bachelor's degree program to graduate summa cum laude, magna cum laude, or cum laude honors, they must earn the following cumulative GPA:

- Summa cum laude - 4.0 cumulative GPA
- Magna cum laude - 3.8-3.99 cumulative GPA
- Cum laude - 3.5-3.79 cumulative GPA

Honors are based upon coursework completed at CSU. Honor graduates must have no grades lower than a "C", and must not have repeated any course taken at CSU due to non-satisfactory grades. Honors are not awarded for graduate degree programs.

Transcripts

A transcript bearing the University seal and signature of the registrar is the official copy of your permanent academic record. A transcript will be provided to you at the time

of graduation. Additional transcripts may be obtained by written request to the University.

Requesting a Transcript

Once a student has completed the first three credit hour course and course tuition is paid, the student may request an official CSU transcript. A \$10 transcript fee applies. A CSU transcript may be requested by using the Transcript Request Form. Please allow seven to 10 business days for processing.

The transcript will be sent as a sealed official transcript to the institution or person indicated on the Transcript Request Form. An unofficial transcript may be faxed if indicated on the request form. Please note, the \$10 transcript processing fee still applies whether the transcript is issued as official or unofficial.

Inactive Status

Students who do not submit any coursework within a 12-month period will be considered inactive and any tuition being held by the University will be forfeited. Students desiring to return to their studies must be reevaluated and will be subject to any changed academic requirements, tuition increases, and policy changes in force at the time of reenrollment. The student will also be assessed a \$25 reevaluation fee.

Incomplete Course Policy

Per-Course Programs

Students requesting additional time, in excess of the prescribed enrollment period, to successfully complete coursework may apply for an Incomplete. Requests for an Incomplete should be the exception during a student's tenure; academic progress throughout coursework is expected and promotes student success. Should circumstances prevent regular, on-time course completion, within the enrollment period, students have the option to request an Incomplete or withdraw from the course. Academic and financial consequences should be noted when withdrawing from a course beyond the first week of the enrollment period. Prior to submitting the withdrawal request, students are advised to review the Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy; in addition, academic advisement should be sought.

The following are important facts concerning an Incomplete:

- An Incomplete may be granted in accordance with the following matrix:

Additional Time Allotment	Qualification	Fee
15 Days	75% of course requirements complete	\$25
30 Days	50% of course requirements complete	\$50
60 Days	Attendance in the course has been demonstrated	\$100

- Students approved for an Incomplete forfeit the option to withdraw from the course.
- Students are required to formally request an Incomplete through submittal of the Incomplete Course Request form.
- Students cannot resubmit assignments previously submitted without professor approval; please review the Assignment Make-up Policy.
- A course grade of "I" will be assigned and may affect future course enrollments. Academic advisement should be sought to discuss course load.
- Assignments not completed at the conclusion of the course will be assigned a grade of zero (0); the final course grade is calculated utilizing the weighted score assigned to each course assignment, as indicated in the course syllabus.
- Fees associated with an Incomplete are non-refundable.
- The following qualifications have been established to request an Incomplete:
 - Successful course progress, identified in the incomplete course matrix, at the time of the request, is required.
 - The request for an Incomplete is to be submitted prior to the original course end date.

Students who meet qualification criteria may submit a request through the myCSU Student Portal. Students are expected to set realistic goals and timelines to complete outstanding course assignments. The approval process may take up to 72 business hours. Students will be notified of the status of the request via email; the correspondence will denote approval or denial. Students who do not meet qualifications for an incomplete, due to an extenuating life circumstance, may choose to review the Incomplete for Special Circumstances policy (ISC).

Term and Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans

Students requesting additional time, in excess of the prescribed enrollment period, to successfully complete coursework may apply for an Incomplete. Requests for an Incomplete should be the exception during a student's tenure; academic progress throughout coursework is expected and promotes student success. Should circumstances prevent regular, on-time course completion, within the term period, students have the option to request an Incomplete or withdraw from the course. Academic and financial consequences should be noted when withdrawing from a course beyond the first week of the term period. Prior to submitting the withdrawal request, students are advised to review the Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy; in addition, academic advisement should be sought.

The following are important facts concerning an Incomplete:

- An Incomplete may be granted in accordance with the following matrix:

Additional Time Allotment	Qualification		Fee
	Undergraduate	Graduate	
45 Days	Course Average of 60 percent	Course Average of 70 percent	\$50

- Students approved for an Incomplete forfeit the option to withdraw from the course.
- All requests are subject to approval by the course professor.
- A plan to complete outstanding course assignments must be presented by the student and followed.
- Assignment due dates are required; if more than one assignment remains due, each assignment due date must be spaced a minimum of one week apart.
- A course grade of "I" will be assigned and may affect future course enrollments, Satisfactory Academic Progress hours attempted and Federal Student Aid (FSA) eligibility.
- Students cannot re-submit assignments previously submitted without professor approval; please review the Assignment Make-up Policy.
- Assignments not completed at the conclusion of the incomplete period will be assigned a grade of zero (0); the final course grade is calculated utilizing the weighted score assigned to each course assignment, as indicated in the course syllabus. The final course grade replaces the grade of "I."
- Fees associated with an Incomplete are non-refundable.

The following qualifications have been established to apply for an Incomplete:

- The student cannot have a grade of "I" from a previous term.
- A request for an Incomplete is to be submitted prior to the end date of the course, during weeks six, seven, or eight. Students are required to formally request an incomplete through submittal of the Incomplete Course Request form.
- As identified in the Incomplete Course Matrix, successful course progress at the time of the request is required. Students unable to meet the revised assignment due dates must contact their professor for late submission approval.
- The student must submit valid justification as to why the course could not be completed on schedule due to reasons beyond normal circumstances. Supporting documentation may be requested by the University.

Students who meet qualification criteria may submit a request through the myCSU Student Portal. Students are expected to set realistic goals and timelines to complete outstanding course assignments. The approval process may take up to 72 business hours. Students will be notified of the status of the request via email; the correspondence will denote approval or denial. Students who do not meet qualifications for an Incomplete, due to an extenuating

life circumstance, may choose to review the Incomplete for Special Circumstances policy.

Incomplete for Special Circumstances Policy

Per-Course Programs

Columbia Southern University (CSU) recognizes students may encounter life situations that may impede academic progress toward degree completion. Students have the opportunity to request a standard course Incomplete (I) through the myCSU Student Portal. The Incomplete for Special Circumstances (ISC) is reserved for students who encounter an extenuating circumstance, through the duration of a course, which inhibits regular, on-time course completion. Under these circumstances, students may also elect to withdraw from the course if it is deemed circumstances may prevent successful course completion. Academic and financial consequences should be noted for students who withdraw after week one of the course. Students planning to withdraw from any course should review the Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy. In addition, academic advisement should be sought to address all consequential actions prior to submitting the withdrawal request. Students requesting consideration must meet all established qualifications for Incomplete for Special Circumstances approval.

The following are important facts concerning an Incomplete for Special Circumstances:

General Facts:

- An Incomplete, up to 120 days beyond the original course end date, is available upon qualification and approval. The Incomplete for Special Circumstances Committee will determine the appropriate amount of time granted upon approval.
- Successful course progress may be taken into consideration when granting the request.
- A maximum of two (2) Incompletes for Special Circumstances will be granted, upon approval, per calendar year. Students are not granted in excess of one (1) ISC per course.
- ISC requests are not automatically granted and require committee approval; the committee is appointed by the President and includes the course professor as a voting member.
- The decision to grant the request is based upon the student's justified hardship.
- Relevant support documentation may be required to substantiate the hardship.
- Students approved for an Incomplete for Special Circumstances are not eligible to apply for a standard, paid Incomplete in the event additional time, beyond time already granted, is needed for course completion.
- There is no fee requirement for an Incomplete for Special Circumstances.

