



School of Health and
Rehabilitation Sciences

**Graduate Student
Handbook
2023-2024**



University of
Pittsburgh



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Introduction

The dean, faculty and staff welcome you to the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) at the University of Pittsburgh. We are pleased that you have chosen SHRS to pursue your advanced educational goals.

This handbook was developed to make you aware of the SHRS policies and procedures that may differ from the general University of Pittsburgh policies. These policies must be followed while you are a student at SHRS. Therefore, we ask that you read this handbook thoroughly.

- You are also required to review the **Graduate Catalogs** for the university and SHRS which can be found [here](#) for the current academic year.
- **Your department may also have a handbook pertaining to your degree that you are required to review.**

Information in the SHRS handbook is subject to change, so you should check the online version periodically. The online version will always contain the most updated policies and procedures.

Check the SHRS digital screens and your Pitt email account frequently for important announcements and information. If you have any questions, contact your department or [Student Services](#).

About SHRS

Information on the SHRS Vision, Mission and Values can be found online: [About | University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences](#).

Philosophy of Graduate Education

The faculty of SHRS believes that one of its major responsibilities in graduate education is to broaden and deepen awareness among all students in the health professions of best practices in maintaining high standards of scholarship, and to foster recognition of scholarship's critical relevance to technological and human needs.

SHRS graduate programs provide in-depth training in substantive areas within a student's chosen profession. They aim to foster critical thinking through a variety of scholarly and creative activities, thereby generating an atmosphere of scientific inquiry. These substantive areas include knowledge of the scientific basis for the development of advanced clinical expertise within the professions represented in the school. An equally important function is to encourage health professionals to be sensitive to the needs of the human beings they are serving and to adapt their methods to the changing social, economic and technological environments in which they practice. Accordingly, these professionals should develop the ability to perform newly emerging and expanding roles of advanced clinical services, research, teaching and administration in the health care systems, advancing the frontiers of their particular field of expertise.

On the assumption that the accumulation and mastery of basic factual knowledge have been accomplished, SHRS graduate education focuses on synthesis and integration, in order to allow for new systemic insights into the application and extension of that knowledge.

Furthermore, the linkage of various educational experiences with research projects as part of SHRS graduate programs enhances problem-solving skills. Through interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary didactic, clinical and research experiences, individual professional identity is fostered, while the ability to function both independently and in collaboration with colleagues from other disciplines is enhanced.

Office of the Provost Policies and Guidelines

The Office of the Provost provides general oversight of academic affairs, including education, faculty and student life. Policies and guidelines can be found online: www.provost.pitt.edu

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The University Notice of Non-Discrimination can be found [here](#).

SHRS Inclusion

Our school is committed to action-oriented and evidence-based policies to address inequity and create a more welcoming, accessible, and inclusive space for our students, faculty, staff and friends in the community. We believe that there are systemic problems that require complex solutions, and we are dedicated to developing and implementing those solutions in order to create not only a more equitable academic environment but also a more equitable health care system, which we believe can be done through the education of the next generation of health care leaders.

More information on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (EDI) can be found online:

[Inclusion | University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences](#).

Disability Etiquette Guide

The [Disability Etiquette Guide](#) provides useful and practical information to consider when communicating about disabilities and/or with people with disabilities.

SHRS Policies and Procedures for Graduate Students

Student Roles and Responsibilities

The university has a number of official policies affecting students. For complete and current text on all university policies, please go to www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies.

SHRS Expectations for Appearance

In the interest of personal safety and consideration for others, it is the policy of SHRS that students adhere to some basic standards of dress and grooming while attending classes and clinical assignments:

- Wear appropriate footwear that meets the expectations for the setting you are in.
- Dress modestly (no inappropriate skin exposure, no exposed undergarments).
- Minimize body odors (e.g., excessive smoke).
- Avoid wearing excessive fragrances (e.g., perfume, cologne).
- Maintain personal hygiene.

Students need to adhere to any dress codes and policies specific to any clinical sites in which the student practices. Online students are also required to maintain a professional online appearance while interacting on camera, be mindful of your location and what appears behind and around you and considerate of any background noises.

Exceptions to this policy may be made based on verified medical, religious or cultural concerns. In addition, students are expected to abide by any dress code policy established by their program or department. Students in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

SHRS Impaired Student Policy

The School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) has the responsibility to educate students to be responsible professionals prepared to provide quality services. Whether in the classroom, the clinical setting or a research setting, students are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors aligned with their professions' respective Scopes of Practice, Codes of Ethics, and Technical Standards.

Please click [here](#) to read the entire SHRS Impaired Student Policy.

Social Media Policy

Social media is rapidly expanding, and new outlets are created every day. Professional organizations and ethical codes are often outdated given the rapid expansion of social media. It is essential that students and faculty remain aware and vigilant regarding the social media ethical challenges facing health professionals, clients, patients and students.

Please click [here](#) to read the entire SHRS Social Media Policy.

University and SHRS Rules and Regulations

- Students should understand and know how to access university, SHRS, and individual program rules and regulations.
- The Office of the Provost provides graduate students with specific resources related directly to their experience at the University of Pittsburgh. You can find this useful information at this link; [University Regulations Governing Graduate Study](#)
- Students should complete the SHRS New Student Orientation, and review the most updated online version of the university's [Graduate catalog](#), [SHRS handbook](#), and their program's policy information. (For catalog you must switch to the Graduate catalog in drop down.)
- Students should be aware of and meet important academic deadlines, e.g., registration, add/drop and monitored withdrawal. See the [Academic Calendar](#).

Communicate with SHRS Faculty and Staff

Students should stay in regular communication with their academic advisor and faculty members. To facilitate this, students are strongly encouraged to:

- Check their Pitt email regularly.
- Inform their academic advisor, faculty or department chair of difficulties that may impact their academic standing.
- Seek help as needed.

- Make and keep regular advising/registration appointments with their academic advisor.

