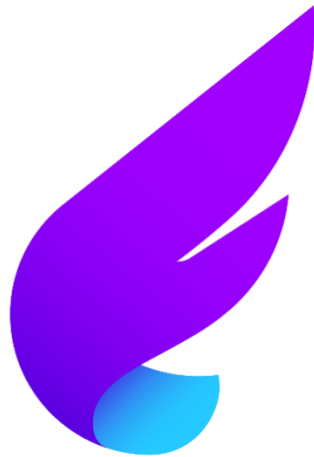


Fontbonne University

Policy Manual Volume VI

Academic Policies



2024

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Volume VI

ACADEMIC POLICIES

6.0 INTRODUCTION

Policy Manual Volume VI has historically contained a compendium of academic policies. In response to student requests and regulator and accreditor requirements, over time, the University Catalog has become the *de facto* repository of many of these policies. In an attempt to house these policies in one place, the 2022 edition of Volume VI served as a transitional manual. Policies of direct relevance to students, including grading standards and requirements, admission requirements, and other academic policies appear in the catalog, and a reference to the relevant sections appears in this volume. Academic policies that are not primarily directed at students will be retained in this volume, such as the policies on textbooks. The 2023 edition removed cross-references to the catalog.

Students have full responsibility for:

- Fully informing themselves of and being responsible for all academic policies, procedures, regulations and requirements, such as general education, major, minor, concentration, certification and graduation requirements.
- Knowing with clarity their progress in their academic program by thoroughly reviewing their degree audit and by regularly scheduling meetings with their academic advisor.
- Fulfilling the general education, major program and graduation requirements identified in the catalog in effect at the time of the student's matriculation at Fontbonne, or at the time of a change of major if so determined by the academic advisor.

General academic regulations regarding students are explained in the catalog as well as in this Volume VI. Faculty and students must keep themselves familiar with the Fontbonne University Catalog and Volume VI of the Policy Manual. Please refer to the catalog or the policies in this Volume VI of the Policy Manual for information on the following:

1. Admission Policies
2. Auditing a Course
3. Classification of Students
4. Tuition Discounts
5. Non-Traditional University Credit
6. Information on Grades

6.1 GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES

6.1.1 Academic Vision Statement

Fontbonne University promotes informed and discerning practice in scholarship, the arts, the professions, and service. By combining a pursuit of academic excellence with an evolving awareness of the world's needs, the Fontbonne community seeks to strengthen the relationship between the educated person and a diverse society. In concert with an emphasis on teaching and learning, the university promotes vital engagement between intellectual endeavor and social responsibility, giving meaning to information and insight to inquiry. In an open, caring, and challenging environment, students and teachers integrate knowledge from the liberal arts and professional programs, developing the understanding and skills central to a thoughtful and committed life.

6.1.2 Academic Calendar

The calendar for regular academic events for each academic year is published by the Office of Academic Affairs each semester and is available on the university website.

6.1.2.1 APPEALS PROCESS IN ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

A student may petition the Appeals Committee for a hearing relative to academic matters. The committee, made up of an equal number of elected faculty and students, offers a fair hearing to students.

For a semester grade appeal, a student must enter into the appeal process in writing within the first three full calendar weeks of the following fall or spring semester. The student is expected to attempt to resolve the issue through informal procedures before entering into the formal process. Established procedures and timelines must be followed.

Information regarding the procedures for an appeal of an academic nature is available from the Office of Academic Affairs. Information on the appeals process and procedures is also found in Section 6.1.13.6 and Section 1.6.4.4.1.

Appeals are not heard in the summer session.

6.1.2.2 GRADE CHANGE/APPEAL

If a dispute about a grade cannot be resolved informally between/among the student, the faculty member, the department chairperson and the Provost, the student may enter into the formal appeal process. (See Appeals Process in Academic Affairs, 6.1.10.1 and Section 1.6.4.4.1.)

The student must appeal in writing to the chairperson of the Appeals Committee within the first thirty calendar days of the following fall or spring semester. The procedures and timeline of the appeal process, obtained from the Office of Academic Affairs, must be followed.

6.1.2.3 POSTING OF STUDENT GRADES

The public posting of grades either by the student's name, student ID number, or social security number without the student's written permission is in violation of FERPA.

Instructors and others who post grades should use a system that ensures FERPA requirements are met. This can be accomplished either by obtaining the student's un-coerced written permission to do so or by using code words or randomly assigned numbers that only the instructor and individual student know. The order of posting should not be alphabetic.