Academic Facts:

- Students approved for an Incomplete for Special Circumstances forfeit the option to withdraw from the course.

- A grade of "I" will be assigned to the course and may affect future course enrollments; please review the Course Load Policy for further clarification. In addition, the grade point average (GPA) and federal student aid (FSA) eligibility could be affected.
- Assignments not completed by the granted Incomplete period will be assigned a grade of zero (0); the final course grade is calculated utilizing the weighted score assigned to each course assignment.
- All course requirements must be satisfied within the allotted time period; additional time will not be granted.

The following qualifications have been established for an Incomplete for Special Circumstances application:

- A documented extenuating circumstance will occur or has occurred during the duration of the course which will inhibit or has inhibited regular, on-time course completion. Examples of such circumstances may include but are not limited to: forward deployment, medical circumstances or surgery, natural disaster, family emergency, death in the immediate family, or job relocation.
- The Incomplete for Special Circumstances request should be submitted prior to the course end date. Requests made after the end date will be considered on the basis of the circumstance.
- The Incomplete for Special Circumstances request should be accompanied by relevant support documentation substantiating the stated circumstance. Documentation must be dated and correlate with the hardship and time parameter in which the student is/was unable to complete coursework. Students should submit documentation within three (3) days of the request or notify specialcircumstances@columbiasouthern.edu of the date documentation will be available. The Special Circumstances Committee may request additional supporting documentation. Students should report a quick response to requests for documentation to substantiate their circumstance at the time of the request.
- Required submission dates for all outstanding assignments are to be identified by the student when submitting the request. Individual assignment deadlines must be spaced apart, weekly, to allow adequate study and submission time.

Students meeting required qualifications may request an Incomplete for Special Circumstances through submittal of the online Incomplete for Special Circumstances request form. Upon receipt of all documentation and individual assignment deadlines, the request will be sent to committee for a decision. Notification of the committee's decision will be sent via email within five (5) business days of presentation before the committee.

All questions should be directed to the Student Services Department at 800.977.8449 ext. 6537, or by email at specialcircumstances@columbiasouthern.edu.

Term and Flexible Enrollment Programs for Veterans

Columbia Southern University (CSU) recognizes students may encounter life situations that may impede academic progress toward degree completion. Students have the opportunity to request a standard course Incomplete (I), for the duration of forty-five (45) days, through the myCSU Student Portal. The Incomplete for Special Circumstances (ISC) is reserved for students requiring in excess of forty-five (45) days. The ISC is for students encountering an extenuating circumstance, through the duration of a course, which inhibits regular, on-time course completion. Under these circumstances, students may also elect to withdraw from the course if it is deemed circumstances may prevent successful course completion. Academic and financial consequences should be noted for students who withdraw after week one of the course. Students planning to withdraw from any course should review the Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy. In addition, academic advisement should be sought to address all consequential actions prior to submitting the withdrawal request. Students requesting consideration must meet all established qualifications for Incomplete for special circumstances approval.

The following are important facts concerning an Incomplete for Special Circumstances:

General Facts:

- An Incomplete, up to 60 days beyond the original term end date, is available upon qualification and approval. The Incomplete for Special Circumstances Committee will determine the appropriate amount of time granted upon approval.
- A maximum of two (2) Incompletes for Special Circumstances will be granted, upon approval, per calendar year. Students are not granted in excess of one (1) ISC per course.
- ISC requests are not automatically granted and require committee approval; the committee is appointed by the President and includes the course professor as a voting member.
- The decision to grant the request is based upon the student's justified hardship.
- Relevant support documentation may be required to substantiate the hardship.
- Students approved for an Incomplete for Special Circumstances are not eligible to apply for a standard course Incomplete in the event additional time, beyond time already granted, is needed for course completion.
- There is no fee requirement for an Incomplete Special Circumstances.

Academic Facts:

- Students approved for an Incomplete for Special Circumstances forfeit the option to withdraw from the course.
- A grade of "I" will be assigned to the course and may affect future course enrollments; please review the Course Load Policy for further clarification. In addition, the grade point average (GPA) and federal student aid (FSA) eligibility could be affected.

- Assignments not completed by the granted Incomplete period will be assigned a grade of zero (0); the final course grade is calculated utilizing the weighted score assigned to each course assignment.
- All course requirements must be satisfied within the allotted time period; additional time will not be granted.

The following qualifications have been established for an Incomplete for Special Circumstances application:

- A documented extenuating circumstance will occur or has occurred during the duration of the course which will inhibit or has inhibited regular, on-time course completion. Examples of such circumstances may include but are not limited to: forward deployment, medical circumstances or surgery, natural disaster, family emergency, death in the immediate family, or job relocation.
- Successful course progress, at the time of the request, is required. For the purposes of this policy, successful course progress is defined below. *All listed criteria are required.*
 - Maintaining a passing grade, defined as an average of sixty (60) percent in undergraduate programs and seventy (70) percent in graduate programs.
 - In the event the student does not meet the course progress qualification but presents a justified hardship, relevant documentation may be required to justify why this qualification has not been met.
- The Incomplete for Special Circumstances request should be submitted prior to the course end date. Requests made after the end date will be considered on the basis of the circumstance.
- The Incomplete for Special Circumstances request should be accompanied by relevant support documentation substantiating the stated circumstance. Documentation must be dated and correlate with the hardship and time parameter in which the student is/was unable to complete coursework. Students should submit documentation within three (3) days of the request or notify specialcircumstances@columbiasouthern.edu of the date documentation will be available. The Special Circumstances Committee may request additional supporting documentation. Students should report a quick response to request for documentation to substantiate their circumstance at the time of the request.
- Required submission dates for all outstanding assignments are to be identified by the student when submitting the request. Individual assignment deadlines must be spaced apart, weekly, to allow adequate study and submission time.

Students meeting required qualifications may request an Incomplete for Special Circumstances through submittal of the online Incomplete for Special Circumstances request form. Upon receipt of documentation and individual assignment deadlines, the request will be sent to committee for a decision. A notification of the committee's decision will be sent via email within five (5) business days of presentation before the committee.

All questions should be directed to the Student Services Department at 800.977.8449 ext. 6537, or by email at specialcircumstances@columbiasouthern.edu.

Institutional Academic Progress, Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal

This policy applies to all students except for those enrolled in the DBA program. DBA students should refer to the policy provided in the DBA Handbook.

Students are required to have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 in undergraduate programs and a 3.0 in graduate programs. Academic standards of performance have been established to ensure satisfactory progress toward a degree. These performance standards form a basis for the following academic classifications:

- Good Standing
- Academic Probation
- Academic Suspension

Guidelines and procedures for placing students in the above classifications include:

Good Standing (Active)

A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 for undergraduates and 3.0 for graduates must be maintained to be in good standing.

Academic Probation

Upon the completion of a minimum of 12 semester hours, a student will automatically be placed on academic probation at any time that his/her cumulative GPA drops below the required minimum.* A student will remain on academic probation for 12 semester hours (four courses). While on academic probation, a student will have to demonstrate sustained satisfactory progress and develop an action plan for academic improvement, approved by their academic advisor, which may include referral to the Student Success Center. Students will be limited to enroll in one course at a time until the cumulative GPA is 2.0 undergraduate and 3.0 graduate. A student will not be permitted to enroll in a fifth course after being placed on academic probation until completion of the fourth course and once the academic status is determined.