Failure to communicate with faculty and staff, respond in a timely fashion to faculty and staff requests for communication, or attend required meetings can result in one of the actions stated further down in this document under the [NEW SHRS Policy on Failure to Communicate](#).

SHRS Online Students

All SHRS rules, policies and regulations outlined in this handbook apply to SHRS online or hybrid students, just as they apply to students taking courses in person.

Financial Information

Tuition and Fee Rates

Tuition rates and mandatory fee rates are available on the [SHRS Graduate Cost of Attendance page](#) and the [Online Graduate Cost of Attendance page](#) on the university website.

Residency/Reduced Tuition

Students who reside in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania may be eligible for reduced tuition through state appropriations.

Eligibility is determined by the criteria outlined in the University of Pittsburgh Guidelines for Determining Eligibility for Reduced Tuition Rates, available online at: <http://payments.pitt.edu/pa-tuition-rate-eligibility>.

Additional Fees

Lab fees: Lab courses may incur an additional fee to cover laboratory expenses. These fees will be charged to the student directly and will appear on the invoice generated by Student Accounts in addition to tuition and other fees each semester.

Financial Obligation of Students

The University of Pittsburgh has the right to withhold services if a student defaults on any financial obligation until repayment arrangements have been made that are satisfactory to the office or department to which the debt is owed.

Scholarships, Grants and Financial Aid

If you are interested in applying for loans, scholarships, grants or work study, you should call, email or visit the University of Pittsburgh Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. Click [here](#) for contact information.

The website specifically for graduate students is: [Graduate School Financial Aid Instructions](#).

SHRS Scholarships and Awards

General information on scholarships and awards can be found online: [SHRS Financial Information page](#). Contact individual departments for information on scholarships and awards specific to your area of study.

SHRS Academic Regulations

SHRS Academic Integrity Policy

Students have the responsibility to be honest and to conduct themselves in an ethical manner while pursuing academic studies. Students have the right to be treated by faculty in a fair and conscientious manner in accordance with the ethical standards generally recognized within the academic community (as well as those recognized within their profession). Should a student be accused of a breach of academic integrity or have questions regarding faculty responsibilities, procedural safeguards including provisions of due process have been designed to protect student rights. These may be found in the [SHRS Guidelines on Academic Integrity: Student and Faculty Obligations and Hearing Procedures](#).

Academic Integrity Modules

It is at the discretion of the department chair to require their students to complete the Academic Integrity modules. The modules can be accessed through Canvas and after the student has completed all three modules, they will be quizzed to test their knowledge and those who receive a score of 80% or greater on the quiz will receive an Acclaim badge that can be shared with their department or on LinkedIn.

The modules can be accessed through this link: <https://canvas.pitt.edu/enroll/3LJA96>. Below is a brief description of the modules.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity means adhering to ethical standards when submitting assignments or taking quizzes and exams. Whether taking classes in person or remotely, it is very important to submit only your own original work. This module provides a comprehensive description of what academic integrity is and provides links to University of Pittsburgh policies on academic integrity.

Plagiarism

In basic terms, plagiarism is taking the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. Sometimes this is done unintentionally by not citing information properly. In other instances, students will purposefully copy from others to complete an assignment quickly. In this section, you will learn how to identify plagiarism.

Paraphrasing

When you have to explain something that you just read, you need to paraphrase, or put the content in your own words. This section will help you understand the basics of paraphrasing.

Ombudsperson

The ombudsperson is a person who handles complaints, serves as a mediator, and a spokesperson for the rights of a particular individual or group. The ombudsperson in the

School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) will be a neutral contact person (non-faculty) for students with whom they can engage in informal discussions to express concerns about conflicts and other issues that may arise during the course of their education that they believe are difficult to address with their academic department.

The ombudsperson for SHRS is Jessica Maguire, executive director of Student Affairs.

To find out more information on the role for SHRS, click on this link for [SHRS Ombudsperson](#) or, if you would like to meet with her, please email her at maguire@pitt.edu to make an appointment. In Maguire's absence, please contact Kellie Beach, director of Student Services/registrars at kbeach@pitt.edu.

Minimum Academic Standard

In addition to the university-wide regulations and standards detailed in the section on General Academic Regulations in the University Graduate Catalog, each student in SHRS is expected to be familiar with these school-specific regulations and academic standards:

- It is the student's responsibility to review her/his academic standing, to identify graduate program requirements and prerequisites for intended graduate program(s), and to monitor their completion.
- All required and prerequisite coursework must be taken for a grade, when letter grade option is available, unless approved by the department chair/program director.
- Students must receive a grade of C or better in all courses required by their program curriculum.
- Students who receive a grade below a C in a required course must repeat that course and attain a grade of C or better to graduate. (Note: University regulations state that a student may repeat any course in which a grade of B- or lower is received if an authorization to repeat the course is given by the student's adviser/faculty.)
- All grades will remain on the transcript and be calculated into the GPA, unless or until a course repeat has been processed. After the repeat has been processed the credits will be removed, but the grade will remain on the transcript, although not factored into the GPA. A repeat flag will also be noted on the transcript.
- Students will not be permitted to register for a course until they attain a C or better in its prerequisites.
- Failure to receive an acceptable grade after the second opportunity to complete a required course may result in the student being dismissed from the program and SHRS.

Advising

Master and Clinical Doctorates

Master's students are assigned an advisor who must be a member of the SHRS faculty holding a regular, research, clinical or adjunct appointment, and having at least a master's degree. The director of the program to which the student has been accepted selects advisors for SHRS graduate students. Students are notified of their advisor after their enrollment. It is the student's responsibility to contact the advisor to schedule an initial meeting.

Doctor of Philosophy

PhD students are assigned an academic advisor in the student's main area of specialization. The academic advisor and student will plan course work and other

experiences to enable the student to meet program requirements and their academic goals. More information for PhD students can be found in the PhD handbooks.

