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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Columbia University is an independent, privately supported, nonsectarian institution of higher education. Its official corporate name is “The Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York.” Academic activity at the University is primarily organized through its Faculties and departments of instruction. To direct instruction and research that cross departmental and Faculty lines, the University establishes administrative boards, institutes, centers, laboratories, and interdepartmental programs. Affiliated with the University, but corporately separate, are other educational institutions, hospitals, and research institutes. The University’s main campus is situated on Morningside Heights in Manhattan along with a new 17-acre campus just north in Manhattanville. The Columbia University Medical Center is located two and a half miles north in Washington Heights. The Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory occupies a separate estate in Palisades, in Rockland County, New York.

COLUMBIA CLIMATE SCHOOL and ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The Columbia Climate School is Columbia University's school of trans-disciplinary climate research. The Climate School is the first new school to be established at the university in over 25 years. The School’s mission is to further knowledge and educate leaders to achieve equitable and just solutions to the changing climate and related sustainability challenges. The [Master of Arts in Climate and Society](#) [Master of Science in Climate](#) and [Master of Science in Climate Finance](#) are the three degree programs offered by the Climate School.

School Leadership

- Alexis Abramson, PhD, Dean of Columbia Climate School, Professor of Climate
- Jeff Shaman, PhD, Senior Vice Dean, Professor of Climate and Environmental Health Sciences, Columbia Climate School

MA in Climate and Society Faculty Leadership

- Lisa Dale, PhD, Director of the MA in Climate and Society, Lecturer in Climate

MS in Climate Faculty Leadership

- Mingfang Ting, PhD, Co-Senior Director for Education, Co-Director of the MS in Climate, Professor of Climate
- Jason Smerdon, PhD, Co-Senior Director for Education, Co-Director of the MS in Climate, Professor of Climate

MS in Climate Finance Faculty Leadership

- Lisa Sachs, JD, Director of the MS in Climate Finance, Associate Professor of Professional Practice in the Faculty of Climate

The policies here are applicable to Fall 2025 incoming students.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

Program administrators are here to enhance the learning environment and support initiatives to help students achieve their academic and professional goals.

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Oversees: Course Planning; Registration; Student Data

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Yana Zeltser, MA

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COMMUNITY STANDARDS

Academic Integrity

As members of the Columbia University community, [all students are expected to uphold the highest standards of respect, integrity, and civility](#). These core values are key components of the Columbia University experience and reflect the community's expectations of its students. Students are expected to behave honestly, civilly, and respectfully in all aspects of their lives. Students who violate standards of behavior related to academic or behavioral conduct interfere with their ability, and the ability of others, to take advantage of the full complement of university life and will thus be subject to Dean's Discipline.

Academic misconduct violates the principle of intellectual integrity that is the foundation of our institution. To violate that principle is one of the most serious offenses a student can commit. Faculty and instructors may list specific expectations on a course syllabus.

Examples of Academic Integrity Violations:

- Facilitation of academic dishonesty
- Unauthorized assistance
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Bribery
- Cheating
- Dishonesty
- Failing to safeguard work
- Plagiarism of self
- Unauthorized giving/taking of academic materials
- Sabotage
- Violation(s) of testing conditions

To learn more, visit the [Center for Student Success and Intervention](#) page.

Reporting Concerns

As members of the community, students have a shared responsibility to ensure that Columbia University is a safe community and workplace where everyone can learn, live, work and express themselves. All members of the Columbia community are responsible for upholding these standards and reporting behavior that violates them. [Reports of concern](#) can be submitted to University Life.

Student Email Communication

Columbia University has established email as an official means of communication with students and expects every student to read email frequently and consistently. A student's failure to read University communications in a timely manner does not exempt them from knowing and complying with such communications' content.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The following sections detail some key features and requirements for all Climate School degree programs. Students should review this section in its entirety and refer to the appropriate resources for further specifics.

Minimum Core and Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)

The Climate School requires all students to have a core and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better to graduate. The Climate School will not confer degrees to students whose GPA falls below these thresholds.

MA IN CLIMATE AND SOCIETY

Description

A STEM-designated one-year, 35 credit interdisciplinary program that trains professionals and academics to understand and address the impacts of climate variability and change on society and the environment. Through classes and research, students gain knowledge in the physical and social sciences, and the humanities, as they relate to climate.

Part-time program

Students enrolled in the part-time program include one or more of the following profiles: people with demonstrated significant work experience in a climate or climate adjacent space; working professionals who can easily transition to climate or a related field where they can apply the program to that profession. Part-time students complete the program in 5 semesters and must accumulate at least 35 credits over the 5 semesters.

Core Courses

Every student in the Climate and Society program follows a sequence of study that includes core courses and a culminating experience in the form of a summer capstone workshop. These core courses are designed to give students a common set of skills and a shared professional working knowledge of climate dynamics on regional and global scales, statistical evaluation, risk management, communication, justice and applied research.

Practical and Applied Experiences

Students gain practical skills and experience during the program through the Applied Climate seminars taken sequentially in the Fall and Spring semesters, and during the final summer semester by completing a culminating capstone.

Social Science Selective

Social science is vital to climate study because human societies and behaviors are central to both causing and solving the climate crisis. Students must fulfill their Social Science Selective (3 credits) from the below list of courses:

- CLMT 5019: Climate Decision Making

- CLMT 5029: Black Ecologies
- CLMT 5035: History of the Climate Crisis
- CLMT 5012: Social Impact: Business, Society & the Environment
- CLMT 5041: Climate Ethics, Leadership & Management

Electives Courses

To complete the program, students must take at least 12 elective credits of graduate level courses in addition to the core course and selective requirements. **Three credits of these 12 elective credits must be taken at the Climate School (CLMT designation).**

It is not guaranteed that elective courses are offered every semester or academic year. Students may also choose to enroll in any electives across the University, provided they allow for cross-registration, if they are taken for a letter grade and at the graduate level (course code of 4000+).