Satisfactory progress requires that a student either raise the cumulative GPA to an acceptable level, or that the student makes progress towards earning the acceptable GPA during the probationary period, as detailed below:

If after completing 12 semester hours required during the probationary period, the student raises the cumulative GPA to 2.0 or higher for undergraduates or 3.0 or higher for graduates, the student will be removed from probation and be placed in good standing. If the student does not raise the cumulative GPA to good standing, the student will be placed on suspension. Please refer to the Academic Suspension Policy for details.

If the GPA for the probationary period is 2.5 or higher for undergraduates or 3.5 or higher for graduates, but the student does not raise the cumulative GPA to the minimum 2.0 or higher for undergraduates or 3.0 or higher for graduates, a secondary probation period will begin.

**Note: Students, who show substandard academic progress in their first 12 semester hours, may be academically dismissed without a probationary period. See the Academic Dismissal Policy for details.*

Academic Suspension

Should the probationary student fail to demonstrate satisfactory progress, he/she will be academically suspended for a period no less than 10 weeks (per course) and 8 weeks (term). A student may request reinstatement after the suspension period has expired. If a second suspension occurs, the student will be suspended for a period of at least six months before they are eligible to request reinstatement. If a third suspension occurs, the student must wait a minimum of one calendar year before requesting reinstatement.

Requests for reinstatement must be made to the Registrar no later than one month prior to the desired enrollment period. Reinstatement following academic suspension will be determined by the Reinstatement Committee and is not automatic.

Students who enroll in other colleges or universities while on academic suspension from CSU will not be eligible for reinstatement to CSU until the cumulative grade point average from these other colleges and universities is 2.0 or higher for undergraduate or 3.0 or higher for graduate.

Once reinstated, the student will return on probation for a period of 12 semester hours. The student is expected to demonstrate academic progress while on probation.

Academic Dismissal

Columbia Southern University reserves the right to dismiss students whose academic progress is substandard. Factors considered will include, but are not limited to, the number of failing grades, past academic performance, the number of withdrawn courses, and the probability of achieving satisfactory academic standing within a reasonable time frame. Students are subject to academic dismissal (without a probationary period) from the program for a full calendar year if their GPA falls below 1.0 or if they withdraw from the majority of courses within the last 12 semester hours.

Appeal or reinstatement from academic dismissal shall be made to the Appeals Board through the Office of the Registrar.

DBA students should refer to the DBA Handbook for applicable Academic Dismissal Policy.

Leave of Absence Policy

Term Programs

Federal regulations require CSU to establish a Leave of Absence (LOA) policy for financial aid recipients who find it necessary to not enroll in a term due to unforeseen circumstances. Students not using FSA need not request a LOA. This LOA policy is designed to allow the student flexibility to take temporary breaks by not enrolling in a term without being considered "withdrawn" for financial aid purposes. Therefore, students must complete the current term they are enrolled and apply for a LOA to start the day after the term ends. Students who are unable to complete their current course should consider an Incomplete course, an Incomplete for Special Circumstances, or course withdrawal.

The CSU Office of Financial Aid is responsible for ensuring that all students who receive federal, state, and institutional financial aid are progressing in a timely manner towards completion of their program of study. The procedure for administering the LOA policy for each type of financial program is as follows.

1. All federal financial assistance programs including Federal Pell Grant, direct loans (Stafford and Plus) and Federal Family Education Loans (Stafford and PLUS) are eligible for consideration.
2. A LOA will be considered for approval if CSU determines that there is an acceptable reason for the request. Some examples of acceptable reasons a student might request a LOA include;
 - Death in the family
 - Illness of a family member or self
 - Job relocation or travel related to job
 - Changes in work schedules
 - Military deployment, TDY/TAD, or PCS
 - Jury duty
3. All LOA requests must be submitted in writing and include a date and a signature.
4. CSU will consider multiple LOA requests as long as the combination of absences does not exceed 180 days in any 12-month period.

Application Procedure

1. All requests for LOA must be in writing. Acceptable formats include the Leave of Absence Request Form in the myCSU Student Portal or personal letters (handwritten or typed). *Please note that email requests are not acceptable.*
2. All requests must contain the following information to be considered complete.
 - Printed student name
 - Social Security Number or CSU Student Identification Number
 - Term end date/last day of attendance
 - Start of leave date (the start date of the next term in the track)
 - First day/date of classes on anticipated return from leave (Must be a term start date)
 - Academic program

- Detailed explanation as to the reason for the request and any appropriate documentation available to support the request
 - Date (month, day, year) the request was submitted
 - Original student signature
3. All requests should be submitted during the last three weeks of a term or between terms. Late requests will only be considered in the case of unforeseen circumstances that prohibit the student from meeting the stated deadline. Additional documentation from a third party to attest to the unforeseen circumstance may be required.
 4. Students granted a LOA that are subsequently unable to return to classes on the anticipated return date, may request a second LOA if the total number of days approved have not exceeded 180 days in a 12-month period.
 5. Students may return early from an approved LOA upon request with no penalty.
 6. All requests for a LOA should be submitted to the CSU Student Services for processing. A written response to the request will be provided to the student within two weeks from the date the request is received.

Additional Information

1. Students on an approved LOA will not receive any financial aid disbursements during the leave.
2. Students on an approved LOA will not have to reapply for admission at CSU if they resume taking classes at the end of their LOA. In addition, their academic program requirements will remain as specified in the CSU catalog at the time the students were placed on a LOA.
3. Students who do not submit a formal and written LOA request, students who take leaves of absences that exceed 180 days in a 12-month period, and students that fail to return from an approved LOA will be considered to have withdrawn from CSU. A federal refund calculation will be performed in these situations and financial aid awards may be reduced or cancelled.
4. Students on an approved LOA at CSU will be considered enrolled and eligible for in-school deferments on federal loans during the leave. However, students on leave are not deferred from making regularly scheduled payments to their CSU financial account for normal costs not covered by financial aid. Students who have outstanding federal student loans may be required to repay the loans while on a LOA if they have previously used up their loan grace period and should contact the loan holder to determine if they can apply for a deferment or forbearance on the loans.

Returning Textbooks for Dropped/ Withdrawn Courses

Term Programs

Textbooks are provided at no cost through the CSU Book Grant as long as the student successfully completes the course. When a student drops or withdraws from a course, a charge for the textbook and shipping will be posted to the

student's account. The student may return the text within 30 days to have the charge reversed. The charge will be based on the textbook price listed at the CSU website and \$12 for shipping and handling. Alternatively, the student may re-enroll in the same course for the next consecutive term (if the course is offered) and indicate on the course re-take form that the previously provided text will be used. As long as the next course is submitted within 30 days of the drop/withdrawal, the text charge will be reversed. If the course is not available for re-enrollment in the next term, the student should return the text.

After submitting the Course Drop/Withdrawal Form, a textbook return form will be provided to the student to print and enclose with the returned text. Students who return textbooks without the proper paper work to identify themselves, will not receive credit for the return. Students who do not return the text and do not pay the text charge, may not be allowed to enroll in future terms.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP) For Title IV Students

Term Programs

Federal regulations require CSU to establish and apply reasonable standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for eligible students to receive financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act. CSU students who wish to be considered for financial aid must:

- Be in good standing at the university and
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress in their program of study as set forth in this policy.

SAP is an eligibility requirement and is administered by the university in addition to the academic standards of performance required under the CSU Academic Progress Policy. The SAP policy is reviewed annually by the CSU Registrar.

