

Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) Policies & Procedures for Off-Campus Study GPA Petitions

The Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) is comprised of three faculty members, representatives from the Office of Academic Advising, the Registrar's office, and two students nominated by SGA. The office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges has a designated Program Manager who presents student petitions to the CAS; this Program Manager does not vote on the CAS decision. The CAS meets once a week during the academic year. Petitions are reviewed by CAS during those weekly meetings only.

To study off campus, Skidmore requires that a student has a GPA of at least 3.0. Over three-quarters of the students in the sophomore and junior classes at Skidmore achieve a 3.0 or better. The CAS considers petitions for students that do not meet this GPA requirement on a case-by-case basis.

All students wishing to present a petition to the CAS must meet with an OCSE Program Manager to discuss their individual petitions and the CAS process. Students are strongly advised to meet with the Program Manager who works directly with the CAS. This is the student's responsibility to arrange. This document serves as a reference tool for all students wishing to petition the CAS.

Below is a list of information that must be included in order for a petition to be considered by the Committee:

- A one (1) page personal statement written by the student outlining the following:
 1. The student's academic performance to date and why her/his GPA is currently below 3.0.
 2. The student's previous experience with the host culture of the program abroad (or successful experience with other cultures), fluency in the language needed for success in the program abroad, and the academic focus of the program on the student's area of special academic strength (for both U.S. programs and those abroad). These factors may enhance the strength of the application; however, they cannot replace the need for a record of solid academic achievement.
 3. Explanation of why studying off campus now is most appropriate, rather than opting for a later semester or summer study.
 4. Explanation of how s/he plans to improve current GPA and how off-campus study supports the student's overall academic goals.
- Two letters of recommendation from faculty members explaining why they support the student's application to study abroad, preferably one from within the student's major, or from the student's academic advisor. It is important that these faculty letters of recommendation speak to the student's performance in their respective classes as well as the faculty member's opinion on the student's ability to succeed on the proposed off-campus program, despite the low cumulative GPA. The letter should also specify and support the student's CAS petition statement. It is the student's responsibility to work with their professors to obtain these letters. It is advised that they share this document with those that will be writing the letters of recommendation for the Committee.

The committee considers all petitions on an individual basis, and therefore may approve a 2.75 and/or deny a 2.9 based on the quality of personal statement and faculty recommendations, as well as a demonstrated improvement in academic record. CAS representatives prefer at least two semesters of above 3.0 level work and a high level of academic achievement within the major. The CAS also prefers an upward academic trajectory, understanding that one poor semester early in the first year on campus can have a tremendous impact on a student's cumulative GPA. Finally, the CAS looks for demonstrated maturity and self-discipline indicating that the student is likely to be a positive representative of Skidmore College on the student's program of choice. If a student is approved, OCSE and CAS expect that s/he will take this role as a global citizen and Skidmore representative seriously. **CAS & OCSE reserves the right to withdraw a student if s/he does not meet the stipulations or conditions placed upon her/his conditionally approved application.**

Based upon the consideration of the individual petition there are a few possible outcomes:

1. The student could be denied.
2. The student could be approved without any condition.
3. The student could be asked to re-petition when additional grades are available for consideration.

The OCSE Program Manager who works with the CAS will present students' petitions on their behalf and will notify students of the committee decision within three days of the committee meeting. Students cannot appear in person to present their petition to the committee at any time.