

## Proposal

Current language:

### Course Withdrawal Policy

"A student may withdraw from a course in either the fall semester or the spring semester, after the end of the fifteenth day of instruction through the end of the last day of the ninth week."

### Documented Late Course Withdrawal

"After the end of the last day of the ninth week in either the fall semester or the spring semester through the last day of classes/instruction for the respective semester, if a student believes that the student's circumstances are extraordinary (poor performance in a course is not an extraordinary circumstance), a student may petition for late withdrawal from a course for documented extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control which occurred after the end of the last class day of the ninth week in either the fall semester or the spring semester through the last day of classes/instruction for the respective semester (change of employment hours, major illness or death in immediate family, student's own major illness, the onset of which occurred after the last day of the ninth week in either the fall semester or spring semester)."

Proposed language:

### Course Withdrawal Policy

"A student may withdraw from a course in either the fall semester or the spring semester, after the end of the fifteenth day of instruction through the end of the last day of the ninth week (excluding Spring Break).

### Documented Late Course Withdrawal

"If a student believes his or her circumstances are extraordinary (poor performance in a course is not an extraordinary circumstance), a student may petition for late withdrawal from a course after the end of the last day of the ninth week (excluding Spring Break) in either the fall semester or the spring semester through the last day of classes/instruction for the respective semester.

In order for a documented late course withdrawal to be approved, the student must provide documentation of extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control, and these circumstances must have occurred after the end of the last class day of the ninth week in either the fall semester or the spring semester (excluding Spring Break) through the last day of classes/instruction for the respective semester. Examples of acceptable extenuating circumstances are a change of employment hours that make class attendance impossible, a major illness or death in the immediate family, or the student's own major illness or injury."

## **Justification**

In Spring 2011, the Midterm Grade Policy was approved. It requires faculty members to submit grades for all 100 and 200 level courses by the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> week of each semester. One of the rationales for this policy was the ability to inform students of their achievement in classes and allow them the opportunity to withdraw from a class in which they are doing poorly.

The current Course Withdrawal policy allows student to withdraw from a course through the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> week of the semester.

In the Fall semester, there are no issues with the current timeline of midterm grade submission and the end of the course withdrawal period. Students have the opportunity to receive midterm grades, meet with an adviser and make a decision whether or not to withdraw from a class. However, in each Spring semester the week of Spring Break makes the turn around time between these events too short to be effective.

The eighth week of the semester typically falls during Spring Break. In 2013, for example, Spring Break was March 16 – 24, and the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> week was Friday March 22. We moved the midterm grades submission date to March 27 to allow for the break, but the last day to withdraw from a course was March 29 (it also happened to be Good Friday.)

Adding wording that specifically excludes Spring Break from the counting of the weeks effectively adds an additional week between the midterm grade due date and the end of the withdrawal period.

We have made some changes in wording in the Documented Late Course Withdrawal Policy to clarify the language. This new language includes the new clause regarding the Spring Break exemption and makes the policy easier to read and comprehend than the current catalog wording. The only substantive change is in the last sentence of the policy. We have added the phrase “Examples of acceptable extenuating circumstance are” because over the years we have often found students to have acceptable extenuating circumstances that fall out of the three areas listed in the old policy.