

# ACADEMIC POLICIES

Students enrolled in the university are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and understanding the implications of all institutional policies, procedures and requirements affecting progress toward their academic goals. These include, but are not limited to, degree and major course requirements, and the university's grading and course repeat policies. Students who fail to comply with these policies, procedures and requirements do so at their own risk.

## Graduate Course Waiver Policy

As part of a student's acceptance, Graduate Admissions will list the courses that a student is eligible to waive. Students may petition to have denied waivers reevaluated.

- a. Prior to the end of Add/Swap/Drop during the first semester, the process is as follows:
  - i. Students submit petition(s) for reevaluation of denied waivers via their Slate portal providing detailed documentation about each course they completed and an explanation of why they believe the course should be waived.
  - ii. Students will be notified of the results of their appeal.
  - iii. Students are not to contact program directors directly to ask about appeals during this time. Program directors will refer all requests in this period to Graduate Admissions.
  - iv. Graduate Admissions will continue with late appeals through the Add/Drop period.
- b. After the Add/Drop period ends, a student must work directly with the designated representative for each course using the Post Add/Drop Waiver Appeal Form (<https://d2f5upgbvbx8pz.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/inline-files/Post%20Matriculation%20Waiver%20Form%20and%20Policy.6.11.19.pdf>) available on the Registrar and GSAS websites.
  - i. The "Waiver Appeal" form must be completed and all required documentation attached and sent to the designated departmental representative noted on the form. The departmental representative will make the final decision.
  - ii. If requesting multiple waivers, a separate form for each course must be submitted to the course contact person for the specific course. Contacts are listed on the form.
  - iii. A copy of the approved waiver form, which must include the departmental representative's signature, will be forwarded to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar will enter the waiver into the student record.
- c. No waiver appeals will be accepted once a student has completed his/her first semester of study at Bentley. Exceptions to this will be at the discretion of the program directors, but such exceptions should be rare and should be reserved for situations that are out of the student's control.

### Course Substitutions

In four of the Master of Science programs, specific established substitutions may be made for courses based upon a student's prior academic history on those topics. The degree programs are:

- Master of Science in Accounting
- Master of Science in Finance (and Analytics Track)

Substitution are unique to each degree program. Substitutions will not reduce the number of courses required for the completion of the degree program. Rather, specific established courses will be substituted from a list unique to each degree. This should be discussed with the Graduate Admissions Officer during the application process. Specific information for each program is available of the Graduate Academic Advising and Engagement page under Waivers and Substitutions. (<https://www.bentley.edu/offices/academic-services/graduate-students/academic-programs/>)

## Grading Policy

Grade	Alphabetical	Numerical Equivalent
4.0	A	95-100
3.7	A-	90-94
3.3	B+	87-89
3.0	B	83-86
2.7	B-	80-82
2.3	C+	77-79
	F	Below 77
	P	Pass: Equivalent to 2.7 or better
	I	Incomplete
	W	Assigned to indicate a withdrawal during the period starting the third week of class and continuing through two-thirds of the semester

There is no audit option for graduate-level courses.

## Receipt of Grades

Term grades for full-semester courses are due from faculty within 72 hours of the final exam for a term. Once grades have been received and processed, students may learn their grades by accessing Workday ([https://my.bentley.edu/?\\_ga=1.107731979.821591837.1455046458](https://my.bentley.edu/?_ga=1.107731979.821591837.1455046458)). ([https://my.bentley.edu/?\\_ga=2.203443604.568088650.1562874767-825748308.1562874767](https://my.bentley.edu/?_ga=2.203443604.568088650.1562874767-825748308.1562874767))

**Note:** A status of "Good Standing" is needed to register for classes without consulting with an academic advisor, but it does not indicate eligibility to graduate. A GPA of 2.7 in the major/concentration and degree GPA is required for graduation.

