

American University of Central Asia

**Bylaws of the Graduate
Programs**

March 2024

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I. Academic Leave

1. Students may opt to take an Academic Leave for a maximum of two semesters if they have issues related to health, finances, or their families; or if they are studying abroad in universities that are not on the list of AUCA partner universities. To officially declare an academic leave, a student must pay all outstanding tuition fees, submit an application to the Program Director, and be approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Please note that your request will have financial implications. Please contact the financial office for details of the university's refund policy. Also, the student should complete a check-out list issued by the Administrative Services Center.
2. After the 10th week of the semester Academic leave is only granted in exceptional circumstances. Students who do not return from academic leave on time will be dismissed from the University but are permitted to apply for re-admission.
3. *MAT students may have an Academic Leave for a maximum of three semesters (one academic year).

II. Academic Probation

1. If a student's semester GPA falls below 2.0 (but is equal to or higher than 1.75), s/he will be placed on Academic Probation. If a student's semester GPA is less than 1.75, it is the decision of the Program Director to determine student status (academic probation or dismissal). If a full-time student fails to earn a minimum semester GPA of 2.0 and 24 credit hours during the probationary period, s/he may be dismissed from the University. Exceptions will be made for graduating senior students.
2. The Registrar's Office/Vice President of Academic Affairs will issue probation orders based on the results of the previous semester and the Registrar's Office will issue notification letters for each student. Departments are responsible for the distribution of the letters to students.
3. A student on probation will not be allowed to participate in any University-sponsored extracurricular activities.
4. Students on probation are prohibited from auditing courses.
5. Most MA programs require students to have 30 credits each semester. Full-time is considered 24-33 credits per semester.
6. In the MAT program, full-time is considered as 18-30 credits during the summer semester and 12-24 credits in the fall and spring semesters.
7. To graduate on time, students must follow the approved curriculums.

III. Admission

1. Eligibility Criteria:
 - a. Applicants must possess a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent from a recognized institution by the time of the course start.
 - b. Some programs may have additional specific prerequisites or requirements, which will be clearly outlined in the program description.
2. Application Process:
 - a. All applicants must submit a completed online application form through the AUCA official website.
 - b. Along with the application form, applicants must provide the following documents:
 - i. Official transcripts/diplomas from all previously attended institutions.
 - ii. Curriculum Vitae (CV) or Resume.
 - iii. Statement of Purpose outlining the applicant's academic interests, career goals, and reasons for pursuing the Master's program.
 - iv. Any additional documents or requirements specific to the chosen program.
3. Applicants must register for the admission exams online through the AUCA official website and pay the exam fee. Each program specifies the exams the applicant must take to get admitted to the program.
4. Each program may specify the exemption from the admission exams based on a student's background.
5. If applicants have at least two years of prior education in the English language, they are exempted from taking the English language test.
6. If applicants need to take other exams according to the applied Program's requirements such as the Math test, the applicant might get an exemption from this exam if he or she holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics, Business Administration, Applied Mathematics, Software Engineering, or equivalent field.
7. Applicants with foreign Bachelor's degrees need to get verification from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic.
8. Applications must be submitted by the specified deadline. Late applications may not be considered.
9. Evaluation and Selection Process:
 - a. Each application will be reviewed by the respective program Admissions Committee.
 - b. Evaluation criteria may include entrance exams, interview proceedings, past academic performance, relevant work experience, statement of purpose, and any additional requirements specified by the program.
 - c. Shortlisted candidates may be invited for an interview or additional assessments, depending on the program's requirements.
 - d. The Admissions Committee will make final decisions based on the overall merit of the application.
10. Notification of Admission:

- a. Applicants will be notified of their admission status via email.
 - b. Admitted students will receive detailed information regarding enrollment procedures, tuition fees, and any other relevant details.
11. Enrollment Confirmation:
- a. Admitted students must confirm their enrollment by the specified deadline and pay the required enrollment deposit, if applicable, to secure their place in the program.
 - b. Failure to confirm enrollment by the deadline may result in the offer being rescinded and the place being offered to another applicant.