Students are evaluated at the end of every term for SAP once they have attempted two terms, which is equivalent to 16 weeks of instruction. All students are evaluated on three standards: grade point average (qualitative measure), semester hours completion ratio (quantitative measure), and maximum timeframe. To maintain eligibility under SAP, students must meet all three standards.

Standard 1: Grade Point Average (Qualitative Measure)

Students must maintain a minimum qualitative measure of progress defined as the cumulative GPA. The requirements are listed below:

- Students in undergraduate programs must maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA.
- Students in graduate programs must maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Standard 2: Semester Hour Completion Ratio (Quantitative Measure)

Students (either full-time or part-time) must achieve a passing rate of at least 67 percent of all hours attempted. Hours attempted include completed courses, repeated courses, withdrawals, and incompletes. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the completion ratio.

Standard 3: Maximum Timeframe

Students must complete their degree program within 150 percent of the semester hour requirements for the degree. Students must complete an associate degree within 90 semester hours, a bachelor's degree within 180 semester hours, a master's degree within 54 semester hours and a doctoral degree within 92 semester hours. Students who are unable to complete their degree program within the timeframe limitation will no longer be eligible to use federal financial aid to cover any costs associated with completing their degree program. Transfer credit, if applicable, is also calculated in the maximum timeframe calculation.

SAP Notification

Students are notified of the SAP policy in the CSU catalog, website and during the initial financial aid application process. All periods of enrollment at CSU are calculated in SAP, including periods of enrollment during which a student did not receive financial aid. Cumulative GPAs are calculated using grades earned at CSU.

Transfer Credits

Transfer credits accepted toward the student's degree program will be included when calculating the SAP maximum timeframe and quantitative progress. This includes credit for English as a Second Language (ESL) and remedial courses, if accepted toward the degree program.

Repeated Courses

Students receiving Title IV Aid may repeat a course, as allowed under CSU academic policy. Repeated courses will count toward the quantitative and maximum timeframe SAP standards.

Incomplete Grades

Students receiving Title IV Aid may receive incomplete grades, as allowed under CSU academic policy. Incomplete grades will count toward the quantitative and maximum timeframe standards of SAP. Students who do not complete course requirements after an incomplete grade is assigned will receive a course grade based on the assignments completed with zeros being assigned for non-completed assignments.

Second Bachelor's Degree

Students who are pursuing a second CSU bachelor's degree are eligible to receive federal financial aid pending eligibility. Students pursuing a second bachelor's degree are not eligible to receive federal Pell Grants. The timeframe limitation

in a second CSU bachelor's degree is 90 semester hours, including transfer credits.

SAP Evaluation

SAP is evaluated once the student attempts two terms, which is equivalent to 16 weeks of instruction. Students who fail to meet SAP standards immediately following SAP evaluation will be placed on SAP Warning status for one term and will be expected to work with their academic advisor to discuss enrollment options.

Students on SAP Warning status will continue to be eligible to receive federal aid for this additional eight-week term. Students on SAP Warning status who fail to meet SAP standards at the end of the eight-week term will be placed on Failing SAP status and will NOT be eligible to receive financial aid. Students who are placed on Failing SAP status will have the opportunity to submit an appeal in writing to the SAP Appeals Committee.

Appeal Guidelines

Students on *Failing SAP* status may appeal to the SAP Appeals Committee if they have extenuating circumstances during the period of academic substandard performance and are able to provide supporting documentation. The committee will make every effort to consider each appeal carefully and provide a decision within seven to 10 business days. Appeals that are approved will result in a student being placed on SAP Probation status and will require collaboration with the assigned academic advisor to develop a plan of action leading to successful degree completion. While on SAP Probation status, students will be evaluated for SAP at the end of each term to ensure the student is meeting the academic standards of the action plan, and if at any point the student is not meeting the academic standards, eligibility for financial aid will be suspended.

Appeals should be in writing and addressed to: Columbia Southern University, SAP Appeals Committee, Office of the Registrar, 21982 University Lane, Orange Beach, AL 36561. Appeal letters should include reasons for failing to meet SAP standards, any supporting documentation, and a plan of action describing changes that will take place in order to successfully meet SAP standards at the next evaluation.

Reinstatement for Non-Appeal

Reinstatement following suspension is not automatic. To regain eligibility for federal financial aid, a student must do ALL of the following:

1. Complete a minimum of 12 credit hours WITHOUT using federal financial aid at Columbia Southern University;
2. Achieve a minimum 2.0 undergraduate cumulative GPA or 3.0 for graduates; and
3. Complete 100 percent of attempted semester hours.

Students who satisfy the above requirements must contact their academic advisor to request reinstatement. Students who are making satisfactory academic progress will be

eligible to reinstate federal financial aid, pending eligibility, and will be expected to meet SAP standards at the end of each term until degree completion.

Student Complaint and Grievance Policy

Scope of Policy

CSU is committed to providing a high quality of educational and related services for students, and encourages students to say where there is cause for concern in academic and non-academic matters. A complaint is defined as dissatisfaction occurring when a decision, act, or condition, based upon specific factual data, affects the student in a perceived negative or unjust manner, or an allegation of improper, unfair, arbitrary, or discriminatory treatment by university personnel. A complaint may constitute a grievance if mutual resolution cannot be achieved and the complaint is deemed a grievable matter. Such grievances may include, but are not limited to, academic matters such as final grade challenges, mistreatment by a university representative, records or registration errors, inaccurate assessment of fees, or discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, sex, marital status, religion, age, or disability. Non-grievable matters may include admissions decisions or similar academic decisions that would impair the exercise of academic freedom. CSU strives to maintain an environment where students, faculty, staff, and administration can achieve an atmosphere of acceptance, allowing complaints and grievances to be resolved in a manner that encourages informal conciliation and facilitates early resolution. This action promotes effective, just, and supportive feedback while maintaining privacy and confidentiality. No student may pursue the formal grievance procedure prior to exhausting the complaint procedure. The University reserves the right to amend use of the Student Complaint and Grievance Policy in any circumstance that appears to be unethical or inappropriate.

Complaint Procedure

- **Complaints:** Students are encouraged to voice inquiries, concerns or complaints to their assigned Student Services representative or academic advisor, as appropriate. These assigned representatives of the University are main points of contact that can offer support, facilitate resolution, or direct the student to the appropriate individual. Generally, all inquiries, concerns, or complaints can be resolved at this level, reaching mutual resolution.
- **Direct Discussion:** If resolution is not achieved, to the student's satisfaction, through the assigned representative, the student must contact (within 14 days of the alleged occurrence) the individual responsible for the matter (respondent) and informally attempt to resolve the complaint. Assignment grade challenges are directed to the course professor and are considered informal. Students not satisfied with the outcome may formally appeal the final course grade, at the conclusion of the course, through the Final Course Grade Appeal Form.

- **Informal Mediation:** Students not satisfied with the outcome of Direct Discussion may engage in informal mediation by contacting the Office of the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman may be summoned by the student or respondent to arrange a meeting of the parties and attempt to aid in resolution of the grievance. Informal mediation should be sought prior to filing a formal grievance.