Program timeline

Full-Time

| Fall | Spring | Summer |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change | Quantitative Methods for Climate Applications | Capstone Workshop |
| Climate Change Mitigation | Elective | Elective |
| Climate Change Adaptation (lecture + discussion) | Elective | |
| Climate Justice: Theory, Practice & Policy (lecture + discussion) | Floating Elective/Social Science Selective | |
| Applied Climate I | Applied Climate II | |
| <i>Floating Elective/Social Science Selective (optional)</i> | | |
| 1 RU | 1 RU | EXTENDED RU |
| Fall Min: 12.5 credits | Spring Min: 12 credits | Summer Min: 6 credits |

Part-time

| Fall 1 | Spring 2 | Fall 2 | Spring 2 | Summer |
|--|---|--|----------|-------------------|
| Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change | Quantitative Methods for Climate Applications | Climate Change Adaptation (lecture + discussion) | Elective | Capstone Workshop |
| Climate Change Mitigation | Applied Climate II | Climate Justice: Theory, Practice & | Elective | Elective |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | Policy (lecture + discussion) | | |
| Applied Climate I | Floating Elective/Social Science Selective | Floating Elective/Social Science Selective | | |
| 1/2 RU | 1/2 RU | 1/2 RU | 1/2 RU | EXTENDED RU |
| Fall Max: 9 credits | Spring Max: 9 credits | Fall Max: 9 credits | Spring Max: 9 credits | Summer Min: 6 credits |

MS IN CLIMATE

Description

A STEM-designated two-year, 50 credit program that blends foundational climate science with specialized expertise tailored to today’s most pressing climate challenges. Students gain hands-on experience through applied learning and practice-based opportunities and engage in collaborative and interdisciplinary learning. Critical dimensions of climate justice and equity are woven into the curriculum. Through the Advanced Certificates, students can specialize in climate systems and analytics, climate and food systems, or climate and disaster management—preparing them to lead at the forefront of global climate solutions.

Core Courses

The program’s climate core curriculum centers on scientific understanding of climate, advanced quantitative methods, mitigation pathways, adaptation strategies and policies, justice frameworks, and societal impacts. These foundational courses provide students with essential tools to collaborate on, design, and communicate pathways for societies to reduce and adapt to the many facets of climate change.

Applied Learning Experiences

Students gain practical skills and experience during the program through the Applied Climate seminars taken sequentially in the Fall and Spring semesters, a practicum experience in the summer after the first spring semester, and a capstone workshop during the final spring semester.

The practicum experience is expected to be completed during a student’s affiliation with the Climate School. A student’s enrollment at the school will not be extended in order to continue a practicum experience.

Advanced Certificates (18 credits)

A defining feature of the degree is a New York State-level Advanced Certificate requirement that equips students with a specialization in a targeted climate field of their choosing; current certificate options include analytics, food systems, and disaster management. Students must declare their certificate by October 15th.

Electives

Students in the MS in Climate must take a minimum of 9 elective credits of graduate level courses. These electives can be taken at Columbia Climate School or any of the graduate schools across the Columbia campus provided they allow cross-registration.

Dual Program

MS in Climate students can develop specialized interdisciplinary expertise with a [dual degree option](#) in lieu of an advanced certificate. Dual programs award two degrees in less time than pursuing the degrees separately. Students who wish to enter the dual program must apply to each participating program and be admitted to both. Through application and admission to other schools at Columbia (GSAPP and Engineering), students may opt out of an Advanced Certificate and earn a dual degree with those schools. For more information, see dual degree information, below.

The Climate School offers the following dual degree program options:

- Dual with the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (GSAPP), which awards a [MS in Climate](#) and a [MS in Architecture and Urban Design](#)
- Dual with the Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), which awards a [MS in Climate](#) and a [MS in Carbon Management](#).

Dual Program (Carbon Management)

Students must enroll for 63 points of credit – 33 points of credit over two semesters in the Climate School’s MS in Climate and 30 points of credit over two semesters in Columbia Engineering’s MS in Carbon Management. Students are responsible for meeting with both program directors periodically to ensure that they meet individual curriculum and point and residency requirements.

Dual Program (Architecture and Urban Design)

Students must enroll for 78 points of credit – 33 points of credit over two semesters in the Climate School’s MS in Climate and 45 points of credit over three semesters in the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation’s MS in Architecture and Urban Design. Students are responsible for meeting with both program directors periodically to ensure that they meet individual curriculum and point and residency requirements.

Program Timelines

Two-year MS in Climate

| Fall 1 | Spring 1 | Summer | Fall 2 | Spring 2 |
|--|---|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change | Quantitative Methods for Climate Applications | Practicum Experience | Quantitative selective | Certificate Course |
| Climate Change Mitigation | Certificate Course | | Certificate Course | Certificate Course |

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Climate Change Adaptation (lecture + discussion) | Certificate Course | | Certificate Course | Capstone Workshop |
| Climate Justice: Theory, Practice & Policy (lecture + discussion) | Elective | | Elective | Elective |
| Applied Climate I | Applied Climate II | | | |
| 1 RU | 1 RU | | 1 RU | 1 RU |
| Fall Min: 12.5 credits | Spring Min: 13.5 credits | Summer Min: 0 credits | Fall Min: 12 credits | Spring Min: 12 credits |

Dual Program (Carbon Management)

| Fall | Spring | Summer |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change | Quantitative Methods for Climate Applications | Practicum Experience |
| Climate Change Mitigation | Elective | |
| Climate Change Adaptation (lecture + discussion) | Elective | |
| Climate Justice: Theory, Practice & Policy (lecture + discussion) | Elective | |
| Applied Climate I | Applied Climate II | |
| Applied Integrative Experience of Duals | Applied Integrative Experience of Duals | |
| Elective | Elective | |
| 1 RU | 1 RU | |
| Fall Requirements: 16 credits | Spring Requirements: 17 credits | Summer Requirements: 0 credits |

Dual Program (Architecture and Urban Design)

| Fall | Spring |
|--|--|
| Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change | Quantitative Methods for Climate Applications |
| Climate Change Mitigation | Elective (<i>Recommended: Earth Studio: Toward Climate Justice & Resilience</i>) |
| Climate Change Adaptation (lecture + discussion) | Elective |

| | |
|---|---|
| Climate Justice: Theory, Practice & Policy (lecture + discussion) | Elective |
| Applied Climate I | Applied Climate II |
| Applied Integrative Experience of Duals | Applied Integrative Experience of Duals |
| Elective | Elective |
| 1 RU | 1 RU |
| Fall Requirements: 16 credits | Spring Requirements: 17 credits |

MS in Climate Finance

Description

A STEM-designated one-year, 39-credit professional degree program offered by the Columbia Climate School in close collaboration with the Columbia Business School. This interdisciplinary degree integrates climate science with fundamental financial management practices that equip students with the financial decision-making skills to respond to climate change.