Another method used to notify students of their final or other grades by faculty before official institutional notification is to have interested students complete postcards with their names and mailing addresses on the address side and the course name/number on the message side. The completed postcard is given to the instructor who writes the student's grade on the message side and mails it to the student when grades have been determined.

The returning of papers via an "open" distribution system, e.g. stacking them on an open table or placing them in a community mailbox, is a violation of a student's right to privacy under FERPA, unless student(s) submit(s) (a) signed waiver(s) to instructor for such purpose.

6.2 ACADEMIC PLANNING AND REVIEW

The goal of academic planning and review is to affect the long-term future of the program, as described below. Given the university's closure in August 2025, long-term academic planning is no longer warranted, so department review and program review is suspended for the 2024-25 academic year. The original policy is retained below for clarity.

To achieve and maintain Fontbonne University's commitment to academic and educational excellence, all departments and programs participate in regular review and evaluation. Departmental chairpersons produce annual departmental reviews as described below, which are reviewed by college deans and the Provost. Every fifth year, programs undertake a cumulative self-study and strategic plan revision as described below. This program review process involves all full-time faculty in the program in consultation with the appropriate dean or administrator and provides a thorough and diagnostic evaluation of the overall health and future of the program. The final outcome of each program review is a revised strategic plan with short- and long-term goals, approved by academic administration through a collaborative process.

Annual Department Review

Annual department reviews provide analyses of program needs, progress and future plans for the purpose of ongoing improvement. Each fall, department chairpersons undertake annual departmental reviews that include the following: (1) an update on strategic planning goals, (2) an update on progress and changes to academic programs, (3) the departmental learning outcomes assessment report, (4) data regarding departmental performance and accomplishments, and (5) an update on goals and objectives from the preceding year. Deans review these reports with the department chairperson and with the Provost and provide feedback to the department.

Program Review

The fifth-year program review is a comprehensive and summative evaluation, including progress toward strategic planning goals, present strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and specific short- and long-term goals. The review consists of four elements: (1) a self-study, (2) an external consultant's report, (3) an action plan focusing on specific outcomes for the next one to two years, and (4) a revised 5-year strategic plan. Self-studies require participation of the entire department/program and are

completed during the fall semester; external consultant visits and action plans are completed during the spring semester; and strategic plans are fully revised and approved early in the following fall semester.

6.3 COURSE SYLLABUS POLICIES

A syllabus or course outline for each course must be made out according to the suggested format which is available in the Office of Academic Affairs. These syllabi are to be kept up-to-date with semester revisions. Copies are to be submitted within the first two weeks of the semester in which the course is being taught.

Faculty members are expected to post the course syllabus to each student in each class in Canvas at the beginning of each course.

The course syllabus should include at least the following items:

Course information, including semester/year, course number and title, meetings, instructor contact information and availability.

1. A course description and/or objectives.
2. Required materials.
3. Course outcomes.
4. Course content, including outline of major topics and tentative schedule.
5. Instructional methods/student activities.
6. Requirements for the course such as assignments, term papers, and examinations.
7. A statement of policy on grading for the course which includes:
 - a. Those items that constitute the final grade.
 - b. How the calculation or determination of the final grade will be arrived at in this course.
8. A statement of attendance policy.
9. Withdrawal deadline.
10. A subject-to-change-clause and statement of student responsibility.
11. A statement about resources available to students with needs for basic resources.
12. A statement on academic integrity.
13. A statement of nondiscrimination.
14. A statement of accommodation of students with disabilities who are eligible for ADA accommodations.

6.4 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT POLICIES

6.4.1 Classes

Faculty members should be prompt in meeting and dismissing classes. When it is necessary to shorten or shift class periods, to change classrooms or to change class times, the proper authorization must be obtained from the Registrar. If a faculty member is unable to conduct his/her classes because of illness, transportation delays, or other emergencies, the faculty member shall notify the Registrar so that classes can be canceled. The faculty member shall also notify the departmental chairperson about the absence. If the departmental chairperson must be absent, he/she should notify the Provost about the absence. If possible the faculty member should also post these changes on the Canvas course page.

6.4.2 Textbooks

Faculty members are responsible for ordering textbooks through the University online bookstore. Order The online bookstore manager will notify faculty needing textbooks and set appropriate deadlines for ordering textbooks each term. Desk copies should be requested from the publishing company by the instructor.