Change of Advisor

If either the student or his or her assigned advisor prefers, the student can choose another advisor. The student must obtain a *Change of Advisor* form, located online at [Student Life/forms](#). Complete the form and secure the required signatures and return the form to the Office of Student Services. As a general rule, students who have more than 50% of the credits required for graduation should not initiate change of advisor procedures.

Advisor Roles and Responsibilities

Initial Responsibilities of the Advisor

- Meet with each student advisee as soon as possible after admission to review goals, policies and procedures of the program, to assist the student in clarifying his or her educational goals, and to design a preliminary Plan of Study. The preliminary Plan of Study must be on file in Student Services by the end of the first term and then as revised.
- Assist the student in selecting courses for the first term registration.

Ongoing Responsibilities of the Advisor

- Meet with the student prior to registration in subsequent terms. Meet with students who have been placed on academic probation to review and revise the Plan of Study.
- Ensure that the student takes the comprehensive examination (if required) at the earliest appropriate time. The anticipated term of the exam should be included in the Plan of Study.
- Assist the student in planning internships or research projects.
- Direct the student to apply for graduation for the term of study in which the student expects to complete requirements for graduation.
- For online students enrolled in degree and/or credit bearing certificate programs, a student success coach is provided to assist students as a general point of contact and/or with any concerns they are experiencing in the online forum.

Plan of Study

Every student in SHRS must have a Plan of Study, signed by an academic/faculty advisor, on file with their department by the end of the first semester. Any revisions to the Plan of Study must be approved by the academic/faculty advisor or department chair.

To be certified for graduation, students must have successfully completed all courses outlined in their final Plan of Study as well as any other requirements for the degree. A final Plan of Study will be submitted by the department to the SHRS registrar during the graduation term.

Review Academic Progress

It is the student's responsibility to review her/his academic standing, to identify graduate program requirements and to monitor their completion.

Allowable Credits

Please refer to the [SHRS Graduate Catalog](#) for more information on transfer credits.

Current SHRS Students taking courses off campus for transfer credit.

Graduate students already enrolled and in good academic standing (cumulative GPA of at least 3.000) may, when approved in advance by their department and the associate dean of Graduate Studies, attend another accredited graduate institution in order to complete degree requirements not available at the University of Pittsburgh, provided they receive prior approval from the SHRS Student Affairs Office. Students will be required to fill out an approval form and provide appropriate course descriptions.

This form can be found online: [Student Life/forms](#).

Students will not receive credit for courses taken without advance approval. SHRS students may not enroll in courses outside the University of Pittsburgh in the semester they are graduating from SHRS.

Credits Required

The number of credits required for the Master's degree varies among the departments within SHRS, but all departments require at least 30 credits. All doctoral degrees awarded by SHRS require at least 72 credits, consistent with University of Pittsburgh regulations for graduate study. Many departments offer a variety of emphases. Individual departments should be contacted for the number of credits and Plan of Study specific to that department and focus.

Grading Policy

All SHRS graduate programs adhere to the university's grading system and grading policies for graduate students. Please refer to the Office of the [University Registrar on Grades](#) or the [University Catalog on Grading and Records](#).

Course Grading

The method of evaluation and grading is the prerogative of the course instructor and is based on the course objectives and expectations. SHRS faculty have the option of issuing "+" or "-" grades. SHRS faculty have the option of assigning letter grades or H/S/U evaluations, as printed in the course catalog, and determined at student's enrollment. Students will be apprised of the evaluation procedure by the instructor at the beginning of each course. It is the student's responsibility to request clarification of any evaluation or grading policy.

Grade Appeal Process

Students may appeal grades they feel have been assigned incorrectly or improperly. A description of the SHRS Grade Appeal Process can be found online: [Academic Toolkit page](#).

"G" Grade Policy

Students assigned "G" grades due to ***unfinished course work because of extenuating personal circumstances*** are required to complete course requirements ***no later than one***

year after the term in which the course was taken. Once the deadline has passed, the “G” grade will be changed to a “NG” no-grade on the transcript and the student will be required to re-register for the course if it is needed to fulfill requirements for graduation. Students will not be permitted to register for courses in which a “G” grade was assigned to a prerequisite course unless prior approval has been obtained by the department/program chair, or designee.

SHRS “G” Grade Policy

A SHRS Completion Agreement of “G” Grade Credits form must be completed by the student, instructor, and advisor and submitted to Student Services (form and instructions can be found online: <https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student-life/forms>).

- When a “G” grade is assigned for a medical reason, the form must be accompanied by a physician’s note when it is turned in to Student Services.
- It is the responsibility of the instructor to clearly state the objectives for completion of course requirements as well as the date of completion to the student.
- This agreement must be submitted before the next semester add/drop deadline.
- Failure to submit this form before the next semester add/drop deadline will be at the discretion of the instructor to change the grade to a failing grade.

Student Services will be following up on any “G” grades that are not changed within the expected timeframe at the end of every term.

Note: “G” grades will be converted automatically to an “NG” grade after the one-year deadline. Go to: [G Grade Deadline Policy](#) for more information.

“I” Grade Policy

The “I” grade indicates work in the course for which it is assigned has ***not been completed due to the nature of the course, clinical work or incomplete research work in individual guidance courses or seminars.*** It is to be assigned only to students who have been doing the regular work of the course but who need more time than the term allows to complete the course work.

SHRS (Incomplete) “I” Grade Policy

All incomplete grades are expected ***to be completed by no later than the end of the next consecutive semester.***

An SHRS Completion Agreement of Incomplete Credits form must be completed by the student, instructor and advisor and submitted to Student Services (form and instructions can be found on the SHRS website).

- It is the responsibility of the instructor to clearly state the objectives for completion of course requirements as well as the expected due date to the student.
- If the incomplete grade is assigned in the spring, it is expected that outstanding course requirements will be completed by the end of the summer term in August.
- This agreement must be submitted before the next semester add/drop deadline.
- Failure to submit this form before the next semester add/drop deadline will be at the discretion of the instructor to change the grade to a failing grade.

Student Services will be following up on any “I” grades that are not changed within the expected timeframe at the end of every term.

