



WHAT TO KNOW

MODULE 6

Promoting
Advising for
Student
Success
PORTal

6A. WHAT TO KNOW: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

When advising a student it is important to remember that the catalog is the agreement between the student and the University. Everything you need to know about academic policies and procedures is in the beginning of the catalogs.

There are different levels of policies and procedures. There are University policies and procedures and then each College/School may have stricter policies or additions to the University policies and procedures. The policies and procedures are different for undergraduate and graduate so be sure to check the correct catalog.

Some of the following policies and procedures require forms or extra material. In those cases, links to the forms are provided.



6B. UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy or Procedure with Links

- ▶ [Absence from a Final Examination](#)
- ▶ [Academic Forgiveness Policy](#)
- ▶ [Academic Record Changes](#)
- ▶ [Academic Suspension/Dismiss](#)
- ▶ [Add/Drop](#)
- ▶ [Attendance Policy](#)
- ▶ [Auditing Courses](#)
- ▶ [Catalog Effective for Graduation Requirements](#)
- ▶ [Change of College or School](#)
- ▶ [Change of Major](#)
- ▶ [Class Membership](#)
- ▶ [Clinical Course Requirements](#)
- ▶ [Confidentiality Policy](#)
- ▶ [Course Numbering](#)
- ▶ [Coursework at Other Institutions](#)
- ▶ [Dean's List](#)
- ▶ [Double Majors](#)
- ▶ [Enrollment Status](#)
- ▶ [Examination Policy](#)
- ▶ [Grading System](#)
- ▶ [Grade Point Averages GPA](#)
- ▶ [Graduation Requirements](#)
- ▶ [Graduation Honors Policy](#)



- ▶ [Independent Study](#)
- ▶ [Matriculation Status \(Leave of Absence\)](#)
- ▶ [Minimum Grade and Academic Suspension](#)
- ▶ [Non-Matriculated Students](#)
- ▶ [Pass-Fail Option](#)
- ▶ [Permanent Academic Record](#)
- ▶ [Post-Baccalaureate Study for Second Degree](#)
- ▶ [Professional Licensure and Certification Notice](#)
- ▶ [Re-enrollment after Academic Suspension](#)
- ▶ [Registrar](#)
- ▶ [Registration](#)
- ▶ [Repeated Courses](#)
- ▶ [Residence Requirement](#)
- ▶ [Student Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- ▶ [Student Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- ▶ [Student Administrative Appeals Policy](#)
- ▶ [Student Complaints](#)
- ▶ [Substitution of Requirements for Students with Disabilities](#)
- ▶ [University Degree Requirements](#)
- ▶ [Unsatisfactory Progress](#)
- ▶ [Variable Credit Courses](#)
- ▶ [Withdrawal from the University](#)

Disability Service Center

The [Disability Service Center](#) works together with students, faculty, staff, and community to support the educational goals of students with disabilities.

This is done by:

- ▶ Certifying and coordinating reasonable and effective accommodations to provide access for persons with disabilities
- ▶ Minimizing physical and attitudinal barriers
- ▶ Building relationships and resources within the University and larger community.

In all its activities, DSC seeks to **balance the rights and responsibilities for both the student and the University within a philosophical framework that stresses student independence and self-reliance.**

DSC provides a wide variety of services for qualified students with disabilities who are enrolled in USM credit/non-credit courses and programs.

Services include:

- ▶ Classroom Accommodations
 - Extended time on exams
 - Access to adaptive technology
 - Sign Language Interpreting
 - Text into Etext
 - Assistive Technology
 - Note takers
- ▶ Disability consultation/referral
- ▶ Housing Accommodations



6C. GRADUATE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

At the graduate level students often have questions about the following:

- Credit for undergraduate work counting towards a graduate degree
- Credit previously received for graduate coursework, either at USM or another institution
- Extramural course credit while matriculated at USM
- GPA requirements for graduate students
- Thesis requirements
- Leave of Absence

In many cases the answers to these questions are different for graduate students than they are for undergraduate students. The most up-to-date and accurate answers can be found in the current version of the Graduate Catalog at

<http://www.usm.maine.edu/catalog>

Other common questions from graduate students often involve registration and graduation requirements, withdrawals from courses and programs, which are best answered by the Registrar's Office.

The Graduate Catalog is also the best source of policies and procedures for Student Appeals and Complaints, such as:

- Academic Grade Appeal
- Appeals of Dismissal or Withdrawal
- Non-Academic Complaints

The catalog can be found at <http://www.usm.maine.edu/catalog>

At the graduate level, the advising relationship is far more than just guiding a student's academic progress. The advisor must also be able to integrate the student's professional and career experience into the process in a very concrete way.

