

ADMISSIONS

Statement of Basic Academic Admission Policies

Admission to credit courses or degree candidacy at Penn State is governed by policies established by the University Faculty Senate. Although specific applications of these policies may vary from year to year, from location to location, and from program to program, all University admissions are governed by the following general policies:

1. As an institution of higher education, Penn State is committed to making post-high school education available to all who possess a high school diploma or its equivalent without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications. Penn State does not discriminate against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
2. The primary responsibility of the University is to residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Consequently, within limits expressed from time to time by the Board of Trustees of the University, preference shall be given to Pennsylvania residents in the various admissions processes.
3. In order to meet the variety of goals and objectives of the population, the spectrum of offerings is designed to enable persons with a variety of objectives—both degree and non-degree—to receive a higher education. Although access to educational opportunities of the University is open to all, courses offered for credit are available to those holding a high school diploma or its equivalent. Policies governing admission to degree candidacy are established by the University Faculty Senate (with a delegation of policies governing admissions to graduate programs to the Graduate Faculty of the University) under a general policy of offering admission to those whose past academic performance indicates a reasonable probability of success.
4. Undergraduate students are admitted to either baccalaureate degree candidacy or associate degree candidacy. To be admitted to degree candidacy, the individual must present an academic performance record that indicates a reasonable probability of their success in their chosen program. In the case of first-year student admission to undergraduate degree candidacy, performance is measured through a holistic assessment. In the case of advanced standing admission, performance is measured either through success in non-degree programs and courses of the University or by success at some other institution of higher education.
5. Within the space available in particular programs and at particular locations, admission shall be offered preferentially to those whose performance record indicates the highest probability of success in the chosen program—with this process continuing until all available spaces are filled. Although exceptions to this policy may be made from time to time (for example, recipients of scholarships with restricting qualifications), these exceptions may be made only for applicants who meet at least the minimum admission and entrance requirements.
6. If a college or school requires restrictions on its baccalaureate admissions, the priorities or targets established must include provisions to consider qualified students in each of these groups:
 - Admissions Group I - **First-year Admissions:** Applicants who hold a high school diploma or equivalent, who present fewer than 18-semester credits of baccalaureate work (from Penn State or another regionally accredited institution), who meet minimum college or school entrance requirements, and who meet minimum college or school admission standards.
 - Admissions Group II - **Penn State Advanced Standing Admissions:** Applicants who (1) request baccalaureate degree re-enrollment, presenting 18 or more semester credits; (2) request a change from Penn State associate degree to baccalaureate degree status, presenting 18 or more applicable semester credits; (3) request a change from Penn State provisional degree to baccalaureate degree status, presenting 18 or more applicable semester credits; or (4) request a change from Penn State non-degree to baccalaureate degree status, presenting 18 or more applicable semester credits. In all advanced standing admissions at Penn State, the student must have a grade-point average of at least 2.00 and must meet the minimum entrance and advanced standing requirements of the college or school. However, a Penn State student who has had an interruption in enrollment of no fewer than four calendar years and whose cumulative grade-point average is less than 2.00 may petition for re-enrollment with academic renewal in accordance with Senate Policy 57-00.
 - Admissions Group III - **Other Advanced Standing Admissions:** Applicants who have not been students at Penn State and request baccalaureate degree status at Penn State, presenting 18 or more applicable semester credits from a regionally accredited institution. In all advanced standing admissions, it is understood that the applicant must have a cumulative grade-point average of 2.00 as computed at Penn State and meet the minimum entrance and advanced standing requirements of the college or school. However, a student who has not met the entrance requirements or achieved a cumulative grade-point average of 2.00 (on a 4.00 scale) for all graded courses taken at all institutions previously attended, and who has had a four-calendar-year absence from the institution(s), may apply to enroll in credit courses as a provisional student in accordance with Senate Policy 10-00. An applicant who has had an absence from the institution(s) of fewer than four calendar years, and who has not met the entrance requirements or has achieved a cumulative grade-point average of less than 2.00, may apply to enroll in credit courses as a non-degree student in accordance with Senate Policy 14-00.
 - Within these three groups, no special consideration will be given to any group; applicants will be admitted to the college or school on the basis of academic competition (e.g., SAT I scores, grade-point averages, grades in required courses in the college or other degree-granting units, and other evidence predictive of baccalaureate degree performance where available, valid, and reliable).
7. To ensure a proper educational mix of students and to further broaden the educational opportunities offered by the University, the University Faculty Senate and the University administration from time to time may authorize various specialized programs. These programs may permit applicants who do not meet the basic qualifications for admission to degree candidacy to be admitted to such candidacy. These programs may also permit, in selected situations, exceptional students who have not earned a high school diploma or its equivalent to enroll in University credit courses. Such specialized programs may include up to 10 percent of the total admissions group for the University in any one year and up to the maximum of 15 percent of the admissions to any geographic location of the University.
8. Within this general policy, the colleges and school of the University, with the concurrence of the University Faculty Senate, may impose certain educational background requirements (Carnegie Units) that

must be completed by an individual before being admitted to degree candidacy.