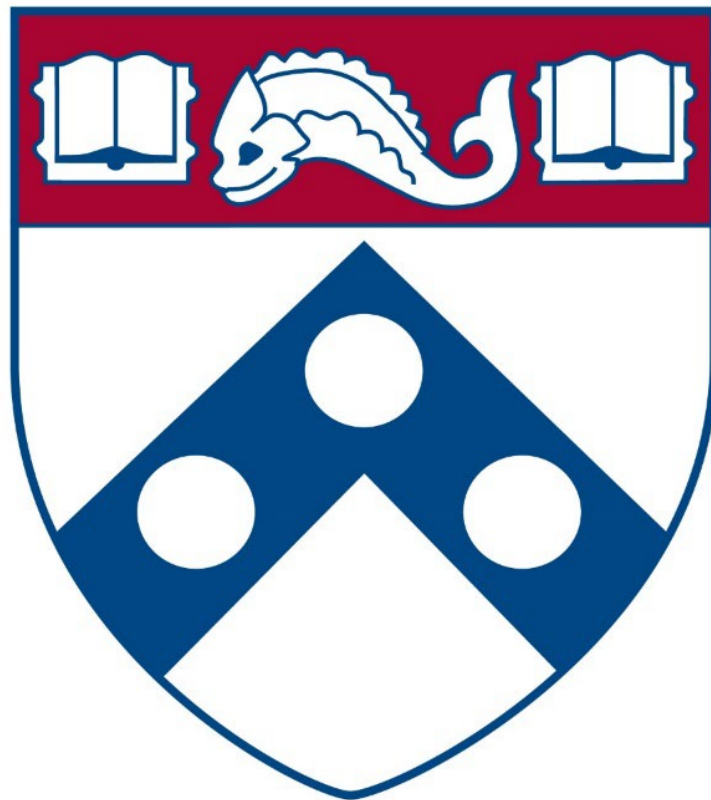


Penn LPS Online

Certificate and General Coursetaker Student Handbook



Academic Year: 2024 - 2025

GENERAL INFORMATION	3
PENN LPS ONLINE OFFICE AND CONTACT INFORMATION	3
PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK	3
ACADEMIC ADVISING APPOINTMENTS	3
CURRICULUM	3
COURSE TAKERS	4
CERTIFICATE STUDENTS.....	4
PENN LPS ONLINE ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND DEADLINES	4
COURSE SELECTION AND REGISTRATION	4
ADVANCE REGISTRATION.....	4
REGISTRATION ADD / DROP.....	4
ADDING A COURSE.....	5
PERMITS	5
DROPPING A COURSE	5
LATE DROP.....	5
WITHDRAWING FROM A COURSE	5
REGISTRATION HOLDS	6
TUITION, FEES AND BILLING	6
TUITION.....	6
ONLINE GENERAL FEE.....	6
PAYMENT PROCESS AND BILLING SCHEDULE.....	6
LATE PAYMENT	6
PENN FACULTY/STAFF TUITION BENEFITS.....	6
ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	7
ENROLLMENT STATUS.....	7
COURSE LOAD.....	7
PROGRAM DEFERRALS	7
INACTIVE STATUS.....	7
TRANSFER CREDIT	8
SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS	8
CERTIFICATE COMPLETION.....	8
POLICIES GOVERNING GRADES	8
POLICIES GOVERNING ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY	10
GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	11
STUDENT SERVICES.....	12

General Information

Penn LPS Online Office and Contact Information

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www.sas.upenn.edu/lps/online

Student Records and Billing: 215-746-7040

Purpose of the handbook

Penn LPS Online has produced this handbook to provide a useful source of information to orient you to the University of Pennsylvania and assist in planning your program of study. Students are required to read the handbook; it contains rules and regulations, procedures, options, curriculum requirements, resources at Penn, and other pertinent information. Read the entire handbook before you begin classes. Continue to reference the handbook frequently during your career at Penn to remain aware of your obligations as well as to investigate the many support services and academic opportunities available to you. Students are responsible for adhering to all Penn LPS Online policies, procedures, and academic deadlines, and for consulting with advisors on a regular basis in order to optimize their academic experience. Please check the Penn LPS Online website periodically for updates.

