

Handbook for Students

What is UASH?

UASH is the Undergraduate Academic Standards and Honors committee. It is composed of 9 professors elected by the Caltech faculty, and 5 students (3 voting, 2 alternate) selected by the Academics and Research Committee (ARC), the Registrar, and the Undergraduate Deans. The Undergraduate Dean is also a voting member; the Executive Director of Student Wellness Services and the Undergraduate Associate Deans sit on the committee in an advisory capacity only.

As its name suggests, its task is twofold. First, it is responsible for awarding a variety of academic honors (e.g., the Green, Froehlich, Housner prizes and Undergraduate Senior Thesis prizes).

Secondly, it is responsible for ensuring that a consistent set of standards and rules is applied in academic matters involving undergraduates. UASH does not deal with financial matters (such as requests for financial aid or assistance), nor with matters concerning students' behavior or conduct (except insofar as that conduct affects their academic performance).

UASH typically meets 3-4 times per term. The full schedule, as well as all of the forms, can be found on the registrar's website here: <http://www.registrar.caltech.edu/uash>. For full consideration, completed petitions must be submitted by the relevant deadline.

It is highly recommended that you show your petition to your undergraduate dean and/or your advisor early, for review and comment, before your final submission. The Associate Deans are available for consultation as you put your materials together, and it is helpful for them as they prepare to lead the discussion on your case.

All the information you submit to UASH in your petitions is private, and will only be shared with those who have a need to know. If you are concerned about revealing deeply personal issues in your petition or to particular UASH members, please discuss methods for handling this with the deans.

The rest of this handbook outlines the kinds of petitions considered by UASH; the process for submitting them; and the committee's typical considerations when assessing them. **Please consult the catalog for more detailed information.**

Types of Petitions:

Further Work Petitions. This is a request to allow you to stay on at Caltech beyond the normal twelve terms so as to finish the courses you need for graduation. If you will need more than one extra term to complete your requirements, submit a petition for all additional terms. Please note that future terms will be re-evaluated each term based upon course completion of the previous term. Updated petitions may be requested in order to continue.

UASH grants Further Work Petitions **ONLY** to enable students to graduate in the shortest time possible. You will not be allowed further terms to complete a double major, nor to take additional courses that do not fulfill outstanding requirements.

Grade Change Petitions. This is a request to correct a grade that has been erroneously recorded on your transcript. It must be the result of faculty error.

If you wish to petition for a grade to be changed from an F to an E, you must go through UASH. If you wish a grade to be changed from an F to an I, please contact your Associate Dean.

Late Add Petitions. This is a request to make a change to your transcript so that it reflects the courses you actually completed. Late Add petitions can add a course to your transcript.

UASH grants Late Add petitions ONLY when there has been a genuine mistake made in the recording of your classes. It does not grant these petitions when it appears that a student is “grade shopping” -- i.e., holding out on adding a course until they know what grade is likely to be forthcoming. UASH will not allow retroactive overloads.

Late Drop Petitions. Petitions by undergraduate students for late drops (i.e., requests to drop a course after Drop Day) will be considered by the UASH Committee, but will only be approved if circumstances beyond the student’s control prevented them from dropping a course or courses by the posted deadline. Such petitions must be submitted before the end of the term following the term when the course was taken, or within the first term of return, if the student is on leave in the term following the term when the course was taken. If approved, a W will be recorded on the student’s transcript in place of a grade for that course. W’s will not be included in the computation of the student’s grade-point average. Courses will be expunged from the student’s record only in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the UASH Committee.

Petitions from graduating seniors submitted later than the first UASH meeting following graduation (which normally takes place shortly after graduation) will not be accepted for consideration, except to correct an error by the Institute.