Formal Grievance Procedure

- **Written Grievance:** If the complaint is not resolved utilizing the Complaint Procedure, the student may file a formal, written grievance. Grievances that are academic in nature should be filed with the program director and the respondent. Students appealing a final course grade should submit the Final Course Grade Appeal Form. Grievances that are non-academic in nature should be filed with the Dean of Students and the respondent. The letter or form must be sent within 10 business days of the complaint decision. The grievant must include the following criteria in the formal written complaint:
 - The specific institutional policy that has been allegedly violated
 - Factual information and/or evidence supporting the alleged violation
 - A description of the outcome the grievant seeks
- **Resolution of Grievance:** The responding University official will give independent consideration, adjudication, and decision of the written complaint. The University official will assess, on the basis of available evidence, whether the University has wrongly discharged University duty towards the student or treated the grievant in a fair, reasonable, and just manner. The University official will provide a written decision, within ten (10) business days, to the grievant and the respondent.
- **Appeal of Grievance Decision:** Either the grievant or respondent may appeal the grievance decision of the University official. The grievance appeal must be submitted in writing to the Grievance Appeals Committee no more than 10 business days after receiving the written grievance decision. The Grievance Appeals Committee will notify the grievant, respondent, and appropriate University officials, in writing of their action.

Student Conduct and Due Process

Students will receive written notice in the event that the university feels that the student's conduct warrants disciplinary action and/or expulsion. Students may contest the university's findings and conclusions by submitting a formal written grievance to the Dean of Students. The Dean will respond to the formal grievance within 10 business days.

Within 10 business days of receiving the formal written grievance decision, students have the right to appeal to the Grievance Appeals Committee. The decision of the Grievance Appeals Committee is final.

Student Identity Verification Policy

In compliance with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008, Public Law 110-315, concerning the verification of student identity in distance education, Columbia Southern University has established processes to verify that a student registered in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit. The Policy for Student Identity Verification is applicable to all Columbia Southern University (CSU) students beginning with the application for admission and continuing through graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the University.

Identity Verification Methods

Students enrolled in courses or programs offered through distance education or correspondence education are subject to one or more of the following student identity verification methods:

- A. Government-Issued Photo Identification - Students making entrance application to CSU are required to submit government-issued photo identification prior to course registration for student identity verification. Students sitting for a proctored final examination are required to provide government-issued photo identification (i.e. Driver's License, or other governmental agency issued photo identification.)
- B. Secure, Individual Login and Passcode - Students are assigned a secure, individual Student Identification Number (SID) and Password upon enrollment to Columbia Southern University. These assigned identifiers are used to access CSU's Learning Management System (LMS) to complete coursework and myCSU Student Portal to access course grades and related information. Because students use their SID when in e-mail or phone communication with the University, it is recommended students periodically change their password to maintain security.
- C. Proctored Examinations - Use of a CSU approved proctor or Remote Proctor Now, a virtual, third-party proctoring service, is required for all final examinations, pursuant to the Final Examination Proctor Policy.
- D. Administrative or Academic Practices - Students are subject to identity verification, at the institution's discretion, through use of personally identifiable information provided by the student upon application to the University. Students may be asked a random selection of questions when contacting the University to verify identity. In addition, faculty may commence verification of student identity following review of student work. Changes in academic performance or writing style may be monitored and prompt a request for identity verification.
- E. Other Technologies used to Verify Student Identity - Use of new technologies proven effective in verification of student identity may be used. Technologies include typing pattern identification, personally identifiable information, biometric software, or other technologies.

Protection of Student Information

CSU practices methods of student identity verification that protects the privacy of student information. Additional facts pertaining to security of information can be found within the Technology Policies, Security of Information Policy.

Notification of Student Fees

Students will be notified at the time of registration any fees associated with verification of student identity. Proctoring services and associated costs are the responsibility of the student. CSU approves two, flexible proctoring options: a standard proctor, who is chosen by the student and approved by the University, or Remote Proctor Now (RP Now), an on-demand, third-party, virtual proctor. Students who elect to use the services of RP Now will incur a fee of \$20 per final examination.

Procedure for Changing Password

Students who have forgotten their password or request to change their password should navigate to the Main Login Page of myCSU Student Portal. The Forgot Password link prompts entry of Date of Birth. Once this information is inserted successfully, an e-mail with new password credentials is sent to the students' primary e-mail address. After completion of this process, students can login to Blackboard and access Tools and Personal Information, in the left navigation, to personalize their new password.

Student Responsibilities

Appropriate use of technology is the student's responsibility. Students should take precautionary measures to keep login credentials secure and make arrangements to change password credentials periodically or in the event a breach is suspected. Unauthorized use of University Systems, further defined as myCSU Student Portal, Columbia Southern University's Website, university networks, Internet, Online classroom, or other hardware or software utilized in association with the University is prohibited as identified in CSU Technology Policies, Acceptable Use Policy. This includes unauthorized access to other user accounts or transfer of user passwords to others. Misuse of any University System is subject to the Student Code of Conduct Policy and sanctions contained therein.

Technology Policies

Columbia Southern University (CSU) is dedicated to the success of its students through the use of a variety of technologies and technology support within the University. Collectively, the Technology Policies communicate institutional expectations for its users and constituents by providing instructional principles for use of all university systems including the myCSU Student Portal, CSU website, university networks, Internet, online classroom, and other hardware or software utilized in association with the user's interaction with Columbia Southern University or its partners and affiliates.

Technology Requirements

Proficient use of email, the Internet, and standard desktop software is recommended to successfully complete online, distance learning courses. CSU utilizes an online curriculum delivery method through the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS.)

The following technologies are required for online courses:

- Access to the Internet, personal or public, with a minimum download speed of 128Kbps and a minimum upload speed of 128Kbps
- An appropriate, individualized (non-shared) email address

The following are computer requirements for online courses:

- Operating system: Windows XP or later; Mac OSX10.5 or later
- Software: Software, such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, capable of saving files in .doc, .docx, .xls, and .ppt
- Plug-ins: Java, Acrobat Reader, QuickTime, Flash Player
- Internet browser: A list of certified and compatible browsers can be found at the following site: <http://kb.blackboard.com>
- Further details of technology requirements may be found at <http://www.columbiasouthern.edu/Future-Students/Requirements>

Additional Technology Requirements

Additional technology requirements may be required in some programs of study. Specific requirements are notated in the course description of courses requiring additional technology. In addition, use of RP Now to administer final examinations will require use of a webcam with audio capability.

CSU reserves the right to update technology requirements, including hardware and software, throughout the duration of the program. CSU strives to be innovative in its curriculum delivery to support student engagement in coursework.

Technical Support

Technical Support services are available and offer a variety of support services including desktop support, diagnostics, and Blackboard support. Students encountering technical difficulty are encouraged to contact the CSU Helpdesk.

FAQs, software downloads, and tutorials are available within the myCSU Student Portal under the Technical Support navigation tab.

myCSU Student Portal

The myCSU Student Portal is the gateway to the University. A few of the features available through the portal include the ability to view grades, submit course enrollments and access a student account. Upgraded applications, features, or functionality may be installed within the myCSU Student Portal and are subject to change. Occasionally, technology

requirements will be revised accordingly to meet new standards and initiatives.

Email Policy

Columbia Southern University considers email as the official form of communication. Important student information and announcements are communicated through this method. An appropriate, individual (non-shared) email address is required for all CSU students. Students are expected to maintain a current e-mail address on file with the University. In the event a student's email address is no longer valid, access to the myCSU Student Portal may be restricted until such time the address is updated.

Email communications are subject to all applicable university policies, including the Student Rights and Responsibilities and Student Code of Conduct policy.

Student Technology Responsibilities

Online, distance learning utilizes technology as a platform for curriculum delivery and student engagement. Although most technologies can be viewed as stable, there may be occasions when technology fails. In our efforts to support students during technology failure, it is recommended students maintain an alternate technology plan. A student's ability to request a grade change, late assignment submission, or similar request will be reviewed on a limited basis by the course professor and may be verified by CSU Helpdesk Support.

