

# The LAS Insider

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Special Edition— Probation

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## Getting the News

How are you reacting to the news that you are on academic probation? When you opened the letter were you shocked by the news, disappointed, or did you shrug it off? Some students quickly dismiss their probationary status, thinking that it is not a problem and that things will be different next semester.



perhaps they blame the instructor or the structure of the class.

You may have started out with one of these reactions, but don't get stuck in it. Denying the seriousness of the situation, going into shock or going over and

over your reaction will not help you get anywhere.

Others are surprised by the news and wonder how this could happen to them when they earned A's and B's previously. Frustration or anger may be another reaction—perhaps they feel there is nothing that they can do and no one can help or

Instead consider the news about probation as a red flag—something is not going well. Face the news and consider your options. Then put your energy into getting off of probation so you can get where you want to go.

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## Breaking Some Assumptions

- Once you have graduated from high school, you are an adult. It is your responsibility to take care of problems that arise. That does not mean that you shouldn't ask for help. Make sure you are familiar with campus resources and use your support network.
- Academic probation does not mean failure. If you are smart enough to get into college, you can graduate. Probation means that you are not currently meeting UIC's academic standards. It is a signal that changes need to be made.
- Failure is not inevitable when learning conditions are less than ideal. How much you learn and how well you do in higher education depends on you, your choices and your reactions to your learning environment. You can experiment with different strategies for learning and seek additional assistance to help overcome any obstacles.



# Academic Probation Requirements

We are setting the stage for change by letting you know that your academic situation is in jeopardy and setting certain criteria you must meet in order to continue at UIC.

**New Freshmen and Transfers:** Being a new UIC student on probation, could be a sign that you are having difficulties adjusting to UIC. The transition to UIC can be a big adjustment for many students—adjusting to a bigger school, more personal responsibility, and different academic expectations. New students can often be unaware of available campus resources or so overwhelmed that they don't know where to start to get help. This is one of the reasons we require new students to complete the online academic workshop found at [www.las.uic.edu/info/workshop](http://www.las.uic.edu/info/workshop). We also require new students to meet with an LAS advisor to review the workshop responses and to develop a plan to make sure you have a better second semester at UIC.

**Continuing students:** You have been at UIC for more than one semester, so we assume that you are familiar with UIC policies and campus resources. If this is not the case, please review the online academic workshop. We would still like to encourage you to come in and see an advisor – we don't know how to help you if you don't come in to let us know what is going on in your life. Some continuing students are required to see an advisor as an additional condition of probation—see article below for more information.

## **Grade Point Average (GPA) requirements:**

- You must earn a minimum of a 2.0 term GPA to be continued on probation for a second semester.
- You must be in good standing— have an overall UIC GPA of 2.0—by the end of your second semester on probation.
- If your overall UIC GPA is already above a 2.0 that means you are on term probation—when your semester GPA is below a 2.0. If that is the case then you must earn a minimum of a 2.0 GPA in the next term to be back in good standing.

Failure to meet these conditions can result in dismissal from UIC. We do not automatically dismiss a student for not meeting their probation requirements. Everyone's situation is different so we review everyone's files before making an academic review decision. So please keep in touch with an advisor especially if there are extenuating circumstances.

## Additional Conditions of Probation

During academic review, we spend a lot of time reviewing students' academic records. As we go through these records, we may decide that additional conditions need to be set for a student. If this occurs we attach a sheet to the probation letter indicating additional conditions of probation that must be met in order to maintain continuing student status. Failure to meet these conditions can result in dismissal from UIC.

Examples of conditions set in the past:



- To meet with a pre-health advisor.
- To stop taking certain type of classes.
- To come in to see an advisor to discuss issues with your major.
- To meet with an advisor to develop an academic contract and set a specific GPA requirement.

The conditions that require you to come in for an advising appointment will have specific deadlines. It is important that you meet these deadlines. If you can't make the deadline because of extenuating circumstances please contact an advisor.

# Accepting Personal Responsibility

**Don't Make Excuses**— “The professor is boring” **Instead seek solutions**— “I find this professor boring, so I'm going to tape-record his lectures. That way I can listen to them a little bit at a time.”

**Don't Blame**— “The professor gave me an F on the first test.” **Instead accept responsibility**— “I got an F on the first test because I didn't read the assignments.”

**Don't Complain**— “It's a stupid requirement.” **Instead take action**— “I'm going to find out if there's an alternative class I can take.”

**Don't repeat ineffective behavior**— “Going to the support lab is no help. It's noisy in there every afternoon.” **Instead try something new**— “I'm going to visit the support lab when it first opens in the morning; I'll bet there's no crowd that early.”

**Don't think you “have to” do things**— “I shouldn't have to take this course.” **Instead “choose to” do things**— “I choose to take this course because it's required for my degree, and my degree will qualify me for the kind of work I've always wanted to do.”