“S”/“NC” Grade Option (Formerly the “S”/“N” Option)

Prerequisite and required courses must be taken for a letter grade when available, and a student must earn a B or better.

Certain courses are offered on the “S”/“NC” (Satisfactory/No-Credit) grade option. This option was designed to encourage students to explore new and potentially difficult subjects without fear of the risks of failure. Under this option, a student who does satisfactory work (a grade of B or better) in a course receives the grade of “S.” If the student’s work is not satisfactory (a grade of B- or lower), the grade of “NC” (No Credit) is given. Courses for which an “S” is received are counted toward graduation but are not computed in the GPA. Courses in which an “NC” is received are counted toward neither graduation nor the GPA.

Enrollment

A student must be registered for at least one credit in a twelve (12) month period from the time of admission until the degree is granted in order to maintain active status. Those students who fail to observe this rule will be placed on inactive status and will have to seek formal readmission in order to continue in the program. If active status is not maintained, the student is not permitted to use university facilities or receive counseling or active supervision by a faculty member, advisor or committee.

Active enrollment status in the term you are graduating:

- If the graduating student is funded under a GSA/GSR/TA/TF – fall and/or spring appointment, the student must continue to be enrolled either as full time (9 credits), SMSI (Summer Milestone Study), or FTDI (Full-Time Dissertation Status), even if they are graduating.
- If the graduating student is NOT a GSA/GSR/TA/TF, they defended their dissertation in the previous semester, and they are simply finishing their ETD requirements, they need NOT be enrolled provided they finish the ETD requirements prior to the add/drop period of the semester they are graduating in. Finishing ETD requirements is defined as the ETD being reviewed and approved by SHRS Academic Administrator Courtney Fleck AND all of the required paperwork is submitted to Fleck. If they do not complete the ETD requirements before the add/drop period, they will be required to enroll and may be subject to a late enrollment fee.

Graduate students registered for 9 to 15 credits in the fall and spring terms are regarded as full-time students.

Students cannot enroll in courses that meet at the same time, without special permission from both instructors and their advisor.

Comprehensive Examination

Comprehensive Examinations are required for many graduate programs in SHRS. Successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination is needed for the student to demonstrate

mastery of their field of graduate study. Each individual department/program will specify the content and procedure for the scheduling, administration, and grading of the Comprehensive Examination. Please refer to individual program descriptions or handbooks for details of Comprehensive Examinations for each program.

Registering for Classes

After being admitted to a graduate program, students may register for classes during the enrollment period. The enrollment period for a term or session is published in the university's [Enrollment Calendar](#).

Enrollment Appointments

The enrollment appointment is the day and time when a student can begin enrolling. Once a student's enrollment appointment begins, adding, dropping or editing classes can be done until the end of the add/drop period. Students can view their enrollment appointment date and time by logging into my.pitt.edu, clicking on Student Center Login, clicking on Self Service, and then clicking on Student Center. See below for additional enrollment appointment information.

- Enrollment appointments are assigned according to credits completed. Those students with the highest number of completed credits will be given the earliest appointments.
- Students cannot enroll in classes prior to the date and time of their assigned enrollment appointment.
- Enrollment appointments are not assigned for the summer term; students can begin enrolling on the first day of the summer term open enrollment period.
- **Enrollment appointments cannot be changed.** Students should contact their Dean's Office to initiate the process of getting a new enrollment appointment. Dean's Office staff should follow steps outlined in our [New Enrollment Appointment Request Process](#) guideline to request a new appointment for a student. Requests for new enrollment appointments will be accepted if a student was not assigned one due to any of the following:
 - student previously applied to graduate and was denied.
 - student has returned from active military duty.
 - student has internally transferred from a school that did not use appointments.
 - student was admitted/readmitted after appointments were assigned.

Student Enrollment Process

Prior to enrolling you must meet with your academic advisor within your department to determine your courses and complete the enrollment form *if required by your department* (signed by you and your advisor).

Resolve any "holds" that you may have on your account with the respective departments that have placed the holds, or they will prevent you from registering for your classes.

Note: Graduate students cannot enroll for more than (15) credits without the dean's approval. Only the SHRS Student Services area can enroll you after you receive approval for the additional credit(s). Students will be charged for each additional credit over the fulltime maximum of 15 on a per credit basis.

Go to the University Registrar's website for instructions on [Steps to Enrolling](#).

Permission Numbers

If courses require permission, please seek permission from the instructor of the course. You may do so via email with the instructor. If it is a course within SHRS, email student services with proof of permission for a "permission number."

If it is a course outside of SHRS you will need to receive a "permission number" from the school in which the course is offered. You will need this "permission number" in order to register for a closed/restricted course in PeopleSoft.

Auditing a Graduate Level Course at SHRS

With the consent of the SHRS Dean's Office and instructor, students may choose to audit a course. In order to audit a course, **you must register and pay tuition for the course.**

Students must complete a SHRS Grade Option/Audit Request Form for Graduate Students, this form can be found online:

<https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student-life/forms>.

During the add/drop period - You are able to change the grade option for a course through your Student Center, if there is an audit option available.

After Add/drop period - If the course is NOT an SHRS course please contact the Dean's Office for the school offering the course for their audit procedures.

- You can ONLY change your grade option (Pass/Fail, Audit) by **submitting a Grade Option/Audit Request form (attached) to the school offering the course.**
- Check with the instructor and your advisor before submitting a request, to make sure an audit grade is allowed. **(Instructor will need to sign the form).**
- Once signatures are obtained, **email the form to Kellie Beach, SHRS registrar at kbeach@pitt.edu the completed form will be processed with the University Registrar's Office.**

Add/Drop Process

Students can add or drop classes until the add/drop deadline. Add/drop period during the summer sessions is dependent on the length of the class session. (See [Academic Calendar](#) for specific dates.) The following is a typical add/drop process:

- Students should make an appointment with their advisor to discuss adding/dropping courses.
- Once approved by the advisor, students will make the enrollment changes online.