The following recommendations are made to maintain an alternate technology plan:

- Periodically save written work as progression is made on assignments.
- Hard disks or memory sticks are recommended to back-up data storage. Computer or hard disk failures do occur and can be detrimental to student course progress.
- In the event the technology failure is severe enough to disrupt course completion, the student should contact the course professor for alternate arrangements.
- Regular use of the back-up device is recommended for effective retrieval.
- A plan of action is recommended when the user's primary computer fails. Examples of other alternatives include work computers, libraries, Internet cafés, or a friend or family member.

The following student requirements are maintained in the event of technology failure:

- Continued course participation and assignment completion is expected unless the student makes alternate arrangements with the course professor or campus, within the limitations of CSU institutional policy.
- Accidental assignment submission is not a basis for an opportunity to re-submit an assignment. Students encountering this circumstance should contact their course professor for a decision.

User Information Compilation and Use

CSU is the sole owner of user information, further defined as applicant and/or student information, collected within the constraints of user interaction with the University. Directory information may be disseminated to specific parties pursuant to FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act). CSU does not sell or share user information to outside parties without prior written consent of the user; however, the University may share any user information with its employees, affiliates and partners, or independent contractors with a vested interest. In addition, CSU may share user information to parties who provide educational, operational, or technical services or products on behalf of or directly to the University.

Student Portal and Blackboard Access

User access of all university systems will terminate under the following conditions:

- Graduation or other official separation from the university; in the event a student returns for an additional program, access is restored.
- Students who achieve inactive status, further defined as inactivity in any 365 day period.

Individual course access is outlined in the Course Access Policy and is separate from the Student Portal and Blackboard Access Policy. CSU alumni will receive the official university newsletter, the CSU Communicator.

Electronically Transmitted Messages

CSU may retain electronically transmitted messages, defined as e-mail or other data, for an indefinite amount of time. Electronically submitted information, defined by this policy, is distinct and does not pertain to information collected and contained in the official student record. CSU does not retain electronically transmitted messages for any specified period other than time periods dictated by law. Users should not have an expectation any electronically transmitted messages will be retained for a specified time period.

Security of Information

Columbia Southern University (CSU) takes security of information seriously and as such, takes all reasonable precautionary measures to protect sensitive user information. CSU uses encryption and Secure Sockets Layer Web Server Certificates (SSL) for sensitive information requested for submission through the World Wide Web.

Information contained within the CSU Student Information System (SIS) is also viewed as sensitive, personally identifiable information and the University makes reasonable efforts to ensure all information contained within is secure from modification or deletion by unauthorized personnel. In addition, employees who do not have a vested interest to perform a relative job function are not granted access to information contained in the SIS. Servers containing the SIS are located in a secure environment.

Users of technology systems should acknowledge security of the aforementioned information cannot be guaranteed as systems can be compromised by unauthorized third-parties. All users further acknowledge there is no expectation user information is confidential or private when transmitted through or stored upon equipment or systems owned by the University.

Acceptable Use Policy

The Acceptable Use policy governs all university systems used in association with the user's interaction with Columbia Southern University or its partners and affiliates. Such systems include but are not limited to the following:

- myCSU Student Portal
- Columbia Southern University's website
- University networks
- Internet
- Online classroom
- Other hardware or software utilized in association with the University

All content transmitted to and from systems or networks are subject to the Student Code of Conduct policy and sanctions contained therein.

Permitted Uses:

CSU technology systems are to have beneficial uses for all users for the sole purpose of instructional delivery in connection with academic, administrative, and operational activities of the University.

Prohibited Uses:

- Harassment
 - Sending other users threatening, inappropriate, or unwelcome messages
 - Sending unsolicited, bulk spam to other users
 - Any other form of harassment
- Privacy Breach
 - Accessing, reading, copying, altering, or deleting another users work without authorization or permission
 - Unauthorized access other users' accounts
 - Transfer of user passwords to others
 - Accessing unauthorized electronic communications
 - Invasion of personal privacy
- Willful Damage
 - Purposefully damaging or corrupting hardware, software, or data systems
 - Malicious uses of network and university systems
 - Committing malicious attacks on university networks or systems
 - Hacking passwords or systems
- Copying
 - Distribution or copying copyrighted material
 - Copying other's work as your own; plagiarism
 - Unauthorized distribution of instructional material to other users
 - Use of illegal or unlicensed software in conjunction with university systems

- Abstract
 - Engagement in illegal activities
 - Unjustified accusations or slander of any person associated with the University

Indemnification of the University

Users granted access to Columbia Southern University Systems agree, by authorization of access and use, to exempt the university and hold it harmless from damages to include lawsuits, losses, and expenses. Damages also include but are not limited to attorney fees and litigation costs which could arise from breaches of transmitted content, violation of sensitive information and privacy, user violation of the Acceptable Use Policy or any other of the Technology Policies associated with use of university systems.

Unofficial Withdrawal Policy

This policy affects any student enrolled in the Term Enrollment System who did not submit an official Course Drop/Withdrawal request and did not complete the course(s) by the term end date. In addition, the student has not been granted an incomplete course.

- If no assignments are submitted in the last 21 days of the term, the student will be withdrawn from the course and a grade of “WF” will be assigned. Grades of “WF” count in the calculation of the student’s GPA as a grade of “F.” The grade of “WF” is counted as attempted hours and will affect SAP. A charge will be posted to the student’s account if the text was supplied through the CSU Book Grant. The student will be notified of the course drop/textbook return process.
- If an assignment has been submitted in the last 21 days of the term, the student will not be withdrawn and no action will be taken. All non-submitted assignments will be recorded with a score of “0” and the final grade will be calculated.
- When determining last day of attendance for financial aid purposes, the course mid-point or last assignment date, whichever is later, will be used.

Withdrawal for Special Circumstances Policy

Columbia Southern University (CSU) recognizes students may encounter life situations that impede successful course completion. Students experiencing an extenuating circumstance, such as a prolonged illness, death in the immediate family, military deployment, or similar incident,

have the option to request a Withdrawal for Special Circumstances (WSC). Requests for a WSC are limited to students who have a course(s) on Incomplete or have a course that has ended with a sub-standard, final course grade directly related to the incident.

Students are eligible to request one WSC per calendar year and the request must be within one calendar year from original course end date. Each withdrawal request may include all courses in which the student is enrolled during the period of special circumstance. Requests for a WSC are not automatically granted and are reviewed independently through the Student Appeals process. Students who wish to withdraw under special circumstances must submit documentation which supports the extenuating circumstance. Acceptable documentation should include applicable dates to justify the request and may include:

- Medical documentation by a licensed practitioner
- Deployment notice documentation
- Officially signed letter from a Unit/Battalion Commander or Employer
- Death certificate
- Any other documentation deemed acceptable to CSU

Students approved for a WSC will receive a grade of “W” for the course, which will be recorded in the student record. The grade of “W” will have no effect on the cumulative CSU GPA, but will count toward hours attempted when determining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and may affect FSA eligibility. Students using FSA should contact their academic advisor to discuss SAP standing and the Office of Financial Aid to discuss FSA eligibility. An approved WSC is subject to the Tuition Refund and Withdrawal Policy and Returning Textbooks for Dropped/Withdrawn Courses Policy.

Students applying for a Withdrawal for Special Circumstances should submit a formal letter to studentappeals@columbiasouthern.edu and include necessary documentation to support the request. Students will be notified of a decision within 7 calendar days.