## International Student Distance Learning Hybrid and Online Course Policy

International students attending Bentley University on the F-1 Visa have special regulations for online and hybrid classes. The Department of Homeland Security requires F-1 students to maintain a full course of study, and the course of study must lead to the attainment of a specific educational or professional objective. A full course of study is defined as a minimum of: 12 credit hours for undergraduate and 9 credit hours for graduate students. F-1 students can count only one 100% online/distance learning class or three credits of online/distance learning course per

semester toward the full course of study requirement [8 C.F.R. 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G)].

For hybrid courses, international students are required to maintain physical presence in these classes by attending at least 50 percent of the class sessions in person. Any hybrid course in which physical attendance in class is less than 50 percent will count as one of the online or distance learning courses allowed for an international student. Failure to comply with the regulation [8 C.F.R. 214.2(f)(6)(i)(G)] will be a violation of a student's F-1 visa status ([http://www.bentley.edu/campus-life/culture-diversity/international-students-and-scholars/current-students/#F-1 Student Regulations](http://www.bentley.edu/campus-life/culture-diversity/international-students-and-scholars/current-students/#F-1%20Student%20Regulations)).

## Policy for Resolution of Course Grade Disputes

In very rare instances, students may dispute a course grade. Such cases will be considered by a faculty-led review process described below. Every attempt should be made to preserve confidentiality for all involved in the process.

At any point during the process, the student may terminate the process and accept the original course grade. The Bentley University administration, including Deans, has no authority to change course grades.

- a. All grading disputes shall begin with the student arranging a conference with the instructor. The student must initiate the dispute resolution process within 30 days of the posting of the final course grade.
- b. If the dispute has not been resolved after the student-instructor conference, the student may choose to request a conference with the department chair of the instructor's primary department, which is normally the department in which the course is offered. If the course in question has a course coordinator, such as for General Business courses, the course coordinator shall be included in this meeting, even if the course coordinator is from a different academic department.
- c. If the instructor for the course with the disputed grade is the department chair, the student should contact the Chair of the Faculty Senate to request that a hearing committee be convened.
- d. Prior to the conference with the department chair, a written detailed explanation of the complaint, along with supporting documents, will be submitted by the student to the department chair.
- e. After the conference with the student, the department chair shall consult with the instructor.
  - i. If the department chair believes that the instructor graded correctly, the process ends and the course grade will not be changed.
  - ii. If the department chair believes that the student may have been graded incorrectly, the department chair will suggest that the instructor consider reevaluating the course grade.
- f. If the instructor still does not believe a course grade change is warranted, the department chair shall request that the Chair of the Faculty Senate convene a hearing committee of three tenured faculty members to resolve the case.
- g. The Chair of the Faculty Senate is directed to choose by lot three tenured faculty members from all eligible faculty members. Members of the instructor's primary academic department are ineligible. The Chair of the Faculty Senate will ask the three-member hearing committee to select a committee chair, who will inform the

instructor's department chair that the hearing committee has been formed, except in the case where the instructor is the department chair.

- h. The hearing committee will examine all evidence from the instructor and from the student disputing the course grade. Within one week of the hearing committee's final decision, written findings and the hearing committee's decision will be forwarded to the student, instructor, department chair and course coordinator, if appropriate.
  - i. If the hearing committee rejects the assertion by the student that the course grade is incorrect, the process ends and the course grade will not be changed.
  - ii. If the hearing committee decides in favor of the student and the instructor is unwilling to follow the hearing committee's recommendation, the hearing committee shall direct the Registrar to replace an F or other grade with an S grade. The course will count toward graduation, but will not be included in the student's grade point average.
- i. Within 10 business days of receiving the hearing committee's written decision, the student must respond in writing to the hearing committee chair, accepting either the hearing committee's decision or the original grade. If the student does not respond, the original grade stands. Then the Hearing Committee Chair will inform the Registrar, department chair, instructor, course coordinator and student of the outcome of the dispute process.