Academic Advising Appointments

Penn LPS Online students may avail themselves of advising services. The advice and counsel of advising staff can be for assistance in the selection and registration of courses; for aid in identifying student resources; and for assistance with academic standing questions and problems. Students may find the name and contact information of their assigned academic advisor by logging into the [Path@Penn system](#) and selecting “View my student profile”.

Students will periodically be required to schedule synchronous Zoom sessions (using their camera and microphone) with their advisor and / or other staff members to fulfil academic requirements for their program. Failure to comply will impact your enrollment status.

Academic advising is available by appointment. Appointments are available for telephone and virtual meetings.

Curriculum

Two Enrollment Options: Courses and Certificates

Course Takers

Penn LPS Online students can enjoy the benefits of enrolling in individual courses. Students are welcome to take Penn LPS Online courses without being enrolled in a certificate program. All students can combine individual courses to suit their needs and develop critical competencies through personal and professional application of coursework.

If a student is enrolled as a course taker and wants to switch to a certificate program, they should email lbs@sas.upenn.edu to request to update their program. All Penn LPS Online courses are open to coursetaker students. Courses outside of the Penn LPS Online offerings are not available.

Certificate Students

Penn LPS Online students can earn credit certificates to enhance their personal or professional skills, whether for career advancement, job transition or the pursuit of additional learning. A current listing of [certificate offerings](#), including course lists and how to complete each certificate is available on the Penn LPS Online website. All Penn LPS Online courses are open to certificate students. Courses outside of the Penn LPS Online offerings are not available.

Penn LPS Online Academic Calendar and Deadlines

You can view the Penn LPS Online Academic Calendar, complete with registration deadlines, on the [Penn LPS Online website](#). Please be advised that dates and deadlines differ from those on the LPS Academic Calendar, as well as in other Penn Schools and University Registrar's Three-Year Academic Calendar.

Course Selection and Registration

Students may register for courses through [Path@Penn](#), the University's online registration system; LPS staff can provide assistance or answer questions. Complete registration instructions are available online. Registering through Path@Penn requires the use of a personal computer and access to the web. In order to access the system, students must have a [PennKey](#)—a username plus password.

Advance Registration

The course registration process involves two registration periods. The first is [Advance Registration](#), when students enter their requests for courses they wish to take. At the end of Advance Registration, a scheduling program processes all registration requests at the same time to determine who gets enrolled in the requested courses. Students may advance register during a two-week period starting in late March for the following fall term and during a two-week period in early November for the following spring term. There is no Advance Registration for summer, but students may register for summer courses at the same time that they advance register for the fall.

Registration add / drop

The Registration and Add/Drop period opens approximately three weeks after the Advance Registration request period has closed and students have been notified of their schedules. During this period, students who participated in Advanced Registration who wish to make changes to their schedules may Add/Drop as they wish through their Path@Penn accounts. Students will know immediately what changes have been processed. Please consult the [Penn LPS Online academic calendar](#) for a complete listing of dates for each term.

Adding a Course

Students may add a new course via Path@Penn.

When making registration changes via Path@Penn, students should always verify their schedule to make sure the changes have taken effect before logging out. Students can confirm their registration two ways:

- When you go to “Add/Drop/Swap classes” in [Path@Penn](#) and click on “Primary Cart” you will see your selected courses in the cart. Courses with a black check mark on the lower left-hand side are classes you are registered for.
- In addition, if you go to “My Profile” > “View my student profile” in Path@Penn you will be able to confirm your registration on the bottom right hand side of the page in the “Registered courses” section.

Permits

The courses that require special permission are indicated in Path@Penn (some DATA courses, for instance, require a permit). Students can request permits while in the registration system. A permit is not a registration. Students must “claim” the permit by registering for the course through Path@Penn. A permit reserves a seat in the course; an authorization allows you to enroll if a seat is available. After both Advance Registration and Registration Drop/Request periods have ended, the Registrar's Office removes unclaimed permits from students' records.