IV. Auditing Courses

Audits are beneficial for students who want to explore courses outside their majors or those who are interested in courses that may require extraordinary effort to complete during the same semester as their compulsory major courses.

1. General Regulations and Expectations

- a. Students may audit a course with the permission of their advisor and the professor.
- b. Students may audit up to 12 credits per academic year but no more than six credits per semester.
- c. The amount of required participation in any given course is left to the discretion of the professor. Expectations of students auditing the course must be clearly articulated in the course syllabus.
- d. Students on Academic Probation are prohibited from auditing courses.

2. Registration

- a. Audit courses will appear on the transcript as "AU." The "AU" will not meet admission, prerequisite, or course requirements for any University credit program. The "AU" will not affect the student's GPA.
- b. 2.2 A student who fails to meet audit expectations may be asked to drop or withdraw from the course by the professor. If this occurs, the audit course will not appear on the student's transcript.
- c. 2.3 Students may not change the status of a course (from audit to credit) after the completion of the registration period.
- d. 2.4 A student may withdraw from a course audit at any time; in this case, the course will not appear on the student's transcript.
- e. 2.5 Students auditing classes will not be considered in the minimum class-size calculations.

V. Attendance

1. Attendance is expected during all weeks of the semester (including the Add/Drop period) for any mode of education – offline, online, or hybrid. Poor attendance may dramatically impact grades; therefore, students who miss a substantial number of classes may want to consider withdrawing from the course (the deadline is the 10th week of the semester; see the Grading System section for more information). Also, depending on the circumstance, a student who has repeated absences should consider speaking with his/her Program Director and Academic Advisor about taking Academic Leave (See the Academic Leave section).
2. The amount of required participation in any given course is left to the discretion of the professor. Expectations of students' attendance at the course must be clearly articulated in the course syllabus. Attendance of online and hybrid classes is mandatory for synchronous online classes.
3. MAT students may withdraw up to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way through the semester. Reference the approved academic calendar for each year to confirm the withdrawal deadline.

VI. Classifications, Course Loads, and Student Expectations

1. Student credits load
 - a. In order to meet the minimum requirement for graduation of 120 credits for Graduate programs, a student is expected to execute a load of 30 credits per semester.
 - b. During the summer school, students may enroll in a maximum of 18 credit hours. One academic year should not exceed 75 credit hours.
 - c. Students who do not successfully complete 30 credits each academic semester may not be on track to graduate in two years. Students may need to complete a third year of study or take summer school classes to earn the required 120 credits toward graduation. This also applies to students who participate in programs abroad.
 - d. Please note that Discounts/Financial Aid are awarded for the first academic year of studies. Each program defines the conditions of the discount to be provided for the second academic year of studies. Discount/Financial Aid is not awarded during summer terms for most MA programs. Since MAT summer term is required, discount / financial aid is awarded during this term as well provided the student continues to meet expectations.
 - e. If a student participates in any program abroad it is still his/her responsibility to complete all requirements of AUCA programs, even if it means that the student may need to extend his/her studies beyond two years.
 - f. Students must have a minimum of 54 credits to advance from the first year to the second year.
2. Credits allocation (full-time and part-time student)

