

Master's student academic standing guide

This document covers policies regarding academic performance of master's students that are specific to the Department of Biostatistics. Students also must satisfy the academic standing requirements of the University and Bloomberg School of Public Health. Master's students are expected to maintain a grade point average of no less than 2.75 throughout their studies, to meet the minimum grade threshold of a C in required courses, and to complete academic requirements within established deadlines.

Departmental master's comprehensive exam

The Departmental master's exam is taken at the end of the first year of study (typically in early June). The Departmental master's exam is administered only once a year.

The grading of the Departmental exam is as follows. Passing scores are determined by exam writers after grading with examiners blinded from student names. Students who pass all sections of the exam pass the exam. Students failing one or more sections will be discussed by the faculty as a whole. This discussion will include exam and course performance in the first year. Possible resolutions include: declaring the student as passing the exam, declaring the student as having failed the exam, take-home remediation of sections of the exam or a full retake (only available if it is the student's first attempt at the exam).

In the event of a retake of the exam, students are allowed one retake. Student retakes typically occur in the following year, with exceptions occurring when mitigating circumstances are present, such as a leave of absence. In the event of a failure in the retake, the student will be asked to leave their master's program or switch to another program (for example from ScM to MHS).

Students who fail the exam are not eligible to receive the 75% tuition reduction for their second year of study. Failing the exam typically results in at least one extra academic year without the tuition reduction.

Often students who will not receive the 75% tuition reduction in their second year consider switching to part time status. Such a switch must be discussed and approved with the graduate committee. Further, it should be noted that part-time status is often not an option for foreign students due to visa issues and residency requirements.