Core Courses

Students take courses in climate science, adaptation and mitigation strategies, capital markets, corporate finance, energy and infrastructure financing, legal and regulatory frameworks.

The program's climate core curriculum centers on scientific understanding of climate, adaptation and mitigation strategies, capital markets, corporate finance, energy and infrastructure financing, legal and regulatory frameworks.

Core Courses (CCS – Columbia Climate School; CBS – Columbia Business School)

- Climate Change Mitigation (CCS) - 3 credits
- Climate Change Adaptation (CCS) - 3 credits
- Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change (CCS) - 3 credits
- Foundations of Valuation (CBS) - 1.5 credits
- Corporate Finance (CBS) - 1.5 credits
- Capital Markets & Investments (CBS) - 3 credits
- Climate Finance (CBS) - 1.5 credits
- Climate Risk (CBS) - 1.5 credits
- International Climate Finance (CCS) - 3 credits
- Internship or Capstone Workshop (CCS) - 3 credits

Applied Learning Experiences

Students gain practical skills and experience during the final semester by completing a culminating Capstone Workshop: GR5007 (preferred/default) or internship.

The internship is expected to be completed during a student's enrollment at the Climate School, in the summer semester during a student's enrollment at the Climate School. A student's enrollment at the school will not be extended in order to continue an internship.

Electives

Students are required to complete a minimum of 15 elective credits selected from a designated list of courses offered by the Columbia Climate School and Columbia Business School. Of these, at least 6 credits must be taken at Columbia Business School and at least 6 credits at Columbia Climate School. The remaining 3 elective credits can be taken at the Columbia Climate School or Columbia Business School.

Program Timeline

| Fall | Spring | Summer |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Dynamics of Climate Variability and Change | Climate Risk | Capstone Workshop or Internship |
| Climate Change Mitigation | Climate Finance | Elective |
| Climate Change Adaptation | Capital Markets and Investments | Elective |
| International Climate Finance | Elective | |
| Foundations of Valuation | Elective | |
| Corporate Finance | Elective | |
| 1 RESIDENCE UNIT | 1 RESIDENCE UNIT | EXTENDED RESIDENCE UNIT |
| Fall Requirements: 15 credits | Spring Requirements: 15 credits | Summer Requirements: 9 credits |

*****A maximum of 18 total credits, including core and electives, can be taken at the Business School*****

INTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAM TRANSFER

Internal transfers from one Climate School degree program to another Climate School degree program is possible for:

- [One-Year Programs to the Two-Year MS in Climate](#)
- [Two-Year MS in Climate to the One-Year MA in Climate and Society](#)
- [Two-Year MS in Climate to a Dual Degree Program](#)

For more information on Columbia Climate School's graduate degree programs, visit:

<https://www.climate.columbia.edu/masters-programs>

Transfers from One-Year Programs to the Two-Year MS in Climate

Students currently enrolled in a one-year program (e.g., MA in Climate and Society or MS in Climate Finance) may request to be considered for admission to the two-year MS in Climate program. A formal application must be submitted to the [Office of Admissions](#). Admission is not guaranteed and will be evaluated based on the strength of the application, alignment of academic and professional goals, and available program capacity. Applications for this transfer path are due by **December 15th** of the student's first academic year in the program.

Transfers from the Two-Year MS in Climate to the One-Year MA in Climate and Society

Students enrolled in the two-year MS in Climate program who wish to transfer into the one-year MA in Climate and Society must submit a formal application to the [Office of Admissions](#). Applications for this transfer path are due by **December 15th** of the student's first academic year in the program. All transfer requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and admission is not guaranteed.

Please note: It is not possible to transfer from the two-year MS in Climate to the one-year MS in Climate Finance due to the intensive nature and curricular structure of that program. Each program has been designed with a unique academic structure and timeline, and it is not possible to switch between them once enrolled.

Transfers from the Two-Year MS in Climate to a Dual Degree Program

Students in the two-year MS in Climate program who wish to pursue a dual degree with another Columbia graduate school (e.g., SEAS, GSAPP) must formally apply to the second graduate program. Students must also notify the [Academic Affairs Office](#) of their intention to pursue a dual degree no later than the first week of their second semester, as there are registration implications of pursuing this path. Approval is contingent on admission to both programs and coordination between schools regarding dual-degree requirements and timelines.

Merit Scholarship Eligibility

In the event of a transfer, any previously awarded merit scholarship does not carry over to a new degree program. Candidates will be reconsidered for merit funding at the time of their new application, and funding decisions are based on the competitiveness of the applicant pool, available resources, and program-specific funding priorities.

ADVISING

Faculty advising

Students are assigned a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor is a mentor and guide through the degree program. The focus of this relationship is typically anchored in larger professional goals for the student as they relate to the faculty's own professional experiences, and that complement but do not replace career office support which offers a wide range of services (see [career advising](#)). Similarly, course and registration guidance should be directed more to staff (see [program advising](#)). It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with degree requirements and track their progress through those requirements.

Program advising

For any questions about course registration, degree requirements, and/or paperwork approvals, contact the [Academic Affairs Office](#).

Career advising

The [Climate School Career Management Office](#) guides and supports Climate School students and alumni in their professional journeys, empowering them to transform academic achievements and personal aspirations into fulfilling careers that contribute to a sustainable future.