Dropping a Course

Students may drop a course with no financial obligation until the published deadline in the current Penn LPS Online Academic Calendar. Students can officially drop classes through Path@Penn.

Absence from class does not constitute a drop, nor does notifying the instructor or another university office. Students who fail to drop a course officially within published deadlines may receive a grade of F and are financially responsible for the tuition.

When making registration changes via Path@Penn, students should always verify their schedule to make sure the changes have taken effect before logging out.

Late Drop

Students who missed the deadline to drop with 100% financial obligation can late drop a course in Path@Penn but in so doing they will incur a 50% financial obligation for the tuition and fees for the dropped course. Please check the academic calendar to see when the late drop deadline takes place.

Withdrawing from a Course

Students wanting to discontinue a course after the Late Drop period has ended will need to withdraw from the course (until the published withdraw period deadline). To withdraw, students must submit a [Withdrawal Form](#). Students must complete the form by the end of the day on the last day of the withdrawal period.

While it is not a requirement, students are encouraged to see their academic advisor to discuss their withdrawal and overall academic progress.

Students who withdraw from a course have full financial obligation.

Withdrawals may affect students' academic standing. Students are encouraged to consult their advisor to discuss their withdrawal and overall academic progress. Students are responsible for investigating how a withdrawal may affect their eligibility with any other offices outside of Penn LPS Online.

Registration Holds

A registration hold may be placed on a student's record that will prevent the student from registering until action has been taken to resolve the issue. If students are unable to register using Path@Penn, it is their responsibility to contact their advisor or other relevant office promptly to determine the cause of the problem and resolve it in a timely manner. Students may see what registration holds, if any, have been placed on their account by reading the messages on the front page of Path@Penn. Students on an academic, financial, or disciplinary hold must have their hold cleared and must register officially by the end of the add period in order to register for a class.

Tuition, fees and billing

Tuition

Tuition is the cost of instruction. The current tuition rates for Penn LPS Online courses can be found on the [Penn LPS Online website](#).

Online General Fee

The online student general fee supports the specific activities, services, and virtual spaces that Penn Online students can access from a distance.

Payment Process and Billing Schedule

Information on how to pay your bill can be found on the Student Financial Services website: <https://srfs.upenn.edu/billing-payment/pennpay>. Details about Paying Your Bill and Payment Options, including the Penn Monthly Budget Plan, can be found in the ['Billing and Payment' section](#) of the Student Financial Services website. You can also view the Billing Schedule for the current academic year on the [Student Financial Services website](#).

Late Payment

Penn must receive the amount due in full on, or before, the due date. If full payment is not received by this date, a late payment penalty of 1.5% of the past due amount per month will be assessed, and future registration and continuing enrollment will be jeopardized.

Penn Faculty/Staff Tuition Benefits

Penn LPS Online and Student Financial Services do not administer tuition benefits for Penn employees, and will not be able to provide eligibility information. To determine eligibility, options and obligations that may pertain to your employment status, and to activate payment of tuition benefits, students must contact their Human Resources benefits office directly.

Penn employees should note that eligibility for tuition benefits does not automatically allow them to enroll in courses. All students must first complete an enrollment form with LPS. Once accepted into a program of study, Penn employees using tuition benefits are afforded options and subject to academic and financial obligations identical to those of all LPS students.

All students are responsible for understanding the policies of their tuition benefits, knowing and abiding by all Penn LPS Online Academic Calendar deadlines, and for grades and bills

incurred through registration in any course regardless of attendance, completion, or employee status.

University System

www.hr.upenn.edu/tuition/

Eligible employees of the University may request tuition benefits, view current and past requests for payment, and view pending payments by using the online tuition management system on the Human Resources website at the above link. Payments are not automatically made or continued for future terms based upon registration; the employee must apply online for tuition benefits each term.