Reinstatement Petitions and Appeals. When a student is ineligible for the first time, students are to send a reinstatement petition to the dean or associate dean of undergraduate students. The dean may choose to reinstate them, in which case they will be on academic probation. Alternatively, the dean may direct them to petition the Undergraduate Academic Standards and Honors Committee (UASH) for reinstatement. UASH will either approve their petition for reinstatement and place them on academic probation, or require them to withdraw from the Institute for at least two terms.

When a student becomes ineligible a second time, they will be required to withdraw from the Institute for at least two terms. Summer does not count as a term. A student who has been required to leave the Institute because of academic ineligibility may, after at least two terms of leave, petition the Undergraduate Academic Standards and Honors (UASH) Committee for reinstatement. The UASH Committee’s decision regarding reinstatement will be based largely on whether or not such students have made good use of their time while away from the Institute. Useful activities include being gainfully employed, having an internship, engaging in a significant amount of volunteer work, or successfully completing courses at another college or university. The Committee will also expect that students applying for reinstatement will have completed work in all Caltech classes in which they had received an E or I grade.

Students who are ineligible to petition may request an exception to the above. To do so, they must first obtain permission from two of the following three individuals: the dean of undergraduate students, the chair of the UASH Committee, and the Registrar. Such requests require that a reinstatement petition be sent to the Registrar’s Office at least three days prior to the next UASH Committee meeting’s published deadline. When a student becomes ineligible a third time, they will not be allowed to continue to enroll at Caltech.

UASH’s primary criterion in assessing a student’s Reinstatement petition is *whether the student is capable of successfully completing their classes in the coming term and making progress towards the degree*. Students who are spending time away due to ineligibility should think critically about how they are spending that time away; either full-time employment or a full term of courses at another institution is highly recommended, as a way of demonstrating ability to succeed in an academic setting and/or readiness to return to a time-intensive environment. Ineligible students are encouraged to be in touch with their associate dean periodically while away, in order to provide updates about their progress.

Students who cite physical or mental health conditions as relevant to their ineligibility should also seek to address these issues through relevant treatment from a licensed medical professional. It is recommended that students have their provider(s) complete a Provider Report Form if they plan to include references to their medical conditions in a reinstatement petition, and that they have a plan to address any ongoing physical or mental health needs through use of on and off campus resources upon return to enrolled status.

NOTE: One of the most common reasons why students fall behind in their coursework is that they are spending their time completing E's or I's from previous terms. Therefore, UASH generally does not grant readmission to students with outstanding E's or I's. If there is some reason why you could not complete an outstanding E or I before petitioning UASH, you should make this clear in your petition.

If a student is denied reinstatement, there is an opportunity to appeal.

How UASH Will Inform You of Its Decision

The Registrar's Office will inform students by email of UASH's decision regarding their petitions no more than one day after the UASH meeting. Students will be told the reasons for a denial and (if appropriate) given advice on what they might do to improve the chance that their petition will be granted, should they decide to petition again or make an Appeal.

Appeals

Late Add/Drop, Grade Change, Further Work and Underload Petitions

No appeal from UASH's decision on these petitions is allowed. However, students may always gather additional relevant evidence and resubmit their petition at a future time.

In the case of appeals, students will be notified in person, if they have appeared in person before the Committee. The Associate Deans will meet with these students later that afternoon, in order to discuss either plans for return, or plans for what a student will do while away from Caltech.

Reinstatement Petitions

Students whose Reinstatement Petition has been denied may appeal the Committee's decision. Appeals usually will be considered on the Friday of the first week of term. but consult the UASH website for meeting dates and deadline for submission of materials.

In the case of appeals, UASH allows students to appear personally before the Committee in order to answer the Committee's questions and further argue their case for reinstatement. If you are appealing and wish to appear personally before the Committee, you should check the appropriate box on the UASH Appeals form, and make yourself available for an interview from 9 a.m. in the lobby of the Center for Student Services. You should wait there until the Committee asks to see you.

The Committee's decision on appeals is final, though students may always submit new petitions for Reinstatement in future terms.