

Reference Number: S09-196

Senate Approval Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2009

Academic Senate Policy

#S09-196

WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSES

(Formerly policies #S98-196 & #S96-196)

(n.b.: This policy incorporates revisions approved by the Academic Senate on 12May2009)

During the first two weeks of instruction, withdrawing from courses is permitted without restriction or academic penalty. This action is commonly referred to as “dropping a class.” No symbol is recorded on the student’s permanent record, future class lists, or grade report. The drop period (the withdrawal-without-penalty period) is the two-week period beginning when all classes meeting more than once a week begin. The procedure for dropping a course during this period is described in detail by the Registrar’s Office.

At SF State, dropping a course is the student’s responsibility. However, faculty are authorized to instructor-drop students who do not attend the first class meeting or do not meet the course criteria. Faculty are strongly encouraged to instructor-drop all students who are not attending class before the end of the drop period.

B. Third Week through the Twelfth Week of Instruction

From the beginning of the third week through the twelfth week of instruction, withdrawal from a course will be permissible, for serious and compelling reasons, by consulting the faculty member teaching the course. The student must complete a “Petition for Withdrawal from Course or University” and submit the petition to the instructor for a decision. The petition must be accompanied by a copy of the student’s unofficial SFSU transcripts. The instructor will have the prerogative to approve or deny the request. All petitions must be signed by the instructor and by the department chair/program director and/or the college dean. If the student has previously withdrawn from the same course two times, the faculty member, department chair /program director, and/or the college dean shall deny the petition.

The student will receive a ‘W’ grade (Withdrawal) if the withdrawal is approved. The student’s name will appear on the grade report with a pre-assigned ‘W,’ and the student’s permanent record will show a ‘W’ grade. However, such grades will not be used to compute a student’s GPA.

From the beginning of the third week through the twelfth week of the semester, an instructor may initiate the withdrawal of a student for serious and compelling reasons, if the student has not previously withdrawn from the same course two times. The instructor will submit the withdrawal petition to the department chair /program director for approval.

C. Thirteenth Week through the Last Day of Instruction

Withdrawals shall not be permitted after the twelfth week of instruction except in cases, such as accident or serious illness, where the cause of withdrawal is due to circumstances clearly beyond the student’s control and the assignment of an Incomplete is not practicable. Withdrawals of this sort may involve total withdrawal from the university or may involve only withdrawal from one or more courses, except that course grade and credit or an Incomplete may be assigned for courses in which sufficient work has been completed to permit an evaluation to be made. Requests for permission to withdraw from a course under these circumstances shall be handled and filed as indicated in Section B, except that such requests must also be approved by the Board of Appeals and Review (BOAR). Requests for permission to withdraw from the university under these circumstances do not require instructor, department chair/program director, or college dean approval; these requests shall be submitted by the student directly to the Registrar for review by BOAR

Such withdrawals will not count against the maximum number of withdrawal units provided for in Section D. The Registrar’s Office is authorized to establish a unique grade symbol, e.g., “WM”, to differentiate between withdrawals permitted under Section C from withdrawals permitted under Section B.

D. Maximum Number of Withdrawal Units

Undergraduate students may withdraw from no more than 18 semester-units of courses taken in matriculated status at SF State. This limit does not apply to coursework completed via self-support enrollment. Only withdrawals approved as described in Section B for matriculated students' enrollment in regular SF State courses in Fall 2009 and subsequent semesters shall be counted towards the limit on withdrawals. Approved student-initiated withdrawals submitted as described in Section C will not count against the maximum number of withdrawal units provided for in this section.

Course withdrawals that result from a student petition to "withdraw from the university" (see Section C above) do not count against the maximum number of withdrawal units provided in this section.

E. Appeal

The student may appeal the instructor, chair/director, or dean's denial of a withdrawal request through to the Board of Appeals and Review (BOAR). Withdrawals approved by BOAR or related administrative action shall be assigned a grade of 'W' or, if approved under Section C, "WM."

F. Bulletin Copy

The following statements shall appear in the campus catalog:

During the first two weeks of instruction, dropping a course(s) is permitted without restriction or academic penalty. No symbol is recorded on the student's permanent record. The procedure for dropping a course during this period is described in detail by the Registrar's Office.

After the first two weeks but before the thirteenth week of instruction, withdrawal from a course is permissible, only for serious and compelling reasons, by consulting the instructor and obtaining the approval of the instructor, department chair/program director, and college dean. The student should submit the appropriate petition and supporting documents (including unofficial transcripts) to the instructor. The instructor will review, approve or deny, and sign the petition. If the withdrawal is approved, the student will submit the signed petition to the department or college office for review. If the student has previously withdrawn from the same course two times, the petition will be denied. Undergraduate students may withdraw from no more than 18 semester-units of courses taken in matriculated status at SF State. This limit does not apply to coursework completed via self-support enrollment, withdrawals approved prior to Fall 2009, or withdrawals permitted after the twelfth week of instruction (see below). The petition will be denied if approval would result in an undergraduate student exceeding the withdrawal limit. Should the instructor be unavailable despite the student's best effort to meet with him/her, the withdrawal request may be reviewed and determined by the department chair/program director in which the course is given.

Withdrawals are not permitted after the twelfth week of instruction except in cases, such as accident or serious illness, where the cause of withdrawal is due to circumstances clearly beyond the student's control and the assignment of an Incomplete grade is not practicable. Under these circumstances, a student may elect to withdraw from a course or from the university. The procedure to withdraw from a course under these circumstances is as described above, except that such requests must also be approved by the Board of Appeals and Review (BOAR). Requests for permission to withdraw from the university under these circumstances are submitted by the student directly to the Registrar for review by BOAR. Course withdrawals resulting from these requests will not count against the 18-unit withdrawal limit.

The student may receive a grade of 'W,' which will appear on his/her permanent record. However, a 'W' grade shall not be counted toward the student's GPA. The student may appeal an instructor, chair/director, or dean's denial of a withdrawal request to the Board of Appeals and Review (BOAR).

The symbol "W" indicates that the student was permitted to withdraw from the course after the second week of instruction with the approval of the instructor and appropriate campus officials. It carries no connotation of quality of student performance and is not used in calculating grade point average or progress points.

Approved by the Academic Senate at its meeting on May 12, 2009

Signed by President Robert A. Corrigan on June 20, 2009
