

Academic Probation Information

Yeek! How do I get off of probation?

Last semester was probably a blur of activity, especially towards the end of the semester, and now you are left with less than what you wanted to show for it. So where do you go from here? First, you will need to determine what happened that got you here.

Where you've come from

There are a variety of reasons why a student would be on probation in any given semester. A failure to manage time well, too much time spent with friends, the internet, computer games, illnesses at just the wrong moments, you name it, it happens. Probation status includes any semester where your cumulative GPA falls below a 2.0. So this is where you are. From this point forward you get to decide how you move forward. And there are those around you who want to help. Let's make the most of it.

The bottom line is, Westmont wants you to succeed. Though this is a hard place, Westmont only admits those students who have the best opportunity to be academically successful. It would be unethical for the college to admit just anyone, which is why the admission standards are high. So the fact that you are here in the first place means that you belong here. But it does mean that some things that were not helpful last semester will need to change this semester. Because if nothing changes, then you can expect that another semester will bring the same below average results.

The first place to start is to take a long, hard look at what happened last semester. This is an introspective moment, where you get to see what it was that contributed to your success in some areas, and failure in others. Be honest with yourself in this assessment. Was it an issue with managing time? Adequate preparation for exams? Starting the paper you needed to write early enough? Were you in classes that you really did not care for? Some other reason? Identifying the "problem(s)" from last semester is key to your future success.

Where you are going

The hope is, that after this semester of probation, you will never need to worry about this again. That your cumulative GPA will rise above a 2.0, and that you will never look back. First-semester first year students make up the majority of the students on probation as they only have one semesters worth of work reflected in their cumulative GPA. If this is you, don't worry. As you complete additional semesters and earn more credits, the impact of any low course grade is lessened. So keep your chin up, it will get better soon!

How you're going to get there

This next semester is going to be spent planning well and working to change some of the negative things from last semester. Here are the things you are going to do:

Enroll in the Successful Scholars Seminar Class - This is one place where you will get all of the information that you ever (never?) wanted to know about how to study smarter instead of harder. You should not be bookworms, spending all of your time in the library, nor should you be party animals who don't know that we have a library. Balance is the key, and in this course you will learn how to develop that balance and self-monitor your activities.

Retake any courses where a D+ or below was received – A little known academic policy allows students to retake any classes in which they received a D+ or below. When you do this, your new grade is what is factored in place of the old grade into your cumulative GPA. The old grade still appears on your transcript, but it no longer impacts your cumulative GPA. If the course is offered in the next semester, this is the easiest way to get off probation. If not, then it will become part of your long-term goals for improving your cumulative GPA. Enroll in classes that will meet requirements but will also be interesting – It is pretty well known that you will spend more time working for something that you are interested in, so let's see if you can plan to take classes that appeal to your natural interests.

Meet with the Coordinator of Academic Support Services at least once per month –

This way, if there are any questions, concerns, or large assignments and exams coming up, you will have someone to partner with on breaking things down into smaller chunks.

What happens if you don't get there the first time?

On occasion there are students who need more than one semester in which to improve their cumulative GPA above a 2.0. If, after one semester you fail to improve your cumulative GPA to above a 2.0, then you will be automatically suspended. You will have the opportunity to appeal that suspension, and request to return back to the college for one additional probationary semester. The steps you take, and the resources you seek out now will enhance your appeal letter and your chance of returning back to Westmont. The Coordinator of Academic Support Services can help you in this process as well. You can contact the Coordinator at (805) 565-6060 to set up a meeting time.