Problem with Enrollment After the Add/Drop Deadline

Should a student find an error in their enrollment after the add/drop period has ended, a formal memo is required from the student's advisor to the SHRS director of Student Services/registrar. This memo will need to include the student's name, PeopleSoft number, the course(s) to be added or dropped (subject, name & section), the number of credits, and

the reason for the error. If the error is the student's fault, the student may be charged a late fee at the discretion of the main University of Pittsburgh Registrar. If the fault is deemed to be with the department the student is enrolled in, that department chair can provide an account number to cover the late fee.

Upon approval from the SHRS director of Student Services/registrar, the memo will be submitted to the University of Pittsburgh registrar to process the exception.

Monitored Withdrawal

After the add/drop period has ended, students may withdraw from a course that they no longer wish to attend by completing a Monitored Withdrawal Request form in the office of the school offering the course. Students must process the Monitored Withdrawal Request form within the first nine weeks of the term in the fall and spring. Because summer sessions vary in length, students should check the University's [academic calendars](#) for those deadlines.

Students should check with the school offering the course for the last day to submit a Monitored Withdrawal Request form. The grade "W" will appear on the student's grade report and transcript. There is no financial adjustment to student's tuition or fee obligations involved in withdrawing from courses, but withdrawing may jeopardize satisfactory academic progress, financial aid, and assistantships or fellowships.

For SHRS, **the form must be signed by the instructor of the course** and emailed to the SHRS director of Student Services/registrar, within the **first nine weeks of spring or fall term**. Monitored Withdrawal forms can be found online:
<https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student-life/forms>.

Repeating Courses

Consult your department or the SHRS director of Student Services/registrar for the proper procedure of repeating a class and for information on how this will effect your grades and the calculation of your Grade Point Average (GPA). When you repeat a class, **you must officially enroll and pay for the class again**. University policy prohibits any student from attending a class without being officially enrolled for that class. A repeated course has a notation appearing underneath the previous course taken designating that it is excluded from the GPA. The original course and grade will always remain on your record/transcript.

SHRS graduate students are only permitted to repeat a course one additional time after the initial attempt.

Any grade earned in the repeated course will be posted to the academic record even if it is lower than the original grade.

The repeated course must be the same in which the original grade was earned. In extenuating circumstances, a department chair, with the dean's approval, may substitute another course of similar content.

Incomplete grades ("G" or "I") will not be identified as repeated courses until the course work is completed.

Students seeking to repeat other non-SHRS courses (prerequisites, electives, etc.) will be permitted to do so at the discretion of the program director.

A student may repeat any course, except as noted below.

- No sequence course may be repeated for credit after a higher numbered course in that sequence has been passed with a C or higher grade. This also pertains to graduate and first professional students who have passed with a B or higher grade.
- No course may be repeated at any other institution and have that grade accepted as a replacement for the original grade earned at the University of Pittsburgh. The grade earned by repeating a course is used in lieu of the grade originally earned.

The following calculations apply to all students at the University of Pittsburgh:

- The original course and grade remain on the transcript and/or the academic record, however, the grade and credits originally earned are not counted in the calculation of the QPA (used prior to Fall term 2005) or the GPA.
- The repeated course does not increase the number of credits counted toward meeting the degree requirements unless an F is replaced by a passing grade.

“W”, “R”, “N”, or “NC” grades reported for the repeated course will not be identified as a course repeat, thus the original grade earned will continue to be counted in the QPA (used prior to Fall term 2005) or GPA. Incomplete grades (“G” or “I”) will not be identified as repeated courses until the course work is completed.

Statute of Limitations on Allowable Coursework

The purpose of the statute of limitations is to ensure that a graduate degree from the University of Pittsburgh represents mastery of current knowledge in the field of study. All requirements for MA and MS degrees must be completed within a period of **four consecutive calendar years from the student’s initial registration for graduate study; all professional masters within five years (includes both full time and part time students)**. Dual degrees and joint degrees that require course work in excess of 50 credit hours may be granted a longer statute of limitations by the University Council on Graduate Study.

PhD/Doctoral:

From the student’s initial registration for graduate study, all requirements for the PhD degree must be completed **within a period of 10 years or within eight years if the student has received transfer credits**. A student who is unable to complete all degree requirements within a five-year period after passing the comprehensive examination may be re-examined at the discretion of the department or school. Programs for professional doctoral degrees, for which the majority of candidates pursue part-time study while working full-time within their chosen disciplines, may be granted a longer statute of limitations by the schools offering the degrees.

Extension:

Under exceptional circumstances, a candidate for an advanced degree may apply for an extension of the statute of limitations. The request must be approved by the department or

departmental committee (master's or doctoral) and submitted to the associate dean of Graduate Studies for final action. Requests for an extension of the statute of limitations must be accompanied by a departmental assessment of the work required of the student to complete the degree as well as documented evidence of the extenuating circumstances leading to the requested extension. Students who request an extension of the statute of limitations must demonstrate proper preparation for the completion of all current degree requirements.

Resigning from the University for a Specific Term

If you are considering resigning for the term (academic withdrawal from all of your classes), please discuss your situation with your academic advisor, a [Financial Aid](#) counselor, or a staff member in the Office of Student Appeals to be certain you understand all your options and obligations.

The effective date of your resignation determines if you are eligible for an adjustment in the tuition and fees you were charged for the term. The effective date of your resignation will normally be the date you notify the University by one of the methods described below. You are responsible for satisfying all financial obligations accumulated until the time you officially resign. The timing of your resignation also has an impact on how grades are recorded on your transcript. The last day to resign from a term is when sixty percent of the term has passed.

For more information regarding resignation, please refer to policies [AC 67 Termination of Registration](#) and Title IV Refunds.

Please visit the Student Payment Center [Tuition Adjustments page](#) on the University of Pittsburgh website for more information.