- a. One ECTS credit is understood to be equal to 30 academic hours. The duration of an academic hour is 50 classroom minutes. The volume of work in a given course is divided into classroom and independent work. In most cases, the majority of the total coursework is allocated to independent preparation – about 60%. The volume of independent work for each academic course is determined by the curriculum.
 - b. The maximum quantity of credits per term for full-time students is 30 credits.
 - c. All students are required to register for a minimum of four terms as a full-time student (six terms for MAT; see MAT course loads under “Academic Probation.”). If a student studies abroad for a semester or a year these semesters can count towards the full-time registration for this purpose. In the case of tuition payment for two terms as a Part-time student, two part-time semesters adding up to 24 credits are counted as one full-time semester.
 - d. If a student completes four semesters (six terms for MAT) as a full-time student and still needs to take courses then he/she can pay as a part-time student.
 - e. Only a *full-time student* has a right to receive Discount/Financial Aid from the University.
 - f. The cost of one credit hour is equal for all the categories of the students.
3. Rights and Responsibilities
- a. AUCA students are fully responsible for completing curriculum and program requirements, following the rules described in the section “Academic rules and regulations” on the AUCA website. Students have the right to inspect their transcripts for clerical errors.
 - b. All active AUCA students are expected to:
 - i. Activate and regularly check their AUCA email (all official communication will be delivered to AUCA email account);
 - ii. Schedule regular meetings with their Academic Advisors and Program Directors;
 - iii. Review all graduation requirements and monitor their progress towards graduation every semester;
 - iv. Meet all prerequisites for the courses for which they plan to register;
 - v. Pay current semester tuition fees according to the payment schedule indicated in a student’s study agreement;
 - vi. Complete the registration for courses according to the academic calendar.

VII. Course Repetition

1. Although all course attempts will remain on the AUCA transcript, only 120 non-repeated credits will count toward graduation.
2. If a student receives an “F” for a required course, the student should retake the course immediately upon its availability. If the same course is not offered prior to a student’s expected graduation date, s/he may be allowed to repeat the course on an individual basis in the last semester of study, based on the fee rates established for that academic year. Enrollment in an individual course requires the approval of the Program Director

and the availability and consent of the Professor. If the individual course option is not available for any reason, the student must retake the course on a regular basis when it is offered. If the student receives an "F" grade for the same required course for the second time then the student is dismissed from the program. The student has the right to get re-admitted to the program only after 1 semester of studies upon approval of the Program. If a student fails the course for the third time after being readmitted to the program, this student will be dismissed without the right to readmission.

VIII. Dismissal

1. A student may be dismissed from AUCA for:
 - a. Poor academic performance (see the "Course Repetition" and "Probation" regulations)
 - b. Failing to maintain an overall GPA of at least 1.75 (*see exception below regarding first-year students)
 - c. Failing to earn a semester 2.0 GPA and 24 credit hours (18 credit hours for MAT students) while on Academic Probation
 - d. Losing his/her connection with the University (failing to register for courses, failing to contact academic advisor and major department within first 3 weeks of the semester)
 - e. Failing to register for courses (with the exception of students on Academic Leave)
 - f. Failing to pay the tuition fee

*There is an exception to the GPA requirement for first-year students after their first semester: these students will not be dismissed; instead, all first-year students with GPAs below 2.0 after the first semester will be placed on Academic Probation. First-year students who are placed on probation and fail to earn a 2.0 GPA and 24 credit hours (18 credit hours for MAT students) for the first year during the second semester will be suspended from the University for one semester with the right to get re-admitted. If the students after restoration have the same academic performance (GPA under 2.0 for the semester of studies), the student shall be dismissed from the university with the right to readmission.

2. Students whose semester GPAs are below 2.0 (but above 1.75) will be placed on Academic Probation. Continuing students who are placed on probation and fail to earn a 2.0 GPA and 24 credit hours (18 credit hours for MAT students) during the subsequent semester will be dismissed from the University, *with the right to apply for readmission*.
3. Dismissal for academic reasons will be completed after the final grades are submitted.
4. If dismissed, the student may request an academic certificate in accordance with the format approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic.
5. Dismissal procedure:

- a. After analyzing all student transcripts, each Program Director will submit a report to the Vice President of Academic Affairs outlining the dismissal of students whose cumulative GPAs are below 1.75.
 - b. Upon the approval of the report by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the HR Office will issue the dismissal orders and the Registrar's Office will issue the notification letters. Dismissal orders for academic reasons must be forwarded to the Programs within 6 weeks after the completion of the exam period.
 - c. Students who have been dismissed will be notified of the decision as soon as possible, typically immediately following the issuance of the order. Departments are responsible for the distribution of notification letters to students.
6. To be voluntarily dismissed from the University due to a personal reason or university transfer, a student should submit a request to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The request must include all the necessary documents (including signatures of the Program Director and Registrar and a completed check-out list, which includes the proof of payment of any financial debts).
7. A student dismissed from the University for Academic Reasons has the right to be readmitted no earlier than a semester after being dismissed. An approval from the Program Director is required.
8. A student dismissed from the University for Financial Reasons has the right to be readmitted in the following semester.

