

Proposal to Revise Policy 01.04.010, Course Drops and Withdrawals

Background Information

In Spring 2024, the University System of Georgia revised a section of Policy 3.5.2, Symbols Not Included in Determining the Grade Point Average, as follows:

Previous:

“W” indicates that a student was permitted to withdraw without penalty. Withdrawals without penalty will not be permitted after the mid-point of the total grading period, including final examinations, except in cases of hardship as determined by the appropriate official of the respective institution.

Revised:

“W” indicates that a student was permitted to withdraw without academic penalty. Each institution, following guidance outlined in the Academic and Student Affairs Handbook, shall determine the last date within a term for withdrawals without academic penalty. Exceptions in cases of hardship will be determined by the appropriate official of the respective institution.

This revision provides all USG institutions with the freedom to set a withdrawal deadline optimized for their individual academic calendar. Research done across UGA's peer and aspirant institutions highlighted the positive impacts of a withdrawal deadline set later in the semester. Key findings include:

- Students may have limited feedback on their performance in the first half of the semester, leading to preemptive withdrawals due to concern about their potential to do well. Those with the HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship may be especially wary of remaining in a course as a GPA dip may lead to a loss of eligibility. Later withdrawal deadlines provide an opportunity for the student to have a more realistic understanding of their potential final course grade.
- Course performance at the midpoint may not be a good indicator of a student's potential in a course. Later withdrawal deadlines provide students with an opportunity to connect with campus resources and take advantage of academic interventions that will allow them to be successful in a course.
- When a student withdraws from a course, it typically means they must retake the course - or take another replacement course - in a subsequent term. Course retakes

can result in a delay in a student's planned term of graduation and can also result in the same student utilizing a course seat twice, which negatively impacts course availability for other students.

A revision to UGA's Policy 01.01.010, Course Drops and Withdrawals, is hereby proposed. The effective date for this policy revision is fall semester 2024.

Current UGA Policy

Course Drops and Withdrawals

Policy Number 01.04.010

Students who withdraw from courses before the withdrawal deadline (two weeks after the midpoint, as specified by the official calendar) will receive a grade of W. Withdrawals from courses will not be permitted after the withdrawal deadline except in cases of hardship as determined by Student Care and Outreach (SCO) within the Division of Student Affairs. Students with an active financial or registration hold on their record must clear that hold before being able to withdraw from their coursework.

Students may drop one, some, or all of their classes during the drop/add period. Courses dropped in this manner do not appear on a student's transcript and are not considered as hours attempted for financial aid purposes. No grade is assigned for such courses. However, a student who wishes to withdraw from a course after the last day of the drop period for a term must withdraw through ATHENA (Online Student Information System).

If the student withdraws before the semester's withdrawal deadline, the student will receive a grade of W. An instructor may withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences as defined in the course syllabus, and the student will receive a grade of W.

If the student does not initiate the withdrawal, the Registrar will notify the instructor and the student of the withdrawal.

If a student experiences significant personal hardship (e.g., medical or family emergency, prolonged illness), SCO can approve a hardship withdrawal from all courses in the term for which a student is currently registered or in previous semesters (retroactive hardship withdrawals). In the case of an approved hardship withdrawal from all courses, the Registrar will assign grades of W for those classes. The instructor must be informed of the assignment of the W grade.

Retroactive hardship withdrawals are rarely granted if it has been more than two years since the last day of class for which the withdrawal is sought. Extraordinary justification must be shown. In the case of approved retroactive hardship withdrawals, the Registrar will assign a grade of W. The instructor who originally assigned the grade must be informed of the change of grade.

A hardship withdrawal cannot ordinarily be used to withdraw selectively from some courses while remaining enrolled in other courses. Selective withdrawal will be permitted only under exceptional circumstances. In these cases, SCO will document the hardship

and work with the Registrar's Office to assign a withdrawal grade for each course.

Each year during the fall semester, SCO will submit a written report to the Educational Affairs Committee summarizing the number of hardship withdrawals granted (both complete and partial) within the past year and, in the case of partial hardship withdrawals, the circumstances justifying the use of a partial withdrawal.

