

11-10-2008

Policy on Limiting Course Withdrawals.

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Recommended Citation

Humphrey, Patricia; Yanochik, Mark; and Academic Standards Committee, "Policy on Limiting Course Withdrawals." (2008). *Faculty Senate Index*. 461.

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Approved by the Senate: 11/19/2008
Not Approved by the Senate:
Approved by the President: 12/1/2008
Not Approved by the President:

Policy on Limiting Course Withdrawals.

Submitted by: Patricia Humphrey for Mark Yanochik/Academic Standards Committee

11/10/2008

Motion:

The Academic Standards Committee recommends that the Senate approve the policy on limiting withdrawals from courses to 5, with certain exceptions, as proposed by the First Year Experience Task Force.

Rationale:

This idea for this policy was first proposed by the First Year Task Force AY 2006-2007. It is really tied in with approved policies such as no adjusted GPA in moving our students toward academic excellence.

This motion submitted by Pat Humphrey on behalf of the Academic Standards Committee and Mark Yanochik (Summer 2008 Chair).

This policy proposes that any undergraduate students be limited to five (5) withdrawals during his/her entire tenure at the University. This amounts to (assuming 3 hour courses) allowing withdrawals of 12% of the hours required for graduation. Exceptions will be granted for such reasons as military or medical withdrawals. In addition, exceptions may be granted above the 5 course limit by the student's dean. Summer courses will not count toward the five course limit as these are typically sufficiently compacted in time frames as to constitute a different set of circumstances.

We are not alone in the System in instituting such a policy. UGA has instituted a 4 course limit effective Fall 08; Kennesaw has an 8 course limit. The full draft policy will be posted to the Senate website.

The policy was unanimously approved by the Academic Standards Committee at it May 19, 2008 meeting. Proposed implementation is for Fall 2009.

Senate Response:

Approved by the Senate 11/19/2008 MOTION: "Policy on Limiting Course Withdrawals" David Rostal (COST) reported that the Academic Standards Committee had met and recommended that the Senate approve the motion of the policy on limiting the number of course withdrawals to five.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator asked for a second and then asked Patricia Humphrey to talk about the rationales for the motion.

Pat Humphrey (COST) explained that the motion had come up during an Academic Standards Committee meeting in May. Then the progress of the motion was delayed because an academic policy requires approval of the full senate. According to the motion, students would be limited to five withdrawals through their tenure as undergraduate students with a few exceptions. Summer courses do not count because they are compressed enough that students should have an out. Other reasons include military and medical withdrawals. In addition, students would have the option of appealing to the Dean for an extra exemption. The idea is to make students use their time more wisely and move through more expeditiously.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator then opened the floor for discussion.

Patricia Walker (CLASS) asked about the phrase "in cases where students completely withdraw from the University, they may petition in writing to the Dean," asking why completely withdrawing would not be an automatic exemption and if it could become one?

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator called upon Chris Caplinger for clarification. Chris Caplinger (Director) First Year Experience explained that such cases would likely be approved by the Dean of Students, but the phrase was added so that students did not have an incentive to withdraw from all classes in order to get around the exemption

policy. As written, the motion takes away the incentive to withdraw and does not encourage what the policy is trying to limit.

Les Furr (CHHS) added that CHHS faculty had also questioned the wording “students may completely withdraw from the University.” They wondered if students who changed their major and wanted to drop classes related to the previous major but continue with the University could be covered in this same clause. Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator suggested that situation might be covered under “grounds to petition?” Chris Caplinger (Director) FYE agreed.

Richard Flynn (CLASS) asked if the policy assumed that classes dropped during drop/add would not be included.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator responded that those classes are not recorded as withdrawals.

Barbara Mallory (COE) briefly questioned whether summer is a term or a semester. Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator clarified that summer semester is an overarching term that includes both Long Term, Short Term A and Short Term B.

Bob Jackson (COBA) asked if the courses and the credits earned in the summer are worth less than in regular semester since they are an exception.

Chris Caplinger (Director) FYE explained that the committee had thought about the implication but concluded that summer is different in that students are less likely to really know exactly what they are getting into, but research also shows that going to summer school is very positively correlated with graduation. The policy, therefore, promotes summer attendance.

Linda Bleicken (Provost) added that the recommendation came from the First Year Experience Task Force, a faculty committee. She also noted that a preliminary analysis of the number of classes that students actually drop is small, stating that perhaps less than 10% of students actually drop more than five courses.

Marc Cyr (CLASS) Senate Moderator then called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

President's Response:

12/1/2008 From Dr. Grube:

Following review of the recommendation adopted by the Faculty Senate at the November 19, 2008, Faculty Senate meeting, as provided in your memo of November 20, 2008, I have approved a response to the motion presented to the Senate by Dr. Patricia Humphrey on behalf of the Academic Standards Committee and Dr. Mark Yanochik (Summer 2008 Chair).

MOTION: The Academic Standards Committee recommends that the Senate approve the policy on limiting withdrawals from courses to 5, with certain exceptions, as proposed by the First Year Experience Task Force.

RATIONALE: This idea for this policy was first proposed by the First Year Task Force AY 2006-2007. It is really tied in with approved policies such as no adjusted GPA in moving our students toward academic excellence. This policy proposes that any undergraduate students be limited to five (5) withdrawals during his/her entire tenure at the University. This amounts to (assuming 3 hour courses) allowing withdrawals of 12% of the hours required for graduation. Exceptions will be granted for such reasons as military or medical withdrawals. In addition, exceptions may be granted above the 5 course limit by the student's dean. Summer courses will not count toward the five course limit as these are typically sufficiently compacted in time frames as to constitute a different set of circumstances.

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