IX. Double Major

1. A double major requires the approval of both relevant Program Directors and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. A student may apply for a second major only upon the successful completion of the first semester of study. The entrance tests and other requirements necessary for admission to the second major will be determined by the relevant Program Director.
2. Students approved to enroll in two programs must complete all course requirements for both majors, which will most likely require students to extend their graduation beyond two years.
3. Any courses required for both majors may be counted towards both. In the case of similar required courses, a student may petition the relevant Program Director to have one course count towards both majors.

X. Faculty and Staff Policy

1. The graduate programs at AUCA hire, re-hire faculty, and staff, and promote faculty based on the following principles:
 - a. Conducting a fair and transparent competitive selection process, organized and facilitated by Program Directors and approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

- b. Meeting the program's qualification requirements, which comply with the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic's program standards. Faculty must hold a master's degree or higher.
- c. Adhering to the [Promotion policy](#) for promotions.
- d. Ensuring alignment with the Quality Assurance policy and the Faculty Evaluation Policy for hiring and re-hiring processes.

XI. Incomplete Policy

Instructors of AUCA courses at the graduate level may provide a grade of Incomplete to students at their discretion. The reasons for the Incomplete must be clearly stated by the instructor in writing along with whatever requirements the student must fulfill in order to complete the course and receive a letter grade. Incompletes at the graduate level must be completed within one academic year of being assigned; in the event a student fails to do so, he or she will receive a grade of "F" for the course. The written explanation and completion plan must be approved by the relevant department head or governing faculty body and signed by both the student and instructor. Once approved, the statement of the instructor clarifying the reason(s) for the Incomplete shall be deemed sufficient to assign this designation. Faculty of graduate level courses must in all other ways conform to the policies of the Office of the Registrar, ensuring that Incompletes are turned in by that semester's grading deadline. While meant to provide faculty of graduate courses the discretion to provide Incompletes, it is the position of the university that an Incomplete is a grade of last resort and that faculty should do everything in their power to ensure that their students complete their courses in the time provided.

XII. Internship

Each program shall develop its own policy on the organization of internships, which shall be available for students. Internships can take either during the fall/spring semester or during the summer time. The policy shall include objectives, learning outcomes, and assessment tools (report, presentation, daily journal, and project results).

XIII. Number of Students in a Class

1. As a general rule, the number of students is a minimum of 5 students in a class for both required and elective courses.
2. The number of students auditing a course is not taken into account when calculating the number of students in that course.
3. Exceptions to the minimum course sizes may be made by the Program Director and upon the approval of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

XIV. Orientation

1. All first-year students are required to attend an orientation program that takes place at the end of August* each year prior to the start of regular classes. The orientation program introduces new students to the activities of key administrative offices of the university designed to support the educational process at AUCA. Students who started studying at the university in the second semester and could not attend Orientation will receive individual consultation on the academic life of the university from their advisor.
2. Summer preparation courses. In cases when a student gets lower English proficiency test scores students have an option to attend a summer course at their expense.
3. *The MAT program provides an orientation program for its students in June, starting the first week of the summer semester.

XV. Part-Time Students

Current degree-seeking students may transfer from full-time to part-time status by registering for fewer than 24 credit hours (fewer than 12 credit hours for MAT students). In order to change the status a student must submit a change of status application form to the Program Director and get approval from the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Tuition for part-time students depends on the number of credits taken. Students with part-time status will be advised by faculty in their degree programs.