ATTENDANCE AT CLIMATE SCHOOL EVENTS

Engagement in Climate School events is an essential and enriching part of your Columbia experience. All full-time students are expected to attend a meaningful number of programs and talks before graduation.

A curated list of approved events will be shared at the beginning of September and updated regularly. By signing in at these events, you will be fulfilling your attendance requirement. With a wide range of topics available and multiple day/time options, students will meet the requirement by attending 5 events per semester.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Course evaluations are an important part of being a student at the Climate School. The Climate School values your honest feedback about instructors and course experience. Students are required to submit a course evaluation for each of their Climate School courses through CourseWorks. Course grades will be suppressed on SSOL until a student has completed the course evaluation.

GRADING POLICIES

The below policies apply only to Climate School courses. Students who cross-register for classes at other Columbia University schools should refer to the policies of each respective school. The Climate School does not dictate a standard grading scale, and faculty ultimately have discretion in setting their grade ranges.

Grade changes are not allowed after a student has graduated and the terminal degree has been conferred.

Letter Grades

| Grade | | Weighted GPA Value |
|-------|--|--------------------|
| A+ | Reserved for exceptional achievements. | 4.33 |
| A | Excellent. Outstanding achievement. | 4.00 |
| A- | Excellent work, close to outstanding. | 3.67 |

| | | |
|----|--|------|
| B+ | Very good. Solid achievement expected of most graduate students. | 3.33 |
| B | Good. Acceptable achievement. | 3.00 |
| B- | Acceptable achievement, but below what is generally expected of graduate students. | 2.67 |
| C+ | Low achievement, above minimally acceptable level. | 2.33 |
| C | Low achievement, but only minimally acceptable. | 2.00 |
| C- | Very low performance. | 1.67 |
| F | Failure. Course usually may not be repeated unless it is a required course. | 0.00 |

Pass/Fail (P/F) Grading Option

The Pass/Fail grading option can be used:

- MA in Climate and Society: up to 3 credits of graduate-level electives can count towards degree requirements
- MS in Climate: up to 6 credits of graduate-level electives can count towards degree requirements
- MS in Climate Finance: up to 3 credits of graduate-level electives can count towards degree requirements

Once a student has attained the minimum required credits for their degree, any additional courses can be taken P/F. The deadline to opt to take a course P/F can be found in the [academic calendar](#).

Requests for taking a course pass/fail must be received before the deadline; late requests will not be accepted. Please note some courses, at the instructor's discretion and according to course content, are graded only on a pass/fail basis. Courses with a predetermined grading of pass/fail do not count against these limits.

P grades do not factor into students' GPA. If you receive an F grade for a course that is P/F, it will be calculated into your GPA. Students can elect to take a course P/F in [Vergil](#). If the P/F election is not available through [Vergil](#), then the student will need to submit a registration adjustment form to the [Academic Affairs Office](#).

Other Transcript Notations

Withdrawal (W)

Students may drop a class without notation on their transcripts before the deadline dates specified in the [academic calendar](#). After the deadline, the notation of W is assigned to students who have discontinued attendance prior to the due date of substantive work and have formally requested to withdraw from the course. A W is not calculated into a student's GPA.

Unofficial Withdrawal (UW)

Students may drop a class without notation on their transcripts before the deadline dates specified in the [academic calendar](#). After the deadline, the notation of UW is assigned to students whose names appear on the grade sheet but who has never formally requested to withdraw from the course. The assignment of a UW is not a foregone conclusion, and a letter grade based on completed work may be assigned instead. UWs do not calculate into a student's GPA but it may affect a [student's satisfactory academic progress](#).

Credit Pending (CP)

The mark of CP implies satisfactory progress. It is differentiated from IN in that CP should be used in cases where minimal coursework is outstanding (e.g., 1-2 missing assignments, extension to complete or submit a final examination). Upon completion, a final qualitative grade is assigned and credit allowed.

The deadline for all coursework to be submitted and a final grade assessed is the day before the start of classes in the next given term.

Incomplete (IN)

The mark of IN is given to a student who has satisfactorily met all the requirements of a course except for the completion of certain assigned papers or reports or the final examination, which the student has been compelled to postpone for reasons that are 1) beyond the student's control and 2) satisfactory to the instructor. Students must arrange for the mark of IN directly with the course instructor and submit a [formal request](#) to the school.

The deadline for all coursework to be submitted and a final grade assessed should be 6 weeks or less from the date final grades for a given term are due. INs unresolved by the deadline will convert to the final letter-grade earned with missing materials accounted for, which may result in an F.

GRADE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The following steps represent the grade grievance procedure for final course grades of B- or below (grades above B- are ineligible beyond the informal review).

- Step One (informal review): Questions about a course grade should be discussed first with the course instructor to understand how the grade was determined and attempt to address any specific concerns.
- Step Two (formal review): Should the student continue to have concerns or questions about a course grade, this should be discussed with the Program Director. If the Program Director is the instructor of the course, then the student should reach out to the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs. Students and faculty are encouraged to center the discussion on determining if an error was made in computing the grade and that all grading followed all written policies outlined in the class syllabus.
- Step Three (formal request): If the student is unable to resolve their concerns in either of the first two steps, a formal request for review may be submitted to the [Academic Affairs Office](#)

within 10 business days of the final grade being posted.

Formal Request

Grounds for submitting a formal grade grievance are considered on the below two criteria only:

- **Calculation Error:** Arithmetic error in the calculation of a student's grade.
- **Procedural Error:** The student believes their final grade is not reflective of all written policy or procedures as outlined in course related materials including the syllabus, CourseWorks site, assignments, or other relevant course resources.

The request should be submitted in writing (email is acceptable) to the [Academic Affairs Office](#) with detailed information as it relates to either of these criteria along with any other supporting documentation.

Once the formal request is submitted, the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Administration and the Senior Vice Dean will review. The decision will be communicated to the student at the conclusion of this review and is not subject to appeal.