XIII

Student Resources

Student Support Services

CSU incorporates excellence and innovation in the delivery of student support services that emphasizes a student-centered learning environment. Our goal to effectively remove barriers to student success and build strong, meaningful relationships will foster life-long learning and provide each student an opportunity to earn degree course credit. CSU's student-centered support services are personal, responsive, and geared toward assisting students achieve their educational goals.

Your CSU Team

Main points of contact are provided to CSU students while progressing through academic coursework on the journey to degree completion. The CSU Team is comprised of an assigned academic advisor and Student Services representative. Together, they are a support team that provides academic guidance, support services, and encouragement throughout degree completion. In addition, the CSU Team can direct you to the appropriate office to assist with needs outside their scope. These assigned points of contact can be viewed in the myCSU Student Portal and are readily available to assist you. Below, you will find specific areas of responsibility for each of your CSU Team members.

Academic Advising Center

Academic advisors are here to help you with your academic needs whether it is your first time enrolling at Columbia Southern University or you are a returning student. Part of CSU's mission is to meet the educational needs of adult learners in a way that is unmatched in higher education. In addition, academic advising is an important part of CSU's mission to change lives through education. Advising involves both an interactive process designed to facilitate student development and the communication of accurate information regarding degree programs, courses, resources, and college policies/procedures, all with the objective of helping students attain their educational goals. Our goal is to enable you to discover your skills and abilities through education and apply those attributes to your everyday life.

Academic Advisement provides academic support in accordance with the following:

- Advisement on degree plans and course selection
- Relays information regarding institutional policies and procedures
- Program requirements
- Creates a degree action plan (DAP) with specified courses for the next enrollment
- Academic policies and procedures
- Approves Course Load Waivers

Academic Advising is a necessary resource while progressing through a degree program.

Student Services

Student Services provides support services in accordance with the following:

- Serves as a central point of contact for any assistance needed
- Provides answers to questions needed and assists with university policies and procedures
- Encourages and motivates
- Verifies shipment of textbooks
- Determines if an assignment has been successfully submitted for grading
- Arranges for an Incomplete course
- Routes students to Tech Support
techsupport@columbiasouthern.edu in the event there is technical difficulty
- Connects students with any other department, faculty or staff member as the need arises

Student Service representatives proactively reach out to students, offering information that guides students along the path to degree completion.

Success Center

The Success Center provides services to students that will aid in their success throughout their academic careers. The Success Center has resources readily available for students, regardless of the degree they are seeking. They also offer academic consultation (specialized tutoring), a writing and

STUDENT RESOURCES

math center, and course assistance. In addition, they provide the following services:

- Proactive advisement and coaching for new and continuing students
- Assistance in the development of learning styles and study skill techniques that will enhance students' academic success
- Provide course assistance at the request of professors or students
- Assisting students with finding academic resources
- Writing and APA assistance, including grammar and paper organization
- Guidance through the math labs
- Serving as a liaison to the faculty within each course to help students meet objectives
- Monitoring students' academic progress and intervening when appropriate
- Offering guidance regarding the university's academic integrity policy

Please allow two business days for the processing of math and writing center requests.

Success Center Mission Statement

In keeping with the culture of the CSU mission to change lives through education by offering affordable, flexible, quality academic opportunities and extraordinary service, the Success Center provides resources and services to students that will aid in the development of their academic success throughout their academic programs. The Success Center strives to promote academic excellence to a diverse, online student population.

Career Services

The mission of Career Services is to provide CSU students and alumni with resources to assist in the achievement of their career related goals.

Career Services assists students and alumni in constructing professional correspondence documents such as resumes, cover letters, and thank-you letters. Career Services can also assist students and alumni with job search strategies and interview preparation.

Services are provided to all students and alumni at no additional charge and include:

- Resume review
- Cover letter review
- Job search strategies/techniques
- Interview tips
- Social networking advice

Career Services can be reached through email at careerservices@columbiasouthern.edu or by phone at 1-800-977-8449 ext. 6551.

For professional correspondence reviews, please submit your correspondence to Career Services by email at

careerservices@columbiasouthern.edu. Please allow two to three business days for your correspondence to be reviewed.

Career Services is neither a placement office nor a resume writing service. Career Services provides general information and support to students and alumni to assist in the achievement of career related goals.

Office of Disability Services

Consistent with the mandates of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, CSU is committed to providing students with disabilities the equal opportunity to partake and benefit from its educational programs and services. By amalgamating instruction, research, and service, it is the mission of Columbia Southern University to change lives through education by offering affordable, flexible, quality academic opportunities and extraordinary service which enables students to maximize their professional and personal potential, and serve the communities in which they live and/or work. The mission of the Office of Disability Services (ODS) is to enhance this experience for students with disabilities. Our goal is to ensure a comprehensively accessible university experience where individuals with disabilities have the same access to programs, opportunities and activities as all others.

Any student with disability who wishes to receive accommodations MUST self-disclose with the Office of Disability Services. Documentation guidelines must be followed before a student can receive services.

Please view the Office of Disability Services Student Handbook for further clarification for any of the above information.

For additional information, contact Greg McClendon at 800-977-8449 ext. 1434 or greg.mcclendon@columbiasouthern.edu.

Temporary Health Situations

Students who experience temporary health situations such as surgery complications, emergency surgery/ hospitalization, or pregnancy complications should review the Incomplete for Special Circumstances Request in the myCSU Student Portal or contact a special circumstances specialist by e-mail at specialcircumstances@columbiasouthern.edu.

Library Services

The CSU Online Library is designed to provide students and faculty with a wide variety of research options, all chosen to support the programs of study at CSU. Library resources include, but are not limited to:

- Online databases that contain journal, magazine, and newspaper articles
- Articles from academic reference works and other scholarly non-fiction
- Special reports such as SWOT analyses and market profiles.

- *The Wall Street Journal*
- A collection of more than 70,000 online academic books, the *ebrary*
- Electronic journal subscriptions in specialized fields of study
- Links to other online resources such as general reference information, APA instruction, and subject-specific tutoring sites

The CSU Online Library staff assists students and faculty with the following:

- Learning how to search the library databases
- Identifying the best resources and search strategy for a specific topic
- Locating assigned readings or appropriate research materials for writing assignments, either in the library resources or online via the Internet
- Creating accurate APA citations for a student's chosen research materials.

For more extensive APA guidance, students should contact the Success Center.

Office of the Registrar

The Office of the Registrar maintains student records and monitors FERPA compliance. Additional responsibilities include evaluating traditional and non-traditional transfer credit, assessing academic requirements and conferring degrees twice a month, providing academic advisement to prospective and active students, and processing application requests.

The Office of the Registrar provides student support through the following teams:

- The Evaluation Team provides support by maximizing transfer credit while meeting accreditation and state requirements.
- The degree auditors complete audits for students nearing graduation to verify the student has completed all academic requirements of the degree. Auditors also receive and process graduation registrations.
- The Registrar Support Team completes numerous tasks, including probation and suspension monitoring, processing transcript requests, receiving official transcripts, monitoring conditional and temporary students, as well as keeping all student records current and up-to-date.

Helpdesk Technical Support

Technical Support is available to both students and faculty through Helpdesk Technical Support. Support encompasses general desktop support in addition to Blackboard support in the event difficulties occur or general assistance is needed in determining how to submit a course assignment. The following resources are available to students in the myCSU Student Portal.