If a student is suspended by the Office of Student Conduct following a violation of the University's Code of Conduct not related to academic dishonesty, the Office of Student Conduct may facilitate a University-initiated withdrawal from courses for which a student is registered for the term. The Registrar will assign grades of W for those classes. The instructor must be informed of the assignment of the W grade.

All probation and exclusion rules apply regardless of the circumstances of the withdrawal. For more information, see General Academic Regulations related to Academic Probation and Academic Dismissal.

No student shall be withdrawn from a course for lack of a prerequisite after the end of one calendar week from the beginning of the term.

No refund is available for a reduction in hours due to individual course withdrawals that occur after the drop/add period.

Students should be aware that a reduction in their hours might result in the loss of full-time student status and thus affect their financial aid, scholarships, athletic and ticket eligibility, University housing accommodations, use of University resources and access to University facilities, immigration status for international students, Veterans Educational Benefits. Students should contact the appropriate office and their academic advisor with questions about the impact of their withdrawal from a course before initiating a withdrawal. Students who are returning from academic dismissal are advised to consult with their academic advisor prior to withdrawal because violation of the minimum enrollment requirements can lead to a second dismissal from the University. Veterans and dependents of veterans who receive educational benefits must notify the Veterans Education Benefits Area in the Office of the Registrar of any course load reductions.

Implementation

Students who wish to withdraw from a course should initiate the withdrawal procedure within the instructional department or with their advisor, if required by their college or school. Instructors who wish to withdraw a student from a course because of excessive absences should initiate the withdrawal procedure within the instructional department. (The term "excessive absences" is defined in the syllabus for the course.)

The instructional department should forward the completed withdrawal form with the

instructor's signature and grade assignment to the Registrar's Office. Withdrawal forms for graduate students must be routed through the Graduate Records Office.

Proposed UGA Policy Revision

Course Drops and Withdrawals

Policy Number 01.04.010

Students who withdraw from courses before the withdrawal deadline (~~two weeks after the midpoint, as specified by the official calendar~~) will receive a grade of W. The withdrawal deadline, specified by the official Academic Calendar, will be prior to the conclusion of the eleventh full week of classes for any fall or spring term consisting of at least fifteen weeks of instructional time. Holidays and breaks falling in the first eleven weeks are excluded when counting the weeks of the term. If an academic term contains less than four weeks of instructional time, the withdrawal deadline shall be set no later than one week prior to the last day of classes, excluding final examinations. For all other parts of term, the withdrawal deadline shall be set no later than two weeks prior to the last day of classes, excluding final examinations.

Withdrawals from courses will not be permitted after the withdrawal deadline except in cases of hardship as determined by Student Care and Outreach (SCO) within the Division of Student Affairs. Students with an active financial or registration hold on their record must clear that hold before being able to withdraw from their coursework.

Students may drop one, some, or all of their classes during the drop/add period. Courses dropped in this manner do not appear on a student's transcript and are not considered as hours attempted for financial aid purposes. No grade is assigned for such courses. However, a student who wishes to withdraw from a course after the last day of the drop period for a term must withdraw through ATHENA (Online Student Information System).

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Impact on Academic Calendar

<https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/calendars/academic-calendars/>

If the policy revision approved, the following updates will be made to the Academic Calendar:

Spring 2025 Withdrawal Deadline:

Current: March 20, 2025
Revised: April 3, 2025
Last Day of Classes: April 28, 2025

Maymester 2025 Withdrawal Deadline:

Current: May 22, 2025
Revised: May 27, 2025
Last Day of Classes: June 3, 2025

Extended Session 2025 Withdrawal Deadline:

Current: June 20, 2025
Revised: July 16, 2025
Last Day of Classes: July 30, 2025

Thru Term 2025 Withdrawal Deadline:

Current: July 2, 2025
Revised: July 16, 2025
Last Day of Classes: July 30, 2025

Short I 2025 Withdrawal Deadline:

Current: June 18, 2025
Revised: June 25, 2025
Last Day of Classes: July 2, 2025

Short II 2025 Withdrawal Deadline:

Current: July 18, 2025
Revised: July 24, 2025
Last Day of Classes: July 31, 2025