XVI. Re-Admission

1. Graduate students may be readmitted to the University, provided they meet all AUCA academic standards and other requirements. To be considered for readmission, the student must submit a Re-Admission application form to the Program Director and get approval from the Vice President of Academic Affairs before the beginning of the semester.
2. Readmission procedures must be completed by the end of the Registration (current semester Add/Drop) Period.
3. Students who are dismissed twice due to poor academic performance will not be considered for readmission.

XVII. Registration

1. Online registration for a semester is carried out by the student independently with the participation of an adviser on the basis of a curriculum, checklist, and disciplines offered for a semester by departments.
2. Online registration takes place during the period established in the Academic Calendar.
3. If necessary, students can make changes to the schedule during the entire registration period.
4. If the student does not complete the online registration on time he/she is required to pay a 500-som late registration fee. During the late registration period, the student is not allowed to change the schedule. A student is allowed to add (register for) a course if

he/she has free credits and written permission from the instructor who teaches the course.

5. To buy additional credits or to pay a late registration fee the student should contact the Administrative Services Center.

XVIII. Registration Status

1. Tuition payments of part-time status students, visiting program students, payments for individual classes of music, other individual classes, and extra credits are established by an official AUCA order for each academic year and must be paid prior to registration for courses. Please find detailed information below:
 - a. **Full-time students** are students who have registered for between 24 and 33 credits in a given term. For MAT students, full-time is 18-33 credits in summer semester and 12-24 credits in fall and spring semesters.
 - b. **Part-time students** are students who are registered for fewer than 24 credits in a given term. The student pays per credit hour. For MAT students, part-time is fewer than 18 credits in the summer semester and fewer than 12 credits in the fall and spring semesters.
2. **Individual classes.** Due to different reasons, a student may take an individual class (other than music classes) upon agreement with an instructor. The fee is paid in addition to the regular tuition of the student and is paid per each extra credit taken per semester.

XIX. Study abroad

1. Students are encouraged to try study abroad opportunities. The university provides the opportunity to complete one semester of study at another university, which is part of the OSUN system, or at another partner international university. This educational exchange is subject to the harmonization of the individual study plan in order to be synchronized with the home program curriculum and be approved by the Program Director and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Applying to a study abroad program is possible only after the first semester of study in the home program. Upon return from study abroad, the student should complete a return form to regain the status of active student. The form must be approved by the Program Director and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Upon need consultation with the International Student Office is requested. According to the previously approved individual plan, the Registrar credits the courses completed abroad towards the requirements of the major curriculum. The student continues to pay tuition fees at AUCA while studying abroad under an exchange program.
2. In order to transfer courses taken at another institution, a student must fill out a transfer form and obtain approval of a relevant MA program from which an alternate course is provided. Please note that only courses with a grade of C and higher will be

considered for transfer. The transfer form must be submitted with an official copy of the transcript. Courses will be added to the student's AUCA transcript if the major program director approves the form.

XX. The President's list

To recognize a student for outstanding academic achievement at the university upon graduation, there is the President's List. Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.8 and higher are considered for the President's List. The award is provided at the expense and discretion of the program. Nominations are possible only upon graduation. The Program Director nominates students for the award.

XXI. Temporary suspension

1. For violation of the code of conduct and/or plagiarism, a student may be temporarily suspended from studying at the university for a period of one semester. The decision to suspend is made by the Program Director and Vice President of Academic Affairs.
2. Students who do not meet the criteria for being removed from Academic Probation may also be suspended.

XXII. Tuition Policy

1. General Provisions:
 - a. This Policy is a general instruction for tuition payment at the American University of Central Asia.
 - b. For the purpose of financial accounting, the terms of the academic year are classified as follows: Fall Term, and Spring Term.
 - c. A student registers for courses in order to obtain training services.
 - d. Registration is performed two times per year (one time in each term). Dates of registration are specified in the academic calendar of the University.
 - e. The tuition is not subject to adjustment or reimbursement in case of, including but not limited to Dismissal/Academic Leave (regardless of the reason), the exercise of the right to apply different forms of education, or the use of the other rights of the University.
2. Final Provisions:
 - a. Matters not regulated by this Policy are settled in accordance with the current legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic and other by-laws of the University.
 - b. The introduction of the alterations and amendments in this Policy is executed as required.
 - c. Provisions of this Policy annul all the previously accepted provisions.
 - d. The Policy comes into force from the moment of its signing.