6D. THE CORE CURRICULUM



The USM Core and the Lewiston Auburn Common Core are USM's general education pathways for undergraduate students. The USM Core and the LAC Common Core provide integrative and practical learning experiences that prepare students for successful participation in a complex and dynamic world. This overview of the Core provides basic information you need to know.

For More Information on...

USM Core: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/core>;

Lewiston Common Core: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/lac/common-core>

Courses satisfy Core curriculum requirement may be found using the gen ed category drop down menu on MaineStreet Class Search. See: <http://www.usm.maine.edu/core/find-core-course>



Dropping or Withdrawing From A Class



Although there are many reasons why a student may choose to drop a course, outlined below are some of the many implications for students to consider in their decision-making process.

- Do they receive financial aid?
- Is the class a pre-requisite or required in their major?
- Are they an International Student on a non-immigrant visa?
- Are they a Student Athlete?
- Are they a Veteran?
- Have they purchased the Student Health Insurance?
- Are they a Native American Student?
- Are they trying to drop classes after the first 2 weeks of the semester?
- Are they considering withdrawing from all of their classes?
- Have they bought the book or course materials?

<http://www.usm.maine.edu/reg/ad/dingdroppingwithdrawal>

COLLEGE WRITING

Writing: SAT writing score of 500 or better student takes ENG 100; SAT writing score below 500, student takes ENG 104. For students whose first language is not English an SAT of 550 or TOEFL of 79 demonstrates proficiency. If proficiency not met, students take ESL 104.

MATH READINESS

Mathematics: SAT mathematics score of 550 or better indicates proficiency; Score 22 or above on the ACT; MAT 101 grade of C minus or better indicates proficiency.



There are no restrictions on overlaps between Core and Major courses except in the cluster, where only one such overlap is allowed.



Core Requirements

Requirements	Credit Hours	Pre/co-requisites
Entry Year Experience/EYE (for students with <24 transfer credits)	3-4	EYE and college writing are co-requisites of each other
College Writing	3-4	EYE and college writing are co-requisites of each other
Quantitative Reasoning	3-4	
Creative Expression	3	EYE and college writing are co-requisites of each other
Cultural Interpretation	3	EYE and college writing are co-requisites of each other
Science Exploration	3 lecture, 1 lab	QR is a pre or co-requisite for Science Exploration
Ethical Inquiry, Social Responsibility, and Citizenship	3	Completed after any 3 of the 4 previous requirements
Diversity	(3) May overlap with another core requirement except international	Pre-requisites vary by course.
International	(3) May overlap with another core requirement except diversity	Pre-requisites vary by course.
Thematic Cluster	9 (3 courses from at least 2 different subject areas, 3 credits each; one course overlap with major allowed)	Pre-requisites vary by course.
Minor in lieu of Cluster	Minimum 15 credit hours and variable	1/3 of the credits in the student's minor may be courses that can be applied to the student's major
Double major in lieu of Cluster	Variable	At least 15 credits of second major must be outside of first major
Capstone (in major)	3 and variable	Some departments offer capstones of variable credit of 3 or more
	TOTAL: Maximum 45, fewer depending on diversity and international overlaps, and overlaps with student's major requirements.	

Dropping or Withdrawing From A Class (cont.)

Important Deadlines:

Drop Period is generally the first 2 weeks of the semester. No grade will be recorded on your transcript. A drop form must be completed. Withdrawal Period is after the first 2 weeks and through 60% of the semester. A grade of W will appear on your transcript. A drop form must be completed.

Post-Withdrawal Period is after 60% of the semester. A grade, possibly an F, will be assigned. A course withdrawal form must be completed. Contact your instructor!

For specific semester drop or withdrawal deadlines go to: www.usm.maine.edu/reg

Students must officially notify the Registrar of any schedule adjustments.

Students requesting late withdrawals may have extenuating circumstances that support a request. These students may be required to submit documentation from a third party.

The documentation is to be submitted on official practice letterhead and must include the following:

- The general nature of the condition and why/how it prevented the student from completing his or her course work.
- The date the student became unable to attend and/or participate in classes.
- Dates the student has been under professional care, if applicable. Signature of the third party. Type of professional practice.

Please note that medical records, bills or documentation from relatives are not acceptable.

Students must satisfy the basic competence requirements in English Composition (Area C) and Quantitative Decision Making (Area D) by the time they complete 60 credits.