6.4.3 Guidelines for Handling Disruptive Students

Fontbonne University students are expected to conduct themselves at all times with appropriate and respectful behavior and observe the policies of the University and the laws of the city, state, and national government.

All University community members—administrators, faculty, staff, employees, students—have the right and obligation to report violations of civil or University policies to the Dean of Students.

Should a member of the University community encounter a student who is not behaving in an appropriate and respectful manner, the student first shall be asked to stop the disruptive behavior. If the student fails to comply, the student will be asked politely, but firmly, to leave the classroom (or wherever the locus of the disruption). If the student refuses to comply, Public Safety shall be notified.

6.4.4 Student Complaints Regarding Faculty

6.4.4.1 INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

For informal verbal complaints, students should first discuss their concern with the faculty member in question. If no resolution is reached with the faculty member, the student should then schedule an appointment to see the departmental chairperson to whom the faculty member reports. If the faculty member in question is the departmental chairperson, the student should request an appointment with the appropriate chair or the Provost. The departmental chairperson or Provost will then present the issue to the faculty member and discuss it verbally. The student(s) will not be identified. Typically, a conversation can resolve the issue. If it is determined that the faculty member is not in violation of a University policy, the departmental chairperson or Provost will explain this to the student and no further action will be taken, nor will any notation regarding this incident be placed in the faculty member's file

housed in the Office of Academic Affairs. If it is determined that the faculty member is in violation of a University policy, the departmental chairperson or Provost will explain the policy to the faculty member.

6.4.4.2 FORMAL COMPLAINTS

For a formal written complaint, the procedure used is similar to that of a grade appeal. The student must present a signed letter addressing the concerns to the departmental chairperson of the faculty member involved. If the faculty member involved is the departmental chairperson, then the letter is submitted to the Provost. A copy of this letter is given to the instructor with the directive to respond to the issues in writing to the departmental chairperson or Provost within ten days. The departmental chairperson (or or Provost) reviews the issue with the faculty member, and a notation of his/her response, along with the student's written complaint, is put into the faculty member's file housed in the Office of Academic Affairs. If it is determined that the faculty member is not in violation of a University policy, the departmental chairperson (or Provost) will explain this to the student, remove the documentation from the faculty member's file, and no further action will be taken.

If it is determined that the faculty member is in violation of a policy, the departmental chairperson (or Provost) will explain the University policy to the faculty member and state that the violation of policy must not reoccur. A summary of the issue is placed in the faculty member's file. The faculty member may place a response to the complaint in his/her file. Serious violations may result in removing the faculty member from a class and replacing him/her with another faculty member. Further action may be taken by the Provost in consultation with the departmental chairperson and others as deemed appropriate.

In the event that a formal complaint concerns a violation of any state or federal law, the formal complaint will be presented to the Provost to determine the most effective manner in which it should be investigated.

In the event that an informal or formal complaint concerns allegations of unlawful harassment or discrimination, then the student should follow the reporting procedure contained in Section 2.1.2 of Volume II of the Policy Manual.

6.5 OTHER ACADEMIC POLICIES

6.5.1 Policy on the Assignment of Credit Hours

This policy describes the assignment of credit hours awarded to courses and programs and the procedures in place for appropriate awarding of institutional credit.

1. Fontbonne utilizes a semester calendar and awards semester credit hours to all forms of instruction at both the undergraduate and the graduate level. While instruction is normally scheduled in 15-week semesters, a variety of other formats are also available.
2. Regardless of the mode of instruction or the length of time (full-semester or shortened), all sections of a course are expected to be consistent in terms of learning outcomes, quality, and assessment procedures.

3. In accordance with federal guidelines and Higher Learning Commission standards, a credit hour is defined to be an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is the equivalent of:
 - a. On average, not less than 50 minutes of classroom, synchronous, or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for 15 weeks of a semester (2,250 minutes of direct instruction for a 3-credit hour course) or the equivalent amount of work in a shorter period of time, or
 - b. At least an equivalent amount of work as outlined in (a) for other academic activities that are awarded credit such as laboratory work, internships, practicums, and art studios. Academic experiences such as laboratory work may have more in-class required time than an equivalent lecture to compensate for work that cannot be completed out of class. This standard implies that students in an externship, for example, should complete at least 45 clock hours of activity, including preparation, planning, and follow-up.
4. Courses that do not have the required face-to-face or synchronous contact time, for example blended or asynchronous online courses, can demonstrate that they have met the credit hour standard by:
 - a. Covering the same material in the same depth as a face-to-face or synchronous version of the course, or
 - b. Being evaluated by the department or a peer-reviewer for content and rigor.
5. Credit hours for new courses are approved during the creation of a course. Therefore, monitoring for appropriate credit hours occurs by the faculty through the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or the Graduate Academic and Curriculum Committee and by the administration (through their representatives on these committees).
6. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for ensuring that all face-to-face and synchronous courses meet the standard above regardless of the length of the course.
7. The Director of eLearning is responsible for ensuring that all asynchronous online courses meet the standard above.
8. Department chairs will periodically review syllabi for compliance with the standards above.

