

Process for Graduate Students Changing Major Advisors Within the Department of Biological Sciences

On rare occasions, professional and/or personal relationships become irreconcilable. When this occurs, either student or advisor (master's committee member or chair) has the right to sever a working relationship, in accordance with University Policy S14-10. Retirements can also leave a student without an advisor. In such cases, students will have to find another advisor using the process below or face disqualification from the University.

- 1) Matriculated students must immediately notify their major advisor and the Graduate Coordinator in writing once a separation between faculty member and student is formalized.
- 2) **It is the student's responsibility** to find another major advisor (committee chair).
- 3) In most cases students will already have worked out an arrangement with another faculty member or will find an advisor almost immediately after separation
- 4) In general, matriculated students will be given **one semester** (following advisor separation) in which to find a new faculty advisor. Students who have not found a faculty advisor after one semester be placed on administrative-academic probation at the end of the current semester pursuant to University Policy S16-16 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-16.pdf>). Not having an advisor inhibits satisfactory progress toward the degree which is grounds for administrative-academic probation. **An extension may be granted only via written request by the student and approval by the Graduate Coordinator.**
 - a. Students placed on probation will be contacted by the Graduate Coordinator and also will be notified in writing by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, who will provide the conditions for release from academic-probation, and the circumstances that would lead to disqualification should academic-probation not be released. The Department of Biological Sciences conditions to lift administration-academic probation are the following:
 - i. Students will have **one semester** (following advisor separation) in which to find a new faculty advisor. Students who have attended one semester as a graduate student and are in good standing may leave SJSU for one semester (Fall or Spring) without applying for an official leave of absence, as long as they still have degree requirements other than the culminating experience to fulfill. Students must return in the semester following the one semester leave, or they will be de-matriculated from the university and have to re-apply for admission. Summer and Winter registration is not required nor do they count as being in matriculation. Therefore, students do not have to pay fees/enroll in courses during this time and should use this time to find a new faculty advisor.
 - ii. When a new student-faculty match is made, a course of study must be developed, a committee must be formed, a project must be agreed upon, and any administrative issues (*i.e.*, academic probation due to poor grades, course transfers, expired courses) need to be addressed.
 - iii. After a suitable advisor-student match is found, the student will submit a Faculty Acceptance form to the Graduate Coordinator (<http://www.sjsu.edu/biology/graduate-programs/graduate-forms/index.html>).

- 5) If the student does not find a new faculty advisor within the prescribed time period, that student will be administratively academically disqualified. The Graduate Coordinator will notify the student in writing that the student has not made satisfactory progress towards degree completion. The Graduate Coordinator or Department Chair will also inform the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and the Registrar (of both probation and DQ) as well as the Registrar, who will enter the notation on the official student record. The administrative-academic probationary status will be removed from the record if the student finds a suitable match and returns to good standing.

Approved: 10/12/16 after revision from Associate Dean Bruck, Graduate Studies