Russell Scholars Many Russell Scholars courses will satisfy the USM Core requirements. Students should consult with their mentor concerning the use of additional [Russell Scholars](#) courses to satisfy additional Core curriculum requirements

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Transfer Equivalencies from Quarter-System and Other Schools Quarter system school equivalencies transferred in as 2.67 credits or more will satisfy 3 credit requirements, but will count for only 2.67 credits toward their degree.

Course equivalencies transferred to USM as 2.67 cr or more will satisfy USM's Area K requirement as long as the lab is included in the course. If the lab was included as part of the course, Transfer Affairs adds "w/lab" to the course title on the transcript.

In the age of ever increasing identity theft/fraud, it is important that the USM community is aware of our responsibility to protect student information.



6E. UNDERSTANDING CONFIDENTIALITY: FERPA

FERPA defines what information from a student's educational record may be released to anyone outside the University of Southern Maine.

An Educational Record is defined as information that is maintained by USM and that can be specifically identified with a particular student. Information that is not part of the educational record includes law enforcement records, medical records and employment records containing information relating exclusively by the office that created the record. Also, any records that are created by a faculty or staff member, and are maintained and used exclusively by that faculty/staff member are NOT part of the student's educational record.


Non public directory information may be shared with other university officials provided they have a valid educational right to know in order to perform their university duties.

Exclusion from the Public Directory – Under FERPA, students have the right to restrict the release of the information. Note that when a student chooses to restrict the release of information that **information will not be released to any**

source outside the university (even the fact they are a student at USM) except as specifically required by Federal and State Law. For example, a student's name would not be included on any Dean's Lists published in local papers; or the University would not be able to verify their enrollment to any person or organization outside USM for employment, unless there is a signed statement from the student received in writing with the request for information authorizing the release of this information.

How Would You Know?

You would know if a student had filed an exclusion from the public directory on:

- MaineStreet – a window shade  indicates the student has requested their personal information be restricted. If you click on the window shade the following statement will appear: **This student has requested that their Directory Information not be released to the public.**

Students may request that no information be released by sending a signed written statement to the Registrar's Office, 37



College Ave, Gorham, ME 04038 or fax to: 207-780-5517 or by selecting to *Restrict All Fields* on their Maine Street account.

Examples of violations of FERPA – Unless the student has given explicit written permission you may not:

- Post a student's grade in any place, physical or electronic, where someone other than the student has access.
- Make available a list with any restricted information (i.e., SS #) about the student that can be seen by anyone other than that student.
- Post a photograph of a named student in a public place (i.e., photos of all students in a particular major).
- Transmit an email to a group of individuals where one individual can see the email address of another. To avoid this problem use the BC (blind copy) option.
- Give out a copy of the student's schedule, or the time/location of a class s/he is in to anyone. In case of an emergency, transfer/refer the person to the USM Police Department, or offer to give the student a message.

Directory information **may** be publicly shared by the University unless a student takes formal action to restrict its release (see above).

Unless you and your office have a valid routine reason to respond to inquiries of this nature please redirect those requesting information to the Registrar's Office.

In the event that written notification is not filed, the University assumes the student does not object to release of directory information.

Public Directory information includes:

- Name
- Address (excludes email)
- Phone
- Date of Birth
- Program of study
- Class Level (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior)
- Enrollment Status (full/part time)
- Dates of Attendance
- Degrees and Awards received (including dates)
- Most recent previous educational institution attended
- Participation in sports and activities
- Appropriate personal athletic stats and real data



A complete copy of our [FERPA policy](#) can be found online. Source: USM Registrar's Office

Graduate Study

Students often don't understand the options available to them for graduate study. They often believe that they can only go on to graduate study in the same area as their undergraduate major. By talking with them about the graduate programs that are open to all undergraduate majors, you can bring up a whole new world of possibilities.

Another common issue is that many students simply do not understand what graduate study is. A few minutes spent explaining what a master's degree is and what a doctoral degree is, and what these degrees can do for a student, can again open up a whole new set of options.

Important points:

- ▶ It is never too early to plant the idea of pursuing a graduate degree.
- ▶ Encourage the student to explore available programs on Gradschools.com or Petersons.com.
- ▶ Encourage students to take the GRE exam, or other appropriate standardized test, while they are still undergraduates, since the scores are valid for five years.
- ▶ Remind students that many universities have graduate assistantships available to support graduate students.

- ▶ Encourage students to contact any programs they might be interested in, since program admission requirements can vary even within the same institution.