Discount policy for MA programs (FinAid). (To be developed.)

XXIII. Transferring into AUCA

1. A student who wishes to transfer to AUCA from another higher education institution must submit an AUCA application and a complete transcript of all academic work he or she has completed at the other higher education institution(s). Student transfer is carried out based on transcript analysis by Program Directors, approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Program Directors (Departments) have a right to require entrance interviews prior to admission.
2. Only courses, that match the degree offerings at AUCA, will be considered for transfer. Only courses with a grade of C or higher (in the letter-grade system) or 3 (or equivalent) or higher (in the former Soviet numerical system) will be accepted for transfer. Grade "Passed" will be accepted only for Sports and Music classes. Grades for courses not taken at AUCA or taken at AUCA as an exchange student will not apply to the student's GPA at AUCA. Not more than 30 credits can be transferred to an AUCA master's program. Prospective transfer students should consult with the respective Master's program.

XXIV. Transferring within AUCA

1. Students are eligible to apply for a departmental transfer after the first semester of study. However, please note that, in order to transfer within AUCA, students must meet all admissions requirements for the chosen Master's program, and receive permission from the Program Directors of the program the student wants to transfer to. Admissions exam results from the previous program may be sufficient if exams are comparable between the programs. Otherwise, if admission exam scores do not satisfy the requirement of the chosen major, the student must retake the admission exam(s) along with prospective students. If a student has taken an advanced math course and received a B+ grade or above, the Director of the chosen Master's program may count the grade as an entrance exam score. Moreover, the number of transfers allowed each year within specific departments may be limited based on the enrollment restrictions set by the Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic. Each program also has the authority to specify additional selection criteria required for transfer.
2. Students are allowed to take courses from the other chosen Major program at the expense of the available elective credits from the program of their first choice.
3. Students need to be advised about the impact of switching majors (especially in terms of the time necessary to complete the degree and any changes in financial aid that may occur if students transfer departments).
4. Please note: all transfers must be initiated prior to the start of the semester up to the end of the Add/Drop period.

XXV. Transferring out of AUCA

1. Students who wish to transfer from AUCA to another institution of higher education should contact that institution to familiarize themselves with its transfer procedures and policies.
2. Once a student submits a transfer application to another institution and has been accepted into that institution, having received what?, the student should notify the relevant Program Director as soon as possible. Upon request, the Registrar's Office will provide with all relevant official documents required for an institutional transfer.

XXVI. Transfer Credits from Other Universities

Students can transfer credits earned at other institutions based on the requirements of the Program upon approval by the Program Director and the Registrar's Office.

XXVII. Visa Regulations

International students must obtain visas, depending on their citizenship, prior to arrival in Kyrgyzstan. They must check with the Student Visa and Registration Coordinator within two business days of arriving in Bishkek, to complete registration with the Kyrgyz Ministry of Internal Affairs. To receive visa support from the University, international students are required to be full-time students (24 or more credits per semester; MAT students must have 18 or more credits in summer or 12 or more credits in each fall or spring semester). Please see the Student Visa and Registration Coordinator to arrange for a new visa or register as a foreign national.

Click here to find the website of the [International Students Office](#).

XXVIII. Visiting Students

Bachelor graduates or students currently enrolled in a graduate degree-seeking program at another university can be admitted to the university as visiting students. Visiting Students may apply and become an AUCA graduate full-time student. All earned credits, grades, and GPA of the AUCA visiting student can be transferred to the graduate level once he/she is admitted to AUCA. Program Directors may dismiss a student for poor academic performance or non-academic misconduct.