- Student Tutorials
 - How to Submit a Unit Assessment
 - How to Upload Blackboard Assignments
 - How to Upload SafeAssign Assignments
 - How to Respond to a Discussion Board Question
 - How to Comment on Another Student's Discussion Board Post
 - How to View Feedback to Essay Questions
 - Common SafeAssign Errors
- Browser Tools
 - [Supported Browsers for Blackboard](#)
- Official Blackboard Resources
 - [Ask Dr. C Student Forums](#)
- FAQ
 - Frequently Asked Questions

Alumni Association

Founded in 2003, the mission of the CSU Alumni Association is to advance CSU through building loyalty, fellowship, and commitment among its members. CSU graduates gain automatic free access to our Alumni Association to stay connected with their alma mater. Alumni Association benefits include:

- Social networking
- A subscription to our monthly student/alumni newsletter, the CSU Communicator
- Notice of any social or career networking events
- Discounts from companies such as Avis and Barnes and Noble
- Access to the CSU online library

For more information, please visit www.columbiasouthern.edu/alumni or email csu-alumni@columbiasouthern.edu.

XIV

References for Students

Student Portal

The Student Portal contains several useful resources and can be accessed by visiting myCSU.columbiasouthern.edu. A partial list of tasks that can be completed on this website are provided below.

- Submit an enrollment agreement
- Access the Online Bookstore
- Login to Blackboard
- Access the Online Library
- View a list of completed and open courses
- Verify course start and end dates
- View course assignments, received dates and grades
- Verify email address on file and send a test email from CSU
- View all automated emails that have been sent

Term Course Schedule

Students enrolled in the Term Enrollment System can access the Term Course Schedule to view courses available in a specific term. Students who are unable to find a specific course in the schedule should work with their Academic Advisor for an alternative course. Navigate to the [Term Course Schedule](#) to view courses.

Full Course Listing

The following link is provided for a listing of all courses offered at Columbia Southern University: [Full Course Listing](#)

Gainful Employment Information

Gainful employment information is dependent on a multitude of factors including where you live, previous professional experience and current industry climate. For assistance on determining what program best suits you and what jobs to apply for, view the following links:

(It is in your best interest to do preliminary research yourself before following national statistics or relative information.)

Choosing a Concentration:

<http://www.degreesfinder.com/online/faq/which-degree-or-school.html>

College Concentration to Career (as of 2010):

<http://graphicsweb.wsj.com/documents/NILF1111/#term=>

Job Shadowing and Industry Information:

<http://www.jobshadow.com/>

Occupation Finder:

<http://www.onetonline.org/find/>

Graduation Information

Commencement Ceremonies

Columbia Southern University holds a commencement ceremony each year. Information regarding an upcoming ceremony will be listed on the CSU website and Student Portal.

University Catalog

The Columbia Southern University Catalog is a resource for you and contains current information on degree program requirements, admission policies and procedures, and other valuable information.

CSU Grading Rubric

The Columbia Southern University Grading Rubric is established for all assignments including written response, Discussion Board, and Research Projects. The complete grading rubric is located in the myCSU Student Portal.

Additional Tutorials & Resources

[How to Read Your Evaluation](#)

[How to Keep Track of Your Courses: SAP \(Satisfactory Academic Progress\) Information](#)

[How to Calculate Your GPA](#)

Academic Term Calendar*

U.S. students must register by the end of the registration period. Students with APO/FPO addresses must register at least four weeks prior to the term start date in order to allow sufficient time for textbook delivery.

Academic Calendar 2011-2012 Term Enrollment

Track A

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Drop Date</i>	<i>End Date</i>
Fall	2A	06/22/11 to 08/30/11	09/14/11	09/20/11	11/08/11
Winter	3A	08/31/11 to 11/15/11	11/30/11	12/06/11	02/07/12
<i>Christmas Break – During Term 3A - 12/21/11 to 01/03/12 (2 weeks)</i>					
Winter	4A	11/16/11 to 02/07/12	02/22/12	02/28/12	04/17/12
Spring	5A	02/08/12 to 04/17/12	05/02/12	05/08/12	06/26/12

Track B

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Drop Date</i>	<i>End Date</i>
<i>Christmas Break – Between Term 2B and Term 3B - 12/14/11 to 01/03/12 (3 weeks)</i>					
Winter	3B	10/05/11 to 12/20/11	01/04/12	01/10/12	02/28/12
Spring	4B	12/21/11 to 02/28/12	03/14/12	03/20/12	05/08/12
Summer	5B	02/29/12 to 05/08/12	05/23/12	05/29/12	07/17/12

Academic Calendar 2012-2013 Term Enrollment

Track A

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Drop Date</i>	<i>End Date</i>
Summer	1A	04/18/12 to 06/26/12	07/11/12	07/17/12	09/04/12
Fall	2A	06/27/12 to 08/28/12	09/12/12	09/18/12	11/06/12
Fall	3A	08/29/11 to 10/30/12	11/14/12	11/20/12	01/22/13
<i>Christmas Break – During Term 3A - 12/19/12 to 01/01/13 (2 weeks)</i>					
Winter	4A	10/31/12 to 01/22/13	02/06/13	02/12/13	04/02/13
Spring	5A	01/23/13 to 04/02/13	04/17/13	04/23/13	06/11/13

Track B

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Drop Date</i>	<i>End Date</i>
Summer	1B	05/09/12 to 07/17/12	08/01/12	08/07/12	09/25/12
Fall	2B	07/18/12 to 09/25/12	10/10/12	10/16/12	12/04/12
Winter	3B	09/26/12 to 11/20/12	12/05/12	12/11/12	02/12/13
<i>Christmas Break – Between Term 2B and Term 3B - 12/19/12 to 01/01/13 (2 weeks)</i>					
Winter	4B	11/21/12 to 02/12/13	02/27/13	03/05/13	04/23/13
Spring	5B	02/13/13 to 04/16/13	05/01/13	05/07/13	06/25/13

*Refer to our website for the most current academic calendar.



Frequently Used Acronyms/Abbreviations

AA..... Associate of Arts	FAFSA..... Free Application for Federal Student Aid
AARTS Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System	FERPA..... Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
AAS..... Associates of Applied Science	GAE GoArmyEd
ADA..... Americans with Disabilities Act	GED..... General Education Development
AGI Adjusted Gross Income	I Incomplete
AU-ABC..... Air University-Associates to Bachelors Cooperative	ISIR..... Institutional Student Information Record
BS Bachelors of Science	LOA Leave of Absence
BSBA..... Bachelors of Science in Business Administration	MBA Masters of Business Administration
CCAF..... Community College of the Air Force	MPN..... Master Promissory Note
CHEA Council for Higher Education	MS Masters of Science
CLEP..... College Level Examination Program	MyCAA..... Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts
CSU Columbia Southern University	NSLDS..... National Student Loan Data System
DANTES Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support	POST Peace Officer Standards and Training Council
DAP Degree Action Plan	R Retake
DBA..... Doctorate of Business Administration	SAP..... Satisfactory Academic Progress
DC..... Institutional Drop	SMART Sailor/Marines American Council on Education Registry Transcript
DETC..... Distance Education and Training Council	SOCAD Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Army Degree
DN..... Dropped for Non-Attendance	SUB Subsidized Federal Stafford Loan
DoE Department of Education	TA Tuition Assistance
DP Dropped from Course	TOEFL Test of English as a Foreign Language
EFA Estimated Financial Assistance	UNSUB Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan
EFC..... Estimated Family Contribution	VA..... Veteran’s Affairs
FA Financial Aid	W Withdrawn
	WF Withdraw Fail

www.ColumbiaSouthern.edu

800.977.8449 | 251.981.3771

21982 University Lane | Orange Beach, Alabama 36561