## Missed Exam or Quiz Policy

A student who is absent from a regular examination or quiz may take a make-up examination in that course only with the approval of the instructor. Such approval is given only when, in the opinion of the instructor, the student was unavoidably absent from the regular examination for a valid and sufficient reason, such as serious illness or death in the immediate family. If possible, the student should notify the instructor prior to the regular examination.

## Final Exam Policy

If a student has three final examinations scheduled on the same day, the student has the option to work with all three faculty members to find one to reschedule. If no faculty member agrees to an alternative agreeable to the student, then the middle exam must be rescheduled. Students must request rescheduling at least two weeks prior to the scheduled examination time.

## Academic Standing Policy

Graduate students can carry four different types of academic standing noted on a transcript by term: Good Standing, Academic Warning, Academic Probation or Academic Dismissal.

Academic standing is noted by term and will only be retroactively altered for a specific term in the event of a university-sanctioned grade change or reversal of an academic dismissal decision upon appeal; repeated courses will not change a student's academic standing for a given term.

- Good Standing: a student with an overall grade point average at or above 2.7.
- Academic Warning: a semester grade point average below a 2.7.
- Academic Probation: a student with an overall grade point average below 2.7, after review by the Graduate Academic Performance Committee, is sent an Academic Probation letter with directives and conditions that must be met to avoid subsequent academic review or dismissal

- Academic Dismissal: a student is permanently dismissed from an academic program after not meeting the terms of Academic Probation or as determined by Graduate Academic Performance Committee.

**Note:** A status of “Good Standing” is needed to register for classes without consulting with an academic advisor, but it does not indicate eligibility to graduate. A GPA of 2.7 in both the major/concentrations, as well as the overall GPA, is required for graduation.

### Grade Point Average

The overall GPA reflects the average of all coursework completed at the graduate level at Bentley. This average is calculated by multiplying each course grade earned by the semester hours of credits to figure the total quality points. Then the total quality points earned are divided by the total hours of coursework completed to arrive at the grade point average. The overall GPA is the average reflected on each semester’s grade report and on a student’s transcript. Graduate students who have completed multiple degrees at the graduate level or who have taken additional graduate-level courses beyond the course requirements specified for a degree should note that their overall GPA and degree GPA could differ. The degree GPA reflects the average of the course work required to complete the requirements of one degree or certificate program including any required Pre-Program or Business Fundamental courses. **This average is calculated similarly to the overall GPA, but only includes the courses applicable to the degree or certificate program being pursued. In cases where a student has completed multiple degrees/certificates or has taken more courses than are required for a degree, the degree GPA is the GPA used to qualify a student for graduation honors and nomination to honor societies.** The degree GPA is not printed on a student’s transcript.

## Graduate Academic Performance Policy

A 2.7 cumulative grade point average in all courses required for the degree or certificate and in the selected major/concentration is required to graduate. The Graduate Academic Performance Committee, a body of faculty and administrators acting on behalf of the Dean of Business and the McCallum Graduate School, will review all student academic records for a violation of the Graduate Academic Performance Policy when:

- A graduate student earns an overall GPA below 2.7; or
- A graduate student earns two or more grades below B-.

The Graduate Academic Performance Committee reviews students after the fall, spring and summer terms. Upon completion of the Graduate Academic Performance Review Process, the chair of the Graduate Academic Performance Committee will send those students reviewed official correspondence. The correspondence will explain the outcome of the review and any specified sanctions.

### Academic Sanctions

Actions taken by the Graduate Academic Performance Committee after an academic record has been reviewed include:

- Academic Warning: results in an official email sent by the Graduate Academic Performance Committee Chair acknowledging the violation of the Graduate Academic Performance Policy; student is notified that further reviews can result in additional sanctions up to and including Academic Dismissal; there is no opportunity for appeal.
- Academic Probation: results in an official email sent by the Graduate Academic Performance Committee Chair acknowledging the violation of the Graduate Academic Performance Policy; student is notified that adjustments are necessary to continue making progress toward

a degree and that further reviews can result in additional sanctions up to and including Academic Dismissal; academic adjustments may include, but are not limited to, repeating failed courses, changes in current course load or a short-term leave of absence; there is no opportunity for appeal.