SHRS Policy on Failure to Communicate

If the student is enrolled in the term and fails to communicate[†]

- They will be assigned the grade earned in the course, which may be a failing grade. If the course is a required course for degree completion, the student will need to repeat the course. Student grades will be assigned based on performance in the course, including failing grades for any missed assignments, at the instructor's discretion.

If a student is NOT enrolled in the current term or drops all courses by the add/drop deadline and has not a) communicated with their advisor or department the reason for withdrawing, or b) has not requested a leave of absence by the add/drop deadline and fails to communicate[†]

- They will be subject to dismissal from the program.

[†]Failure to Communicate definition - not responding to two (2) requests for communication with faculty or staff or failure to attend one (1) required meeting with faculty or staff.

Leave of Absence

Under special conditions, graduate students may be granted **one** leave of absence. A **maximum leave of two years may be granted to doctoral students or one year to master's students**. All requests for a Leave of Absence should be put in writing to the associate dean of Graduate Studies, using the SHRS Leave of Absence form. The length and rationale for the leave of absence must be approved by the associate dean. If approved, the time of the leave shall not count against the total time allowed for the degree (Statute of Limitations) being sought by the student.

The Leave of Absence instructions and form can be found online:
<https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student-life/forms>.

Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy

Graduate students who have completed at least 9 credits and whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.000 will be placed on academic probation and/or suspension and will receive written notification of this status. At this point it is the student's responsibility to meet with his or her advisor.

To be removed from academic probation, the student will need to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.000 within their next two terms of enrollment. Failure to do so may subject the student to recommendation for immediate dismissal from the program by the department chair, in collaboration with the associate dean of Graduate Studies.

Students who fail to demonstrate progress toward meeting graduation requirements in a timely manner may be placed on academic probation or recommended for dismissal from the program by the department chair, in collaboration with the associate dean of Graduate Studies. SHRS reserves the right to terminate a student at any time for academic or other reasons.

Dismissal from the program is at the discretion of the SHRS dean. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event it is not mathematically possible for a student to remediate their cumulative program GPA within their next two terms of enrollment, the student may be immediately dismissed.

A student may appeal their dismissal with the University of Pittsburgh Provost Office.

Reinstatement

Reinstatement is not guaranteed. Students who have been dismissed from SHRS for academic reasons or who have not enrolled at SHRS for three consecutive terms must request reinstatement by contacting their program director.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation Requirements for a graduate degree from SHRS are as follows:

- Student must be considered an "active student" at time of graduation; they must have been registered for at least one credit at the University of Pittsburgh within the last three terms or sessions.

- If the graduating student is funded under a GSA/GSR/TA/TF – fall and/or spring appointment, the student must continue to be enrolled either as full time (9 credits) or FTDI, even if they are graduating.
 - If the graduating student is NOT a GSA/GSR/TA/TF, they defended their dissertation in the previous semester, and they are simply finishing their ETD requirements, they need NOT be enrolled provided they finish the ETD requirements prior to the add/drop period of the semester they are graduating in. Finishing ETD requirements is defined as the ETD being reviewed and approved by Courtney Fleck AND all of the required paperwork is submitted to Fleck. If they do not complete the ETD requirements before the add/drop period, they will be required to enroll and may be subject to a late enrollment fee.
- If you are a PhD or Master of Science student that needs to complete an **ETD (Electronic Thesis/Dissertation)** as part of your graduation requirements, you MUST contact Courtney Fleck at courtney.fleck@pitt.edu in the term PRIOR to your graduating term to receive the instructions and deadlines to complete your ETD. **NO EXCEPTIONS** will be made if you do not meet the deadlines for the term in which you are graduating. **Failure to meet these deadlines will result in the student being denied graduation by the SHRS registrar.**
 - Students may **not** enroll in courses outside the University of Pittsburgh in the semester they are graduating.
 - Satisfactory completion of required credits.
 - Minimum cumulative GPA 3.000.
 - The GPA will be calculated as a composite of all courses taken at the University of Pittsburgh and counting toward completion of the degree.
 - Completion of all requirements for the program in which the student has enrolled.
 - No outstanding “D”, “F”, “G” or “I” grade in a required course.
 - Updated and approved Plan of Study on file with department and Student Services.
 - An **application for graduation** must be submitted online through PeopleSoft, based on the deadlines determined for that term. Email notification of these deadlines will be sent to students in the prior term.

A student with outstanding financial obligations to the university is not eligible to receive a diploma, official academic transcripts or any certification of completion of the academic program.

Thesis and Non-Thesis Options and Procedures

Thesis Option

A thesis is a written report of an investigative study conducted by the student during their graduate program. The completion of a thesis requires that the student has the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct a valid study and that the thesis project is the investigation of a research question appropriate to the student’s focus of study. The thesis is usually a concluding experience in Master of Science programs and completed under the guidance of a research mentor.

Completion of a thesis may be required for specific graduate programs within SHRS. Students should refer to the specific program requirements to determine if a thesis is

required for completion of their program. Students should refer to their program requirements for specific guidelines for completing the thesis, the minimum number of thesis credits required and for required courses.

Selecting a Thesis Committee

Committee members should be selected early in the formulation of the thesis project. The student should contact the proposed committee members, discuss the thesis topic and obtain their consent to serve on the committee.

Committee Advisor/Chair:

In consultation with an academic advisor, the student will need to select a research mentor to serve as the thesis committee advisor/chair. The advisor/chair must have a faculty appointment within the department and have expertise and research experience in the area of investigative study. If the advisor/chair is an adjunct member of the department, they would be a co-advisor with a regular department faculty member.

Committee Members: The committee will consist of University of Pittsburgh faculty members; the number of members depends on the department.

In consultation with the thesis advisor/chair, the student selects 2 members (3 for the Department of Communication Science and Disorders or CSD):

- At least one (two for CSD) member(s) must be an SHRS faculty member from within the student's department.
- At least one committee member must be a regular (not adjunct) member of the SHRS graduate faculty.
- If required, a third committee member may be from within the department, SHRS or the university.
- Additional members from outside the university are allowed (serving as non-voting members) but not required, and these members would be in addition to the two or three University of Pittsburgh faculty members.