GRADUATION

The Climate School confers degrees in:

- October: MA in Climate and Society and MS in Climate Finance
- May: MS in Climate

Exceptions are made for students with deviated academic plans. Students who apply for graduation will have their academic record reviewed by the Academic Affairs Office to ensure compliance with all degree requirements and financial obligations.

Each of Columbia's twenty-one schools, colleges and affiliate institutions hold their own ceremonies (referred to as Class Day) to honor the graduating class. Students can participate in [Climate School Class Day](#) if their degree is expected to be conferred the following October of the next academic year.

Commencement is held in May on a single day for all graduating students across the University.

EXTENDING TIME IN DEGREE PROGRAM

Students must progress through their degree as specified at the time of admissions and consistent with Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) guidelines (see [SAP](#)). Extending time in program for elective purposes or applied learning experiences that go beyond the scope of the hours and learning objective minimums required for graduation, or for other reasons is not permitted.

TRANSCRIPTIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Transcripts are issued by the Registrar through the Office of Student Services. They may be ordered in person at the Student Service Center in 205 Kent Hall or through [SSOL](#). For further information see the [Transcripts section](#) of the Registrar's website. Please note that the amended [Family Educational Rights](#)

[and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) of 1974 prohibits release of educational records without the written consent of the student.

Students may also order certifications of enrollment and degrees via mail, in person, or online. When requesting a certification by mail, include the notation *Attention: Certifications* on the envelope. Students requesting a certification for a visa should make certain that their expected graduation date is included on their record before leaving and returning to the United States. See the [Academic Certification section](#) of the Registrar's website for further information.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS

The following policy on satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is applicable to all students at the Columbia Climate School. To comply with applicable regulations and for the sake of brevity, the School provides this single SAP policy which includes Federal regulations specific to students receiving FSA.

[Compilation of Federal Regulations \(CFR\)](#)

34 CFR 668.16(e) – Administrative Capability

Columbia University has the administrative capability to adequately administer the Satisfactory Academic Policy (SAP) program.

34 CFR 668.32(f) – Student Eligibility

General Federal Methodology: All students applying for financial assistance must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine their federal eligibility. Notification of the school's academic requirements is made in person and via electronic and paper formats. These requirements are as strict as the school's academic progress policy for students not receiving assistance under the Title IV and Higher Education Act programs.

34 CFR 668.34 – Student Assistance General Provisions

This policy sets reasonable satisfactory academic progress policy standards for determining whether an otherwise eligible student is making satisfactory academic progress in one's educational program and may receive assistance under the Title IV and Higher Education Act programs.

Academic progress requirements at the Climate School are identical for all students, irrespective of their financial aid application or eligibility status or whether they receive Title IV aid.

The Academic Affairs Office ensures the consistent application of SAP standards to all Federal Student Aid (FSA) programs and FSA recipients within institutionally defined categories of students.

At least as strict...

Academic progress requirements at the Climate School are identical for all students, irrespective of their financial aid application or eligibility status or whether they receive Title IV aid.

[Consistent Application](#)

The Academic Affairs Office ensures the consistent application of SAP standards to all Federal Student

Aid (FSA) programs and FSA recipients within institutionally defined categories of students.

Evaluating Satisfactory Academic Progress and Academic Standing

Students are responsible for tracking and maintaining their own academic progress and ensuring they have met all University and School requirements. **The Academic Affairs Office conducts SAP evaluations at the end of each term and sets expectations to help students return to satisfactory academic progress and good academic standing.** Students not achieving SAP should expect notifications from Academic Affairs Office after final grades are submitted. When evaluating academic progress, the School reviews

- [Core and Cumulative GPA](#)
- Completion of coursework at the required [pace of completion](#)

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Students are expected to maintain cumulative and core GPA of no less than 3.0. Students must keep track of their academic progress at the core and overall GPA level. The Academic Affairs Office supports students by also informing students when their GPA's fall below a 3.0. The Academic Affairs Office will notify students whose core and/or cumulative GPA falls below 3.0. All students whose core and cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 are considered not making satisfactory academic progress and in poor academic standing and may be terminated from their degree program.

Maximum Timeframe (Credits) and Pace of Completion

The Academic Affairs Office audits students' academic progress each semester to ensure students meet the benchmarks of their respective degree programs and are meeting an acceptable pace of completion. To successfully complete earned credits, students must receive a passing grade. Non-passing grade designations include F and W. The pace of completion by which students are expected to progress through their degree programs is the percentage value calculated by a student's minimum required credits divided by the maximum number of credits a student is allowed to attempt as a degree-seeking candidate (also known as the maximum timeframe). Should the percentage value of earned credits divided by attempted credits fall below the pace of completion, a student would be considered as not making satisfactory academic progress and in poor academic standing.

| MA Climate & Society Enrollment Status | Minimum credits required | Maximum timeframe (credits) | Pace of Completion (percent) |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Full-time | 35 | 44 | 79 |
| Part-time | 35 | 44 | 79 |

| MS in Climate Enrollment Status | Minimum credits required | Maximum timeframe (credits) | Pace of Completion (percent) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Full-time | 50 | 62 | 80 |

| MS in Climate Finance Enrollment Status | Minimum credits required | Maximum timeframe (credits) | Pace of Completion (percent) |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Full-time | 39 | 48 | 81 |

Below is a non-exhaustive list of how the most common unearned credits negatively impact a student's satisfactory academic progress.

F and UW Grade

Students who earn an F or UW grade cannot repeat the course unless it is a requirement for the completion of the degree program. In cases when the course is required, the student must re-register for the course and obtain a satisfactory grade. The F or UW grade remains on the transcript even after the course is retaken for a passing grade. In instances when a student is assigned an F or UW in a pre-requisite course, the student may not begin the subsequent course until re-sitting for a passing grade (if allotted the opportunity).

Students who earn more than one F or UW grade – whether in a single semester or across multiple semesters – are considered not making satisfactory academic progress and in poor academic standing. The SAP implications of an F or UW may only be rectified by:

- retaking a course for a passing grade (only one additional opportunity is provided).
- or by complying with a School approved academic plan.