- Academic Dismissal: results in an official email sent by the Graduate Academic Performance Committee Chair acknowledging the violation of the Graduate Academic Performance Policy; student is notified of the decision and the Committee’s reasoning behind the decision.

### Academic Performance Dismissal Appeal Process

Any appeal must be made in writing to the Dean of Business and the McCallum Graduate School via the Chair of the Graduate Academic Performance Committee within seven business days of the original official email. The Dean, or designee, will review written appeals and documentation and determine whether to uphold, alter or reverse the decision of the Graduate Academic Performance Committee. The Dean, or designee, will notify the student in writing of the final outcome of the appeal once all materials have been reviewed.

In the interim, sanctions issued by the Graduate Academic Performance Committee, including dismissal, will not take effect until a final decision on an appeal is communicated to the student in an official email by the Dean or designee.

All written appeals must include the rationale for disputing the initial appeal decision. Appeals should meet one of the criteria listed below:

- a. New material or information unavailable to the Academic Performance Committee at the time of the hearing becomes available. New information must highlight unusual or unexpected circumstances, beyond a student’s control or planning, and occurring during the term/s in question. In addition, students must supply official documentation for stated information.
- b. Evidence is provided that the stated process or protocol has not been followed.

## Incomplete Grade Policy

As a general rule, all coursework must be completed by the end of the semester in which the course is offered. An incomplete grade is a temporary designation issued when required work, which can be made up, is not completed by the end of the semester.

### Eligibility for an Incomplete Grade

- An incomplete grade may be granted to a student at the discretion of a faculty member as an accommodation due to the student only when the student is experiencing unforeseen and extraordinary circumstances at the end of the semester.
- A student must have consistently demonstrated passing academic work prior to the request for an incomplete.
- Incompletes are not automatically granted for students who miss large amounts of class due to illness or personal circumstances. Instructors *must not* issue an incomplete due to lack of class attendance and/or a lack of completed work. An incomplete grade should *not* be issued in the following situations:
  - The student needs to attend and repeat most of the course.
  - The student stopped attending class.
  - To allow the student the opportunity to complete additional work or improve upon previously completed requirements after the semester has ended

- A faculty member's failure to complete grading by the deadline is not a permissible reason to issue an incomplete. When a grade designation is required, the faculty member, Registrar, and department chair will coordinate such designation.

An incomplete grade issued in the fall or winter session term must be completed no later March 1 of the subsequent spring semester. An incomplete grade issued in the spring or summer term must be completed no later than October 1 of the subsequent fall semester. Faculty members have the discretion to require outstanding coursework to be submitted earlier than the deadlines stated above. Faculty members should email the Registrar's office to set a deadline earlier than those stated above. It is the student's responsibility to work with the faculty member to clear the incomplete grade.

An incomplete grade not completed within the required period will automatically convert to an 'F'. The completion deadline for an incomplete grade may not be extended. A faculty member has up to one year from the last day of the semester for which the incomplete was granted to change a grade. A change of grade may not be submitted after this one year period without permission from the Associate Provost for Academic Services and Operations.