Health System

Eligible employees of the University of Pennsylvania Health System should consult with their supervisor to determine benefits eligibility, policy and procedures.

Academic Policies and Procedures

Enrollment Status

To be considered enrolled at Penn, a student must maintain registration in a course or courses. Students who take limited time off may be considered to have an active program status (see the section in this handbook on maintaining academic standing) but are not considered currently enrolled. Students will have access to student services and resources only during semesters in which they register for courses.

Course Load

Certificate students and course takers may enroll in up to a maximum of two C.U.'s per eight-week session. A semester includes both accelerated eight-week (e.g. Fall 1 and Fall 2) and classic (full semester) courses.

Most working adults register for one course in each eight-week session and will thereby complete two C.U.'s across a semester which makes them a half-time student.

Students planning to submit an application to the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree may apply up to, but no more than, four eligible Penn courses earned through enrollment in non-degree programs toward BAAS degree requirements. Non-degree programs include, but are not limited to, Penn LPS online certificates, coursetaker, Gateway program and Penn Summer sessions.

Program Deferrals

To maintain admission to their program students must take a course during their first semester of study. The College of Liberal and Professional Studies does not offer an admission deferral option. All offers of admission are valid only for the specific term to which you have been admitted. If you are unable to enroll for the term offered, you will need to re-apply for admission to a future term.

Inactive Status

Students who do not enroll in courses for four consecutive semesters, including summer, will be in inactive status and will be officially withdrawn from the University for inactivity. After being withdrawn, students wishing to resume their studies at Penn are required to reenroll and pay a new application fee.

Transfer Credit

Penn LPS Online Certificates do not accept transfer credits. Courses delivered through Penn LPS Online count toward the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences and the Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in LPS, but do not count toward any other degrees at the University of Pennsylvania. Students interested in applying to the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree should consult with a BAAS staff member regarding limits on the transfer of courses completed as a non-degree student. Students planning to transfer Penn LPS Online credits to another institution should be aware that transfer credits are awarded at the discretion of the receiving institution.

System Requirements

To confirm that you have what you need to get started in an online course, please review our [technical requirements](#). Students are strongly encouraged to have a PC or MAC desktop or laptop—notebook computers like Chromebooks as well as mobile devices like tablets and smartphones are NOT recommended as a sole device as they do not support all course technologies.

Certificate Completion

Before submitting a graduation application students should review the “Requirements to Receive a Certificate” below. To obtain a certificate, students should complete the courses associated with the certificate and [submit an application to graduate](#) in Path@Penn. The link to apply can be found by clicking on “more links” in the upper-left hand side of the main Path@Penn screen and select “Apply for graduation”.

Policies governing grades

Credit System

Academic credit at the University of Pennsylvania is figured in course units (CUs). A course unit (CU) is a general measure of academic work over a period of time, typically a term (semester or summer). A CU (or a fraction of a CU) represents different types of academic work across different types of academic programs and is the basic unit of progress toward a degree. One CU is usually converted to a four-semester-hour course. The transferability of credits and assignment of credit hours is at the discretion of the receiving institution.

Grading System

The following grades are used to report the standing of a student upon completion of each course.

All courses must be taken for a grade. Courses cannot be taken pass / fail or as an auditor.

A+ = 4.0 Distinguished	A = 4.0 Excellent	A- = 3.7
B+ = 3.3	B = 3.0 Good	B- = 2.7
C+ = 2.3	C = 2.0 Average	C- = 1.7
D+ = 1.3	D = 1.0 Below Average	(No D-)
F = 0.0 Failure		

I = Incomplete (see below)

W = Withdrew

X = Academic Violation

Incomplete Grades

Students should request Incompletes rarely, if at all. It is far better to plan ahead and use **advising and academic support resources** to ensure finishing the coursework on time. If the work for a course is incomplete as a result of the student's unexplained failure to hand in assigned work or to take the final examination at the regularly scheduled time, the instructor will issue a grade of F for the course.