Students who fail to meet either of these expectations may be [terminated from their degree program](#).

Pace of Completion for Fs, UWs and Ws

Further implications of an F, UW or W can be understood in terms of one's pace of completion. Fs and UWs factor into a student's attempted credit, which means that a student's pace of completion will fall below 57 percent (full-time) or 60 percent (part-time). Students below the percentages may be considered not making satisfactory academic progress and in poor academic standing.

Course Repetitions and GPA

Students cannot repeat courses for credit toward their degrees or to improve their GPAs, except in cases when a student has received an F or UW in a required course. While the new grade will not replace the F or UW grade on the transcript, the Academic Affairs Office will informally recalculate a student's GPA for the purpose of determining SAP without considering the F or UW. Repeated courses count toward the maximum number of attempted credits toward the degree. Repeated courses may incur additional tuition and fees.

Withdrawals (W)

The implications of Ws can be understood in terms of pace of completion. Ws are considered unearned credits and can push a student's pace of completion below 57 percent (full-time) or 60 percent (part-time). Having more than one W in a semester will incur some intervention by the Academic Affairs Office. The Academic Affairs Office will determine if any adjustments to a student's SAP assessment are required as a result of the Ws.

Incompletes (IN)

The implications of carrying INs into a new semester can be understood in terms of pace of completion. Incompletes are considered unearned credits and push a student's pace of completion below 57 percent (full-time) or 60 percent (part-time). Carrying any number of INs will incur some

intervention by the Academic Affairs Office. The pace of completion implications of an IN may only be rectified by replacing the IN no later than the deadline provided on the student's completed [Official Request for an Incomplete Form](#). INs assigned a final grade will be calculated into a student's cumulative GPA to determine if any adjustments to their SAP assessment is required.

If a student holds an IN for a course that is a pre-requisite for a subsequent course, the student may not begin the subsequent course until the IN is resolved. Any number of INs may prevent a student from beginning their culminating experience (capstone or internship).

Status Definitions for Satisfactory Academic Progress and Academic Standing

Federal Student Aid-Specific Definitions

Certain status definitions are applicable only to students who receive FSA and who find themselves not making SAP. Students who fail to achieve SAP are placed either into an FSA Warning or FSA Probation status.

FSA Warning

The Climate School places students who receive FSA into a Warning status the first time they do not achieve SAP. Disbursement of FSA is allowed without disruption. Students will receive an email notifying them of this Warning status and the accompanying School-specific status, which may indicate School-level intervention. Students in an FSA Warning status must return to achieving SAP in the next semester of enrollment, or they will be placed in a [Probation status](#). It is possible for a student to not achieve SAP in one semester (Warning), achieve SAP in the subsequent semester, and then be placed into a Warning status again in the third semester should SAP not be achieved.

FSA Probation

A student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress, and who has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated. Students will receive an email notifying them of this Probation status and any accompanying School-specific status.

Some academic plans may take more than one semester for a student to achieve SAP. It is possible for students to remain in a Probation status for successive semesters, as long as they keep to their academic plans. Even in these cases, a student's FSA will be held until the academic plan can be reassessed based on the student's performance during the first semester of probation.

Notifications of SAP and Academic Standing Status

Students who are not meeting achieving SAP and in poor academic standing must be notified of their status. **The Academic Affairs Office will notify all students via email to the [student's Columbia email account](#).** Students should expect notification following the deadline for faculty to submit grades.

Consequences of Not Achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress

When evaluating academic progress, the School checks a qualitative measure (GPA), as well as completion of coursework at the required pace of completion (unearned credit verse earned credit). Students are not achieving SAP if they qualify for any of the above-mentioned status definitions for

Satisfactory Academic Progress and Academic Standing and are:

- at risk of losing their FSA eligibility (per the Federal Student Aid-Specific Definitions)
- at risk of jeopardizing their degree candidacy at the Climate School and may be eligible for termination from their degree program
- at risk of being removed from activities or services: A student may be restricted from participation in academic or extracurricular activities and/or University organizations (including appointments, awards, leadership/committee roles, etc.) or restricted from university services.

Students whose SAP appeal has been granted may be required to submit an [Academic Agreement](#) or [Academic Plan](#) after their performance during the most recently reviewed semester.

Academic Agreement

Students in need of signing an Academic Agreement will be provided with a set of academic standards that they must abide by to assist students in returning to satisfactory academic progress. Standards may include target GPAs for subsequent semester, retaking a course, and more.

Failure to meet the standards noted in the Academic Agreement may prevent a student from returning to satisfactory academic progress, thereby impacting their eligibility for Federal Student Aid and their degree candidacy with the Climate School.

Academic Plans

Students in need of an Academic Plan develop them in partnership with the Academic Affairs Office. Academic Plans will provide academic standards and course requirements designed to help students return to satisfactory academic progress. Standards may include target GPAs for subsequent semester, retaking a course, and more. Designated course requirements may span between one and three semesters. Academic Plans are signed by the student and the Academic Affairs Office.

Failure to adhere to the conditions of an Academic Plan may prevent a student from returning to satisfactory academic progress, thereby impacting their eligibility for Federal Student Aid as well as their degree candidacy with the Climate School.

Restoring FSA Eligibility for Students on Probation

Students who have not met SAP standards in consecutive semesters are determined to be ineligible for Federal Student Aid (FSA) because of an FSA Probation status. Students have the option to appeal the decision. The previously outlined requirements for Academic Agreements and Academic Plans satisfy an FSA appeal's requirements. Students who fail to submit either an Academic Agreement or Academic Plan as directed by their notification will remain ineligible for Federal Student Aid.

[Termination Due to Poor Satisfactory Academic Progress and Academic Standing](#)

Students who are not making satisfactory academic progress and are in poor academic standing in one or more semesters may be terminated from their degree program. A student terminated from their degree program will receive an official letter from the Academic Affairs Office. If the student disagrees with the decision of termination, the student may appeal to the Senior Associate Dean of

Academic Administration within seven business days of receiving the official notification. Grounds for appeal are considered on two criteria:

- **Procedural Error:** Student must identify and define with specificity any errors in the evaluation of their academic progress and how it negatively impacted the final decision.
- **New Information:** Students wishing to submit new information must explain why this information was not made available to school officials when notified of their SAP and Academic Standing Status and how this information would have substantially impacted the final decision.