## Course Repeat Policy

The following policy applies to repeating any course:

- A student may only repeat the same course in which an F grade has been earned; this is the only way to remove the weight of the F grade from the student's overall GPA.
- A failed course may be repeated only once.
- Only the first 'F' grade which is repeated will be replaced in weight. A second 'F' grade may be repeated but will still be calculated into the grade point average.
- A student may only repeat a total of two failed courses.
- Only the second grade enters the grade point average, but the F grade will remain on the transcript.
- If the course is no longer offered or not available prior to a student's graduation, the student must seek approval from the program director or the department chair of the failed course to select an appropriate replacement course.
- Students cannot repeat Global Business Experience (GBE) courses to the same country with the same professor, nor can a GBE to another country count as a repeat for an F grade obtained in a previous GBE regardless of a different destination and/or professor.
- If the student chooses not to repeat the course, the F will always be calculated in the student's GPA.
- Students in advance standing undergraduate programs should refer to the Undergraduate Course repeat policy.

## Religious Observances Policy

Bentley University is committed to supporting a diverse and inclusive campus culture. We recognize the diversity of religious traditions represented in the campus community, and affirm the rights of students to receive reasonable accommodations when their sincerely held religious observances conflict with an academic requirement, except when such an accommodation would create an undue hardship. We offer reasonable religious accommodations in accordance with Massachusetts state law and Bentley core values.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151C, Section 2B states:

Any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section. A copy of this section shall be published by each institution of higher education in the catalog of such institution containing the list of available courses.

The following are guidelines for students and faculty to follow in order to arrive at an agreed upon accommodation:

### For students:

If a student anticipates being unable to attend class, take an exam, or turn in an assignment because of a religious observance, they are strongly encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors at the outset of the semester, but not less than two weeks before the day of the religious observance in order to ensure that the faculty member and the student can adequately determine an appropriate accommodation. Students are expected to work with the faculty member to identify an accommodation that satisfies the specific need of the student while maintaining the necessary academic requirements. In general, reasonable religious observance accommodations will be made for the day of the religious observance but not for any days preceding or succeeding it.

### For faculty:

Faculty are expected to respect the religious traditions of their students and make reasonable accommodations when academic requirements conflict with a student's sincerely held religious beliefs or practices, unless when such accommodations would cause undue hardship. Faculty should not expect the student to disclose their religious affiliation in order to receive a religious accommodation. Faculty are expected to work with the student to identify an accommodation that meets the student's needs and those of the class and that maintains equity for all students in the class. A day missed under this accommodation cannot be counted against the attendance policy.

### For students and faculty:

Academic Services is a resource to students and faculty when determining reasonable accommodations for religious observances. Students and faculty can reach out to Academic Services at any time with questions regarding how to agree upon a reasonable accommodation. A student is encouraged to work with their professors directly, but they may also choose to work solely with Academic Services, who will then liaise with their professor. Once an accommodation is agreed upon, that agreement should be documented in writing; an email between the student and professor can serve as such documentation.

## Time to Degree Completion Policy

Students must complete their degree program/s (including any concurrent degrees and certificates) within five years of their initial admit term. Beyond five years, without an approved Leave of Absence

(see policy below), a student will be required to apply for re-admission to the Graduate School with the understanding that previous course work and GMAT/GRE scores will no longer be counted toward the degree program/s; exams and courses must be retaken. Students may request an extension in time to degree completion, not to exceed a total of seven years, in writing to the Director of Graduate Academic Advising and Engagement

## Leave of Absence Policy

Bentley graduate students are expected to maintain concurrent enrollment. However, Bentley University recognizes that there are occasions when students may require time away from their studies. Matriculated graduate students experiencing medical, personal, or professional challenges may take a voluntary leave of absence for up to one calendar year after consultation with their Academic Advisor. Matriculated is defined as a graduate student who has deposited, registered, and attended at least one day of class either in person or online. Non-matriculated students who wish to delay their active course enrollment may request deferral through the Office of Graduate Admissions.

Students who plan to take more than one semester away from their studies must fill out the leave of absence request form ([https://bentley-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report/index.php/pid468501/](https://bentley-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid468501/)). F-1 visa holders must submit a Leave of Absence form regardless of the duration of the leave. Students may not take classes at other institutions during their leave of absence. Students who take more than one semester away from their studies without obtaining an approved leave of absence request may be inactivated. Students may also request an extension to their approved leave of absence status not to exceed a total of two years.