An instructor who chooses to grant an extension to a student who has not completed a course by the end of the term may grant an Incomplete (I). An Incomplete must be made up within the first four weeks of the start of the next term (including the summer term). If the Incomplete is not made up by the deadline, it will become an F. An Incomplete is made up only when the official grade is received by the LPS office and recorded by the Registrar's office on the student's official transcript. Once an Incomplete grade is converted into an F, the instructor may change the grade if they allow the student to complete the required work. Students with two or more incomplete grades are subject to registration hold and are required to meet with their advisor to explain the circumstances of the Incompletes and develop a plan to resolve them. Students with two or more outstanding grades of incomplete who have already registered for additional courses will be dropped from their courses. Students with one incomplete or unresolved grade will be limited to 1 CU in subsequent terms until all unresolved grades are resolved (I, GR, NR).

Review of a Grade and Academic Grievance

The instructor who gives an evaluation, exam, or course grade has sole authority for changing such evaluation, exam, or course grade provided the instructor remains on the staff of the University of Pennsylvania. In cases in which instructor appointments have terminated, or instructors have resigned or are deceased, sole authority for changing an evaluation rests with the Deputy Vice Dean of the College of Liberal and Professional Studies.

Penn LPS Online students who wish to have a final grade reviewed must first discuss the matter with the instructor who gave the evaluation unless the instructor is no longer a member of the University of Pennsylvania staff. Should this meeting not yield a resolution that is satisfactory to both the student and the instructor, or not be possible, the student may ask the Deputy Vice Dean of LPS for assistance in the matter. The role of the Deputy Vice Dean is limited to ensuring that the department or program has arranged for a proper review of the matter. Any concerns related to other academic grievances should follow the same procedure.

Petitions

Students at Penn LPS Online who believe that their circumstances might warrant an exception from a rule or requirement may submit a petition. They may do so by filling out a petition form and writing a statement. In this petition statement, the student must demonstrate why they feel that this exemption should be allowed. If extenuating circumstances such as health or family troubles are cited, proper documentation will be necessary.

The student should first discuss the issue with their advisor to discuss options, responsibilities, resources and support services that may pertain to the student's circumstances and serve to inform best strategy toward student success. The student may submit a petition, which will be evaluated by the Petitions Committee.

The Petitions Committee meets at regular intervals throughout the school year. The committee will consider the student's petition statement and any supplementary materials (such as medical documentation) that the student submits. The student will be notified of the committee's decision, usually within a week of the committee meeting.

Grade Point Average

Grade point average (G.P.A.) is computed at the end of each semester and on a cumulative basis. The G.P.A. is calculated by multiplying the course units for each course by the numerical equivalent of the grade received. The total for all courses is then divided by the total number of course units taken.

Transcripts

An official transcript of a student's academic record in the College of Liberal and Professional Studies is available from the University Registrar. Procedures for requesting a transcript can be found on the [Registrar's web site](#), and in Path@Penn.

Maintaining Academic Standing

Penn LPS Online students must maintain academic standing. Maintaining academic standing requires Penn LPS Online students to meet all of the following conditions:

- Maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher
- Earn a term G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher
- Accumulate no more than one Incomplete, F, or Withdrawal in a term

Please see "Policies governing academic difficulty" below for the potential consequences of failing to maintain academic standing.

Requirements to Receive a Certificate

To be awarded a certificate students must earn a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher, except in the case of the Leadership and Communication certificate which requires a 3.0 GPA. Students who fail a class have an opportunity to retake it once. If a student retakes a course they previously failed and receives a passing grade both the F and the new grade are calculated in the GPA.

Policies governing academic difficulty

Course Action Notices

When the work of a student in a given course becomes unsatisfactory for any reason, the instructor may send a Course Action Notice email to the student. This notice will indicate the nature of the problem and suggest an appropriate person for the student to meet with, including the instructor, a teaching assistant, or an academic advisor. Students are expected to follow the recommendations made in these notices.