The Senior Associate Dean of Academic Administration will review the appeal. The decision of the appeal is final and will be sent to the student within seven business days of the appeal request.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND REINSTATEMENT FROM LEAVE

Students who need to pause their studies must apply for a formal Leave of Absence (LOA). **Students are not permitted to advance in their degree program while on LOA.** This may include requirements such as earning course credits or completing a culminating experience.

Leave of absence requests are generally approved for one to two semesters. Anything beyond two semesters requires special approval from the [Academic Affairs Office](#). Typically, after two semesters of leave, a withdrawal from the program is the next step. If a student is in good standing academically, financially, and with no disciplinary record, they can typically reapply to the program. [Re-admission](#) is limited to five years from the last registered semester.

Students must complete the [Climate School Leave of Absence form](#) in addition to the [University's Leave of Absence form](#). Students who request a Leave of Absence in-term – meaning after the start of the current semester – will be subject to a [withdrawal from the semester](#). Students should understand the full implications of a withdrawal, including financial. Students who request a Leave of Absence between terms are not subject to the same withdrawal conditions.

Deadlines and procedures for requesting a return from leave are noted below. Students are expected to monitor their Columbia email while on leave, as this is the official means of [communication used at The Climate School](#).

Any general questions regarding LOA should be directed to the [Academic Affairs Office](#).

Financial Implications for Leave of Absence

For a student taking a leave for any reason, it is vital that students communicate with [Student Financial Services](#) regarding any aid received. A student who is away from their program for more than a semester may be required to begin loan repayments; therefore, it is important to schedule an exit interview with Student Financial Services to discuss the options for a particular loan before requesting a leave. A student who defaults on a loan will be unable to receive any further aid until appropriate payments are made.

All financial obligations to the University must be cleared before reinstatement. **A student with a tuition**

balance will have a Student Financial Services hold and will not be able to register for classes. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any debts that could prevent registration.

Pending budgetary constraints and funding availability, students who go on leave and were previously awarded grant or scholarship funding are not guaranteed a renewal of that funding. Students should discuss funding eligibility with the [Climate School Admissions Office](#) regarding any awarded Climate School scholarships. Ramifications for outside scholarships should be discussed with the provider directly.

Types of Leave

Voluntary Leave (including Uniformed Service Leave of Absence)

A voluntary leave from The Climate School is granted to students who wish to take time away from their studies for various reasons, including employment opportunities, personal or family circumstances, and military service. **A voluntary leave of absence (LOA) is not designated for a student's own health condition** (see [Medical Leave](#)). Students taking any type of leave will have a registration hold placed on their account until a formal request to resume the program has been approved by the Academic Affairs Office.

Requesting Voluntary Leave

To take a voluntary leave of absence, complete the following:

- Meet with the Academic Affairs Office as soon as possible to discuss the leave and potential impact on your academic progression.
- Make a formal request by submitting the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#) from Student Financial Services.

Students will receive an email informing them if the request for leave of absence has been approved. Students expecting a refund after an approved leave request and withdrawal from the semester should contact the [Student Service Center](#) with any questions.

Medical Leave

A student should pursue a medical leave of absence when experiencing health challenges that prohibit them from performing at their optimum and a pause is necessary to return to good health. **If a student experiences a health emergency that requires a lengthy hospital stay, the School will ask them to take a leave of absence.**

Requesting Medical Leave

To take a medical leave of absence, complete the following:

- Meet with the Academic Affairs Office as soon as possible to discuss the leave and potential impact on your academic progression
- Make a formal request by submitting the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#) from Student Financial Services.
- For a Medical Leave to be granted, students must include a letter from a licensed medical professional indicating:

- Support for the leave of absence
- Their recommendation for the length of leave
- Please do not include diagnostic or private medical information

Students will receive an email informing them if the request for a leave of absence has been approved. Students expecting a refund after an approved leave request and withdrawal from the semester should contact the [Student Service Center](#) with any questions.

While on leave

International Students

If you are an international student, you must immediately contact the [International Students and Scholars Office \(ISSO\)](#) to discuss next steps related to your visa status. International students taking anything other than a medical leave must leave the United States within 15 days of their withdrawal date.

Academic Standing while on leave

If a student begins a leave on or before the add/drop deadline listed in the [academic calendar](#), any previously registered courses for the semester will be removed from the student's academic record and will not count toward required residency units. If a leave begins after that deadline, courses may remain on the transcript, and the semester may count toward required residency units.

Courses left on the transcript may be assigned a [Withdrawal \(W\) or Incomplete \(IN\)](#), whichever is deemed appropriate following consultation with the course instructor. Should an IN be deemed appropriate and in compliance with the IN policy, students would resume work on rectifying the INs when they return from leave and are subject to the IN deadline of that semester. **Unless the requesting student is unavailable, the Request for Incomplete form must be submitted alongside the Leave of Absence Request form.** Otherwise, a final letter-grade with missing materials accounted for may be assigned.

Students departing after the add/drop deadline may see an impact to their satisfactory academic progress. Please note that whatever [academic standing](#) students depart with at the start of the leave, they will then assume upon return to their degree programs.

Financial Aid and Tuition Balance while on leave

For a student taking a leave for any reason, it is vital that students communicate with the [Student Financial Planning](#) regarding any aid received. A student who is away from their program for more than a semester may be required to begin loan repayments; therefore, it is important to schedule an exit interview with Financial Aid to discuss the options for a particular loan before requesting a leave. A student who defaults on a loan will be unable to receive any further aid until appropriate payments are made.

All financial obligations to the University must be cleared before reinstatement. **A student with a tuition balance will have a Student Financial Services hold and will not be able to register for classes.** It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any debt that could prevent registration.