Thesis Committee Approval

The student must submit the Thesis Committee Approval Form to the academic advisor and department chair for review and approval. The form can be found online:

<https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student-life/forms>. The student must submit this completed form to: Courtney Fleck, SHRS administrator/assistant to associate dean of Graduate Studies, with copies retained by the thesis advisor and the student.

Institutional Review Board (IRB).

In addition to approval from the thesis committee, any investigative study involving human subjects, including those involving the collection of data through questionnaires and medical record review, must also be approved by the scientific review committee/officer within the student's home department/program and then by the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Students should refer to the University's IRB website at <http://www.irb.pitt.edu/> for submission requirements, meeting dates and timelines. Due to the time required to prepare

the IRB proposal and the approval process itself, the process of obtaining IRB approval should be started as early as possible. Students should review the Student Research Guide on the University of Pittsburgh website at <http://www.irb.pitt.edu/student-research> in order to obtain forms and to prepare research proposals for review by both the department and the University IRB.

IRB approval is not needed for theses that do not involve the collection of data from humans (e.g. model building or theory development).

Thesis Draft

The student then submits a draft to the thesis committee chair in accordance with the ETD Format Guidelines Manual (described below). After approval by the committee chair the draft is presented to the thesis committee members.

Oral Defense

The final step in this process is the oral defense. This presentation is intended as a defense of the thesis project to the committee members, faculty and colleagues. The student will need to follow the “[Defense Instructions](#)” to reserve their room and create their announcement. The announcement will be emailed to the entire school and placed on the SHRS digital screens and on the Pitt Calendar SHRS Events Page.

Following the oral defense, the student will meet privately with the committee to address any outstanding questions or issues that may have arisen after the public presentation. At this time, the committee makes a recommendation regarding the approval of the thesis work. The thesis committee chair may reconvene the committee if necessary. The student is expected to prepare the final version of the thesis which should include any revisions that the committee has suggested and be in accordance with the ETD Format Guidelines (below).

Electronic Thesis and Dissertations (ETD) Approval form

All members of the thesis committee must sign off as approving the final thesis manuscript using the [Electronic Theses and Dissertations \(ETD\) Approval Form](#). This form should be approved and signed **based on the content and not the formatting of the ETD**. The thesis committee advisor/chair submits the grade, using the Satisfactory or No Credit (“S”/“NC”) option. With the unanimous approval of the committee, the student will be eligible to receive the MS degree.

Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Guidelines

A student that is completing a thesis will need to complete an ETD as part of the graduation requirements. Students must attend an in-person or virtual information session in their final semester. They will be notified by Courtney Fleck at courtney.fleck@pitt.edu, the administrator to the associate dean of Graduate Studies regarding the virtual information session. Other information on ETD deadlines can be found online: [Doctoral Dissertation & Master's Thesis | University of Pittsburgh School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences](#)

Additional information ETD deadlines for graduation can be found online: [Doctoral Defense & Master's Thesis](#).

Workshops and ETD support can be found through Pitt resources: <https://etd.pitt.edu/help>. Students are strongly encouraged to attend these training sessions as early as possible and before beginning to write the thesis online.

Completed (ETD) must be submitted in electronic format to D-Scholarship@Pitt. Students preparing a dissertation should visit the (ETD) website at <https://etd.pitt.edu/>. Fleck's role in the ETD process is to review your ETD to make sure that it meets the ETD format guidelines specified by the university. The student will upload the ETD through D-Scholarship for review, and Fleck will send the student and thesis advisor a detailed email on what items need to be corrected. After corrections are made the student will upload again to D-Scholarship and this review process will continue back and forth until Fleck has approved that all revisions have been made. All revisions and the ETD paperwork will have to be completed by the defense deadlines set by SHRS in the term the student is graduating to be certified for graduation. **There will be no exceptions to these deadlines.**

Deadlines are posted at least a term prior on the SHRS Website for [Doctoral Defense & Master's Thesis](#).

In some cases, the student is encouraged to publish the thesis and/or present it at a national or state professional meeting. If the thesis is published in a professional journal, it is recommended that the thesis committee chair be listed as co-author.

Non-Thesis Option

Many SHRS graduate programs provide a non-thesis option as an alternative to completing a thesis. The non-thesis option is program-specific and reflects the culminating assignment to demonstrate the student's mastery of their area of study. Some programs require the student to complete the non-thesis option while others may give the student the opportunity to choose between completing a thesis or the non-thesis option. Students should refer to their home program/department for specific information on the non-thesis option.

Scholarly Paper

As part of the non-thesis option for a Master of Science degree, some programs/departments may require a scholarly paper. A scholarly paper is of publishable quality in a focused area.

Examples of scholarly papers include but are not limited to: substantial reviews of the literature on a particular topic, development of health care policies, or development of evidence-based treatment procedures. Students who complete this option must register for HRS 2926 Scholarly Paper for 1-6 credits depending on the requirements of their plan of study.

Identification of the mentor and second reviewer for the scholarly paper. A student who plans on writing a scholarly paper will work with the program faculty to identify an appropriate topic, and to identify a mentor and a second reviewer for the paper. The mentor may be a full-time, adjunct or clinical faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh or another

individual with expertise on the topic if approved by program faculty. Either the mentor or the second reviewer must have an SHRS faculty appointment.

Format. Departments may have established formats to which the student must adhere. Guidelines for submission of articles to a professional peer reviewed journal may also be used as a format. The general format for the paper should be agreed upon prior to registration for HRS 2926. Any proposed research in support of the scholarly paper involving human subjects will need to be approved in advance by the University IRB.

The faculty mentor will work with the student to ensure appropriate content, style and format for the paper are followed. An oral presentation of the final paper may be included as part of the requirements. The final paper must include the *Scholarly Paper Cover Sheet*.