Failures

The grade of F remains on the record and is not erased even if students have repeated the course with a passing grade. Students who fail a certificate or certificate-related course requirement will be required to repeat the course. Students who fail a course which is listed as a certificate course option may decide whether to repeat the course in consultation with their academic advisor. A grade of F is always calculated in the cumulative grade point average.

Repeating a Course

Students who receive an F in a course may retake the course for credit. Both the new grade and the original F will be tabulated into the final G.P.A. and a course credit will be awarded if the student receives a passing grade.

Failure to Maintain Academic Standing

Penn LPS Online students must maintain academic standing and make adequate progress toward their certificate. Maintaining academic standing requires Penn LPS Online students to meet all of the following conditions:

- Maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher
- Earn a term G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher
- Accumulate no more than one Incomplete, F, or Withdrawal in a term

Academic probation Students who fail to meet one or more of the conditions listed above will be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be required to meet with their academic advisor and may be placed on registration hold. Students will be expected to remedy the condition(s) that placed them on academic probation with the next three courses they take (no grades of W, F, I, GR, or NR). If students are on probation for any incomplete grades they will be placed on hold until they resolve their incomplete courses. If they are unable to meet the requirements of their probation, they may be subject to dismissal from the program, pending a decision of the SAS Continuing Education Committee.

Dismissal: After being placed on Academic Probation, students who do not meet all three of the conditions listed above will be reviewed by the SAS Continuing Education Committee. If the Committee decides that the student is unlikely to successfully complete their program, the student will be sent an academic dismissal letter. Penn LPS Online Gateway students who are not admitted to the BAAS degree for academic reasons and enroll in a certificate or course taker program will also be eligible for dismissal if they do not maintain academic standing.

Mandatory Leave of Absence: Students who accumulate one incomplete or unresolved grade in a given semester may be placed on a mandatory leave of absence until such work is finished. Students placed on a mandatory leave must complete all outstanding course work before they are allowed to re-enroll and continue with new work. Students have four semesters to complete this work or they will need to re-enroll in their program.

Conditions for readmission: Students who have been dropped for poor academic performance and who wish to be considered for readmission must contact their advisor for requirements and procedures for readmission. Students will not be considered for readmission for one full calendar year following dismissal. If a student is readmitted, the student must maintain good academic standing throughout the program. If the student fails to meet these conditions, the student may be dropped from the University without further warning, and with no opportunity for readmission.

General University Policies and Procedures

The Penn Book

The Penn Book is a collection of policies that relate to student life at the University of Pennsylvania. These policies govern academic activities such as grading and exams, provide guidance on the use of campus resources, and explain membership in the university community. The University of Pennsylvania reserves the right to rescind admission to a student in violation of its codes of conduct and/or personal responsibilities policies. All students are expected to have read and understood these codes and policies—which are published at the link below— before taking classes. <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/>

Academic Integrity

The fundamental purpose of the University as an academic community is the pursuit of knowledge. Essential to the success of this educational mission is a commitment to the principles of academic integrity. Academic work represents not only what we have learned about a subject but also how we have learned it. Values and beliefs about academic integrity have been adopted by scholars so that others may trace our honorable footsteps, verify what we have learned, and build upon our work. Every member of the University community is responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty at all times.

As members of the University community, students are also responsible for adhering to the principles and spirit of the [Code of Academic Integrity](#). Penn believes strongly in the importance of academic integrity. Students who violate its precepts are subject to punishment through the judicial system. Ignorance of the rules is no excuse. If a student is unsure whether his or her action(s) constitute a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity, it is that student's responsibility to consult with the instructor to clarify any ambiguity.

The best strategy for maintaining academic integrity is to avoid situations where academic dishonesty might occur. When in doubt, cite. There are many publications, such as the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (which has been placed in Rosengarten Reserve by the Honor Council), that provide information about methods of proper citation. Failure to acknowledge sources is plagiarism, regardless of intention.

- Consult with instructors about assignments
- Plan ahead to leave sufficient time to complete work
- Work with your academic advisor
- For more information, consult [The Center for Community Standards and Accountability](#)

Student Services

Information about student resources can be found on our [Canvas site](#).