6.5.2 Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty by Professional Equivalency or Tested Experience

Qualified faculty members are identified primarily by credentials, but other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience, may be considered by the institution in determining whether a faculty member is qualified. In some circumstances experience may substitute for an earned credential or portions thereof provided that the faculty member is qualified based on experience that the institution determines is equivalent to the degree it would otherwise require for a faculty position. This experience should be *tested experience* in that it includes a breadth and depth of

experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching.

Requirements for Equivalency

1. Undergraduate Courses: All persons serving as instructor of record who do not hold at least an earned master's degree in the discipline or subfield in which they teach, or who hold a master's degree or higher in a different discipline but have not completed at least 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach, must hold a bachelor's degree in the discipline or subfield in which they teach and at least one of the following:
 - a. Five years of tested experience relevant to defined course outcomes.
 - b. Additional professional credentials (i.e., licensure or certification in a relevant area) and a minimum of two years of tested experience relevant to defined course outcomes.
 - c. A record of research, scholarship or professional achievement in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.
 - d. More than 50% of the credit hours toward a master's degree in the discipline or subfield, and a minimum of two years of tested experience relevant to defined course outcomes.
 - e. Faculty member meets guidelines of external accrediting body to teach in the discipline or subfield. (i.e., Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation),
Council on Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Council on the Education of the Deaf, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Commission for the Council for Social Work Education, Accreditation Council for Business Schools & Programs)
2. Graduate Courses: All persons serving as instructor of record who do not hold an earned doctorate or terminal degree in the discipline or subfield in which they teach must hold an earned doctorate or terminal degree from a different discipline OR a master's degree in the discipline or subfield in which they teach, AND at least one of the following:
 - a. Five years of tested experience relevant to defined course outcomes.
 - b. A record of research, scholarship or professional achievement in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.
 - c. Additional professional credentials (i.e., licensure or certification in a relevant area) and a minimum of two years of tested experience relevant to defined course outcomes.
 - d. More than 50% of the credit toward a doctorate or terminal degree in the discipline or subfield in which they teach and a minimum of two years of tested experience relevant to defined course outcomes.

Faculty member meets guidelines of external accrediting body to teach in the discipline or subfield. (i.e., Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation, Council on Academic Accreditation of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Council on the Education of the Deaf, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Commission for the Council for Social Work Education, Accreditation Council for Business Schools & Programs)

Procedure for Determining Hiring Eligibility Based on Professional Equivalency and/or Tested Experience

1. The applying instructor shall provide to the department chair a resume or curriculum vitae, original transcripts, and other materials to document meeting the criteria defined above.
2. The department chair will evaluate the materials and submit them to the Provost with a completed Faculty Qualifications Form, indicating the chair's recommendation regarding whether to hire the instructor.
3. Once approved, the documentation and record of the decision to hire shall be kept on file in the Office of Academic Affairs.

6.6 PROCEDURES FOR REVISION OF VOLUME VI

Proposals for revising those sections of Volume VI that come under the purview of FGA should be submitted to the committee appropriately concerned with the policy or procedure to be revised. Where there is doubt as to which committee should be given a proposed change, the committee on Faculty Affairs, as the executive committee of the FGA, should decide the matter. Proposals for changes should be submitted on the form for motions for committee consideration, available in the Office of Academic Affairs.

Should a matter of great urgency arise and require action during a time when a committee cannot readily be convened, the President of the University or the appropriate Vice-President should consult with the chairperson of Faculty Affairs, if possible, to determine what action should be taken. Such matters should then be presented to the proper committee at its next meeting.

All changes to Volume VI over which the FGA has decision-making responsibilities will be incorporated into the document at the end of the spring semester of the academic year by the Office of Academic Affairs. This does not limit the implementation of policies or procedures as they are approved, or the inclusion of addenda and errata. Changes will be appended to the end of the manual until the end of the spring semester, at which time the changes will be incorporated into the manual.