**Don't pretend your problems belong to others** (They say “you” when they mean “I.”)— “How are you supposed to stay awake.” **Instead own your problem**— “I find myself falling asleep when I listen to his lectures.”

**Don't “try”** - “I try to study, but my housemate is no help.” **Instead commit and follow through**— “I'll study for two hours tonight; I'll tell my roommate not to bother me until I'm finished.”

**Most of all, don't give up**— “There's nothing I can do.” “I've always been that way.” “I can't...” “I have to...” “I should...” “I quit.”

**Instead take control of your choices and your life**— “There's always something I can do.” “I can choose to be different.” “I can...” “I choose to...” “I will...” “I'll keep going.”

*“Every time your back is against the wall, there is only one person that can help. And that's you. It has to come from inside.”*

*- Pat Riley, Professional Basketball Coach*

## Academic Workshop

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences offers an on-line workshop for college students who seek guidelines to improve their academic performance. All LAS undergraduates are invited to take advantage of the on-line academic workshop regardless of academic standing.

**The workshop is found on-line at [www.las.uic.edu/info/workshop](http://www.las.uic.edu/info/workshop).**

Probationary students are often required to complete the on-line academic workshop AND meet with a college Academic Advisor. Students who fall into this category are generally informed by letter and are not allowed to register for courses until the academic workshop and advising conference requirements are fulfilled. College Deans and Advisors may require that the same or similar condition be met by other students when conditions of academic performance warrant.

The academic workshop includes an academic self-assessment to help students identify academic skills that can be improved. It includes information on academic policies and rules pertaining to academic standing, academic deficit and GPA calculation, academic skills and goal setting, and campus resources.

**College of Liberal Arts and Sciences,  
University of Illinois at Chicago**

LAS Academic Advising Center  
3rd floor of University Hall  
Phone: 312-996-3366  
Hours: 8:30 – 4:45

Appointments:  
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday  
Walk-ins: Tuesday 8:30–11:30, 1–3:30

Comments or  
Questions About Submitting an Article:  
Contact Melinda Finkle at [mfinkle@uic.edu](mailto:mfinkle@uic.edu)

**We're on the Web!**

[www.las.uic.edu](http://www.las.uic.edu)

## Tutoring Information

**Honors College** <http://www.hc.uic.edu/tutoring/tutorintro.htm>

**Mathematical Sciences Learning Center**

<http://www.math.uic.edu/undergrad/mslc/index.html>

**Science Learning Center** <http://www.chem.uic.edu/slc/>

**Writing Center** <http://www.uic.edu/depts/engl/writing/index.html>

**Individual Academic Departments**

**Individual Support Programs—AAAN, ACE, LARES, NASP**

## Picking Courses With an Eye for Grades



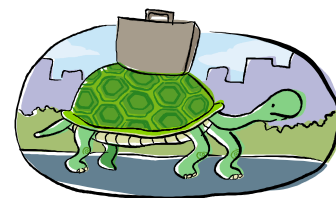
Your goal this semester is to earn as many A's, B's and C's as you can. That means making sure that you are in appropriate classes and in ones that you know you can do well in.

**Some students try to pick the “easy” classes. This is a short term solution,** but does not as a long term plan for getting good grades in college. Choosing a course based on its easy reputation can also come back to bite you. Sometimes you'll be the victim of misinformation. What one student considers an easy class can be another student's nightmare.

**You certainly shouldn't take courses in which you are over your head from the get-go. Make sure the class you registered for is at the right level.** Example – If you are not a science major or pre-health student then you probably shouldn't be taking Bios 100. Instead, you should consider taking science classes designed for the non-science major. **Also check to make sure that you have the pre-requisite for the course.** Colleges impose pre-requisites for courses that need significant background. It is not uncommon though to find courses that should have pre-requisites but don't. If you are not 100% sure which course best fits your needs or background, ask an advisor or a professor. The computer only checks pre-requisites for a few courses—**it is your responsibility to make sure that you have the right background.**

**You have many choices and options for classes—so pick ones that interest you.** Enjoyment is good in and of itself, but it also can motivate you to engage with the material and get good grades. You may even have one of those “aha” moments of self-discovery and find a new passion and career path.

**Do not max out your credit!** You only need to have 12 hours to be considered a full time student and 15 hours is a normal course load. There shouldn't be a rush to get out of school as quickly as possible— find the pace that works for you. Don't be fooled by the workload at the beginning of the semester—everything is usually fine for the first few weeks and then all of a sudden things will get busy. Take a lighter load, plan ahead so you can get an early start on projects, and keep an eye on how you are doing in your classes. If things are too much, you can drop a class through February 23rd. It is worth spending a little more time in college and coming out with a higher GPA.



**Slow down and take your time!**