Grades. The mentor and second reviewer will read the scholarly paper, assign a grade using the honors/satisfactory/unsatisfactory (“H”/”S”/”U”) grading option, and when the final paper is approved will sign the *Scholarly Paper Cover Sheet*. The student must receive an “H” or “S” to receive credit for the scholarly paper. The student must submit a copy of the signed *Scholarly Paper Cover Sheet* to SHRS Student Services.

Scholarly Paper Cover Sheet

TITLE

By

STUDENT NAME

This scholarly paper has been approved by:

Mentor

Second Reviewer

Internships and Clinical Education

Most graduate programs in SHRS incorporate internships and clinical education experiences. Students should contact their departments regarding internship experiences and clinical education experiences and procedures.

Independent Study

Many graduate programs in SHRS permit students to register for independent studies. These courses provide an opportunity for the student to complete an intense, self-designed project with faculty supervision in an area of special interest. Students should contact their departments regarding internship experiences procedures.

Miscellaneous Information

Lost and Found

The lost and found area for SHRS is in the Center for Academic Advising and Student Success Office, 4044 in Forbes Tower. If you are in another SHRS building, please check with your department administrator.

Change of Name/Address/Social Security

Students are required to keep their contact information up to date with SHRS. Students have the ability to change their addresses or telephone numbers via the Student Services page. More information on changing Personal Information can be found on <https://www.registrar.pitt.edu/students/personal-information>.

Graduate and Professional Student Association

The SHRS Dean's Student Advisory Board (SAB) is a member of the **Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG)** of the University of Pittsburgh. All full- time and part-time graduate students of SHRS who have active status, as defined by the school, and who are in good standing, as defined by the university, are members of the SHRS GPSG. Further information on becoming active in this organization can be obtained by sending an email to: shrssab@groups.pitt.edu.

Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG)

A Graduate & Professional Student Government Organization - The Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) is the student government for all graduate and professional students at the University of Pittsburgh. The GPSG administers half of the graduate student activity fee to provide [services](#) and [event programming](#) to all graduate and professional students.

GPSG connects students to Pitt administrators through graduate student [representation on many University committees](#). Please feel free to contact the GPSG with any issues or concerns.

Graduate and professional students can also get involved with the GPSG by attending monthly assembly meetings or visiting the GPSG office in William Pitt Union. Please see the calendar for times and locations.

GPSG connects students to Pitt administrators through graduate student representation on many university committees. Please feel free to contact the GPSG with any issues or concerns.

Website: <https://www.pittgpsg.com/>

Office location: 825 William Pitt Union, Email: gpsg@pitt.edu

SHRS Student Organizations

The School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences has student organizations for graduate students. Visit <https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student-life/student-groups> for more information.

Disability Resources and Services

Disability is an aspect of diversity. Pitt's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion offers Disability Resources and Services (DRS) and will assist and determine reasonable accommodations and services for students. At the University of Pittsburgh, we are committed to providing equal opportunities in higher education to academically qualified students with disabilities.

Students with disabilities are integrated as completely as possible into the university experience. DRS shares with each student the responsibility for creating equal access toward achievement of a student's academic goals. Through an interactive process, they will work individually with each student to provide access to university classes, programs and activities. Please contact DRS to discuss any individual needs.

Contact information for the Office of Disability Resources:

[The Office of Disability Resources and Services \(DRS\)](#)

(412) 648-7890 or diversity@pitt.edu

Students with disabilities who require special testing, accommodations or other classroom instruction modifications should notify their department chair, instructor and DRS no later than the fourth week of the term. Students may be asked to provide documentation of their disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations.

Veterans Benefits

Veterans and dependents of disabled or deceased veterans may be eligible for benefits according to federal administration guidelines. The Office of Veterans Services is located on at 1440 Wesley W. Posvar Hall, 230 South Bouquet St., Pittsburgh, PA 15260, 412-624-3213, veterans@pitt.edu or visit online: <http://www.veterans.pitt.edu/>

For additional information on Veterans Education Benefits, visit www.gibill.va.gov.

International Students

All international students should refer to Pitt's Office of International Services (OIS) website at <http://www.ois.pitt.edu> for detailed information on admissions, orientation, immigration, visas, and life in Pittsburgh.

PITT/SHRS Technology Resources

Please reference the <https://www.technology.pitt.edu/it-resources-pitt-student> page for more information.

SHRS Computing Labs

Learning Resource Center 4011 Forbes Tower (Only Open to SHRS Students)

Hours: <https://www.shrs.pitt.edu/student-life/forbes-tower-hours>

Students may use the computers in the **Learning Resource Center**, as the 6th floor computer classroom is reserved for class. Accessible computers are to be vacated as precedence is given to users who require the specific features of these stations. Charging stations are also available throughout the LRC.

The Anthony and Filomena Pascasio Learning Resource Center (LRC) is a student-centered area dedicated in 1996 by Anne Pascasio, PhD, the founding dean of SHRS. The Learning Resource Center (Forbes Tower, room 4011) contains additional public computers, a quiet study area and Student Print Stations ([Pitt Print Stations \(Pharos\) | University of Pittsburgh](#)) A Print Station is also available in the fourth floor Student Lounge Area in Forbes Tower.

All SHRS classrooms and conference rooms include a computer, laptop hookup, room display and network access. Please ensure you turn OFF the data projectors to prolong lamp life.

Reserving Classrooms and Conference Rooms

Classroom/conference room reservations can only be made online by SHRS faculty and staff. All rooms in Forbes Tower must be reserved via the online system.

Keep our Classrooms Clean and Orderly

- Please do your part to keep our classrooms clean and orderly.
- There is to be NO FOOD or DRINK in any of the classrooms.
- Please return the chairs to their original positions at the end of class.
- Do not under any circumstances move chairs from one classroom to another.

Accessibility

- Accessible computer workstations are available in the Learning Resource Center in 4011 Forbes Tower and the Computer Classroom in 6048 Forbes Tower.
- Accessible instructor stations are available in all classrooms.
- Low vision computer stations are available in the Learning Resource Center.