Housing while on leave

Students who live in university housing and opt to take a leave must contact [Columbia Residential](#), as they may have to vacate their on-campus housing assignment. Students taking a leave will not be penalized for breaking their lease. Students must follow all moving-out procedures set forth by [Columbia Residential](#).

Campus Involvement while on Leave

While on leave, students will remove themselves from the greater-Columbia University community and not participate in activities such as auditing classes, required culminating experience, student groups, University event programming or otherwise spend time on campus. Therefore, the student Columbia ID and swipe access are deactivated during the leave.

Health Insurance

If students are covered by the Columbia University Student Health Insurance Plan, they should contact the [Insurance Office](#) to discuss coverage while on leave. If students have waived Columbia insurance, they must contact their own insurance provider for details on coverage.

Reinstatement from Leave

When a student on a leave of absence is ready to return, they must contact the [Academic Affairs Office](#) 60 days prior to the semester of their return. Students will need to complete the [Climate School Return from LOA form](#).

From a medical leave

Students returning from an approved medical leave must include a letter from a licensed medical professional supporting their return to the academic program. Please note that students on medical leave will not be reinstated to attend a Columbia summer session. Students returning from medical leave should meet with the Academic Affairs Office during the first two weeks of the semester to ensure a smooth transition back to the campus community.

READMISSION

Students who have been dismissed for academic or disciplinary reasons are not eligible for re-admission.

Students required to apply for re-admission include:

- Students not on a formal leave and not enrolled for one or more consecutive semesters but still within their time to degree.
- Students on a Leave of Absence for more than two semesters but still within their time to degree.
- Students whose Leave of Absence has expired but is within five years from the last registered semester.

To apply for readmission, complete the [online application](#) by the following deadlines (or following business day if the deadline falls on a weekend):

- June 1 for Fall consideration

- October 1 for Spring consideration

Academic records and readmission materials will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee, the Academic Affairs Office, and the Degree Program Director(s). An interview may be required. Students who are readmitted will become subject to all current requirements. A program may require a student to retake examinations and/or courses as deemed necessary. Coursework taken more than five years prior to the application for readmission may not be used toward degree requirements upon readmission. Readmission is not guaranteed.

Questions should be directed to the [Academic Affairs Office](#).

WITHDRAWAL

Withdrawal from courses

Withdrawal from a single course

Students may register and withdraw from semester courses during registration periods posted on the [academic calendar](#) and in accordance with their assigned registration appointment times posted on [Vergil](#). Registration typically consists of one to two registration periods and the Change of Program Period. After the program period change, students must get approval to add or drop a course from their schedule. From the close of the change of program period through the “Last day to drop without it appearing on transcript” posted on the [academic calendar](#).

Students attempting to withdraw from a single course after the change of program deadline should follow [posted registration procedures](#) for dropping full semester or 1st and 2nd quarter classes from their schedule.

Failure (intentional or otherwise) to attend classes does not constitute a formal withdrawal or drop of a class. Students who cease attending but do not formally drop a class will receive a grade of [W \(Withdrawal\)](#) for the course.

In circumstances when students have been referred to the [Center for Student Success and Intervention \(CSSI\)](#), a student may not withdraw from the course in question to avoid participation in subsequent hearings and possible sanctions.

Withdrawal from a term

Registered students, who decide to withdraw from all classes in a semester or fully withdraw from their degree program, must reach out to the [Academic Affairs Office](#) and must complete the [Withdrawal Request Form](#) from Student Financial Services to initiate the withdrawal process.

Not registering for classes does not equate to a withdrawal from one’s degree program. If a registered student decides to withdraw from all classes in a term, the student still has not effectively withdrawn from the degree program. The University Registrar determines the [refund rate](#) for full withdrawal; the School determines the deadlines for dropping classes without notations on one’s transcript. These deadlines are the same for fully withdrawing from a degree program as they are for

dropping an individual class. In most cases, ancillary fees will remain on the account, in addition to a \$75 withdrawal fee.

Students who plan to return to the program must complete the [Climate School Leave of Absence form](#) in addition to the [University's Leave of Absence form](#).

YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM

The US Department of Veteran Affairs provides significant financial aid opportunities to students who served in the US Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001, as well as the dependents of these veterans.

Through a new initiative authorized by the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act, higher education institutions can provide eligible student veterans with a tuition waiver or grant that is matched by the US Department of Veterans Affairs. This program, known as the Yellow Ribbon Program, enhances the base tuition benefits provided by the Post-9/11 GI Bill®.

More information about the program's benefits and eligibility requirements is available online. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program Scholarship. As stipulated by the Post 9/11 GI Bill®, Yellow Ribbon Program benefits are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis; accordingly, it is recommended that you complete the application as soon as possible.

Applying for the Yellow Ribbon Program

1. If you are a qualifying veteran, or the qualifying dependent of a veteran, and you are interested in applying for the Yellow Ribbon Program, you must [apply online](#).
2. In addition to completing the above application, you must submit a [Veterans Certification Request](#) to Columbia's VA Certifying Official to receive VA benefits each semester.

See also the Financing Your Education section of the Veteran Affairs website.

In accordance with Title 38 US Code 3679 subsection (e), this school adopts the following additional provisions for any students using U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Post 9/11 G.I. Bill® (Ch. 33) or Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Ch. 31) benefits, while payment to the institution is pending from the VA. This school will not:

- Prevent nor delay the student's enrollment;
- Assess a late penalty fee to the student;
- Require the student to secure alternative or additional funding;
- Deny the student access to any resources available to other students who have satisfied their tuition and fee bills to the institution, including but not limited to access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities.

However, to qualify for this provision, such students may be required to:

- Produce the Certificate of Eligibility by the first day of class;
- Provide written request to be certified;
- Provide additional information needed to properly certify the enrollment as described in other institutional policies.

For more information about Columbia Climate School's Yellow Ribbon Program scholarship, please email veterans@columbia.edu. View policy information regarding VA benefits [here](#). For general information about veteran affairs at Columbia, please [click here](#).

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official US government website.