

## *So, What IS a Progress Plan?*

### *Description of Progress Plans*

A formal progress plan is required of all students placed on probation following the end-of-semester grade review. It is also advised for students on official warning. The progress plan process consists of identifying three primary components: a description of the difficulties and the reasons for them, strategies for overcoming these difficulties, and specific academic standards to be met during the probation period. If you meet the standards of the progress plan as of the next grade review, it is likely that you will no longer be on academic probation. For students on probation, if the goals of the plan are not met, students will normally be denied registration or dismissed from the college.

### *Procedures for Students on Probation*

As soon as possible, you need to meet with your faculty adviser to devise a plan to overcome your academic difficulties so you may be removed from academic probation. To prepare for this meeting you should first complete a progress plan worksheet (enclosed). This worksheet will serve as the basis for your discussion with your adviser and will assist you when completing your formal progress plan. After meeting with your adviser and then completing your progress plan, you should contact the student services office (extension 7521, E218) to arrange a meeting with one of the deans and to hand in your progress plan. In some instances, particularly when personal issues were a factor in your difficulties, it may be advisable for you to have a meeting where both your adviser and one of the deans in student services are in attendance or to meet with one of the deans prior to meeting with your adviser. Your completed progress plan, with adviser signature, is due to student services by the end of the second week of classes, Friday, September 8, 2006. The document will then be forwarded to the administration committee for final approval for first- and second-year students, and to the division chair for juniors and seniors.

During the process of completing your worksheet and developing your plan, you should try to identify the specific difficulties that interfered with your academic success this past semester and explore strategies directly related to these difficulties. For example, students in academic difficulty often have motivation problems related to personal issues or confusion regarding their academic interests or may never have developed effective study skills. These problems require varied strategies such as personal counseling, exploration of various majors, or instruction and peer tutoring regarding study skills.

Please be aware that if you do not meet with your adviser and make a progress plan, this will be brought to the attention of the division or administration committee at the next grade review when it is considering your situation and determining your academic standing.

### *Establishing Appropriate Academic Standards*

Appropriate academic standards usually include maintaining a normal course load (3 - 4 1/2 units per semester, 7 - 9 units per year) and receiving grades that are of the standard of official warning or better (no worse than one D grade). Your plan will reflect your individual situation, difficulties, resources, and goals and will serve as an agreement with the college regarding how you will return to good academic standing.

When developing your academic standards it is very important that you look carefully at your particular situation and overall academic record. Students tend to make one of two errors in developing their plans. They either establish unrealistically high standards, or they propose standards that are too low to compensate for past deficiencies. An example of the first type of error is a student who writes that he/she will receive all Bs for a semester or a student who states C as the standard for a year-long course even after receiving an F in the first semester. These may be valuable goals, but they may not be as appropriate as minimum standards. The plan is an agreement that is used to help determine whether a student will return to good standing or be denied registration. We do not want to be faced with a situation in which the student did not meet the standards of the plan (e.g. receiving 2 C+'s after setting standards of Bs) but otherwise has a satisfactory overall record. Technically, a student could be denied registration in such a circumstance.

The second type of error occurs when a student's overall record is not satisfactory. The recommended standards (see above) allow the option of one D grade, so a student could propose standards of 2 Cs and 1 D. However, if the past record is not satisfactory (e.g., a C- average or less) these proposed grades will not be adequate to show the administration committee or the division that the student is capable of successful full-time work at Reed. This is particularly an issue for students who are beyond their first year at Reed.

It is important to note that federal standards for financial aid regarding satisfactory academic progress can be stricter than those guidelines recommended above, both in terms of GPA and number of units earned. Any student on financial aid, or planning on applying for aid, should discuss his/her situation with Leslie Limper in the financial aid office prior to formal completion of the progress plan.