For more details about the leave of absence and withdrawal/transfer processes, please see the Student Handbook (<https://bentleydownloads.s3.amazonaws.com/general/Bentley-University-Student-Handbook2022-2023.pdf>). For any questions, please email [LOA@bentley.edu](mailto:LOA@bentley.edu). Graduate Students in the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center cohorts please refer to your Terms & Conditions in regards to the leave of absence process.

### Withdrawal from the University

If a student decides that they are unable to continue attending Bentley, the student must officially withdraw from the university by filling out the Leave of Absence/Withdrawal form. ([https://bentley-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report/index.php/pid739209/?](https://bentley-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid739209/?).) It is recommended that students considering withdrawal from the University consult with an advisor in Graduate Academic Advising and Engagement. Once a decision has been made to withdraw, the student must contact the Registrar's office by email requesting to be withdrawn from the degree program and the university.

Discontinuing class attendance or not taking exams does not constitute an official withdrawal from Bentley, nor does it reduce a student's financial obligations. A withdrawal from the university must be completed by the last day of classes for the current semester.

Withdrawal from individual courses is a different procedure; all students process course withdrawals through Workday.

## Residence Requirements/Course Away Policy

Students must complete all degree requirements in residence at the Bentley Graduate School. Under rare and special circumstances after

matriculation, a student may petition for a waiver of the Residence Requirement for a maximum of two courses (6 credits). Petitions for up to two courses (6 credits) of work completed at another institution will be considered. Courses must be completed at an AACSB- or EQUIS-accredited institution. Courses must also be the final two courses needed to complete the degree program. In all cases, courses must be at the graduate level and carry credits equivalent to meeting the requirements of the Bentley degree. Such appeals should be addressed to Graduate Academic Advising and Engagement. A course-away grade of B- must be earned for credit to be awarded toward a Bentley University degree.

## Commencement Participation Policy

Along with those students who have completed degree requirements within an academic year, other graduate students may be allowed to participate in the spring commencement ceremony, provided the following conditions are met:

- a. A student's account must be paid in full;
- b. After the spring semester, no more than six credits must remain for degree completion;
- c. A minimum 2.7 GPA is required for both the cumulative average of courses that qualify for a degree/certificate and major/concentrations average;
- d. The student must register for his or her final course(s) prior to the graduation ceremony;
- e. By no later than the date specified by the Registrar's office, a student completing their program of study must **apply for program completion** through Workday ([https://my.bentley.edu/?\\_ga=2.203443604.568088650.1562874767-825748308.1562874767](https://my.bentley.edu/?_ga=2.203443604.568088650.1562874767-825748308.1562874767)).
- f. The student must not be subject to review by the Academic Performance Committee.

### Additional Commencement Participation Information

- a. The above policy in no way obliges the Graduate School to offer any specific summer course.
- b. A student allowed to participate in commencement prior to the completion of final courses will have his or her name listed in the commencement program with the May completion candidates. A special annotation, "Anticipated completion of degree in October of XXXX," will appear and no graduation honors will be listed.
- c. Diploma orders will be requested during the semester in which the degree will actually be completed.
- d. A student who participates in commencement prior to the completion of studies will also have his or her name listed in the subsequent year's commencement program. If graduation honors are earned, they will be noted in this listing.
- e. Diplomas will be awarded only after all degree requirements have been completed.
- f. Beta Gamma Sigma nominees will include only those students who anticipate completion of their degree requirements within the nomination year.

### Graduation Honors

Honors at graduation are awarded to those students receiving degrees who have achieved the following Overall GPA:

- High Distinction: 3.80 to 4.0
- Distinction: 3.60 to 3.799

Graduation honors are not awarded to certificate candidates. GPAs are not rounded. See Grade Point Average for explanation of GPA.