

MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Policies & Procedures Committee

From: Mr. Matthew Brunner, Dr. Raymond Linville, and Dr. Patricia Shoemaker

Date: March 30, 2011

RE: University Withdrawal Policy Change Proposal

Proposal: Eliminate the one university withdrawal limitation from the University Withdrawal policy.

Background and Rationale: This group was formed to research and consider a change to our Medical Withdrawal policy. The Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students Offices only award Medical Withdrawals as exceptions to the University Withdrawal policy, that is, if the University Withdrawal deadline had past or if a student had already used their one allowable University Withdrawal. This caused students problems because they were forced to use their one and only University Withdrawal for medical reasons and would, therefore, no longer have the option to withdraw from the University for non-medical reasons.

Upon review of our policy, as well as our fellow state and peer institutions' policies, it was determined that the VPSA/DOS practice of only granting Medical Withdrawals as exceptions to the University Withdrawal policy was fairly common. What was uncommon, however, was our policy that restricts students to only one University Withdrawal. Indeed, we are the only state institution that has this limitation, and we are one of just two schools in our peer group that has this limitation.¹ All other schools do not limit the number of University Withdrawals a student may use.

¹ The following VA state schools do not limit the number of university withdrawals a student may use: Christopher Newport University, College of William & Mary, George Mason University, James Madison University, Longwood University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, University of Mary Washington, University of Virginia, University of Virginia College at Wise, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Military Institute, Virginia State University, and Virginia Tech. The following are our peer institutions that do not limit the number of university withdrawals a student may use: Appalachian State University, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, California State University-Chico, California State University-San Bernardino, Gonzaga University, Hofstra University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Kutztown University, Loyola Marymount University, Minnesota State University-Mankato, Monmouth University, Rowan University, Saint Cloud State University, Salisbury University, Seattle University, SUNY College of Brockport, Texas Christian University, University of Tampa, University of Northern Colorado, University of Northern Iowa, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, Western Carolina University, William Paterson University of New Jersey, and Winthrop University. The only peer institution that does limit university withdrawals is California State University-San Bernardino.

Apparently, the limitation was first instituted at RU in the fall of 1997 as a way to prevent financial aid fraud. At the time, RU had problems with students registering for classes, getting financial aid refunds, and then withdrawing from the University. Barbara Porter, the Director of Financial Aid, informed us that the Federal government has other protections in place that minimize this fraudulent practice.

If we were to eliminate this limitation, and align our University Withdrawal policy with the other state schools and in our peer group, we would also eliminate the problem that our students have had obtaining Medical Withdrawals.

While students will have an unlimited number of University Withdrawals, should this proposal pass, students will still need a Medical Withdrawal option because the deadline to withdraw from the University will remain the same, and medical emergencies can occur at anytime during the semester. So, the only time that a student would need to seek a Medical Withdrawal would be after the University Withdrawal deadline has passed. Thus, Medical Withdrawals will continue to be used as an exception to the University Withdrawal policy.

Catalog Changes:

(From p. 57-58 of the *2010-2011 Undergraduate Catalog*)

Withdrawal from the University

(All Courses)

Students withdrawing from all courses during a given semester must contact the advising coordinator in the college of their major to obtain and complete a “Withdrawal Check-Out Sheet.” Students who have not declared a major must contact the advising coordinator in the Pre-Major Advising Center. The academic advising coordinators’ offices are in the following locations: College of Business and Economics, Whitt Hall 002; College of Education and Human Development, Peters Hall A104; College of Health and Human Services, Waldron Hall 351; College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences, Russell Hall 127; College of Science and Technology, Stuart Hall 163; College of Visual and Performing Arts, 240 Porterfield Hall; Pre-major Advising, Walker Hall, 103. This process must be followed to ensure the student will receive any eligible refunds and the appropriate grades for the semester.

Students who withdraw from the university (all classes) before the Census Date will receive no grades. Students who withdraw from the university after the Census Date but prior to the end of the twelfth week of the semester (80 percent of summer sessions) will receive “W’s” in all classes. Students who withdraw from the university after the twelfth week will receive “F’s” in all classes.

~~A student may withdraw from the university only once during his or her RU academic career. (Canceling enrollment to the university prior to the Census Date or receiving a medical withdrawal does not count as a withdrawal from the university.) Exceptions will be granted by the student’s college dean or by the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.~~

Any student who withdraws from the university during a fall or spring semester must apply for readmission. Please refer to page...for more information about readmission.

Withdrawals from Summer

Session Courses

Withdrawals from courses during summer sessions are individual course withdrawals, even if the student withdraws from all courses in which he/she is enrolled. These withdrawals do count against the five withdrawal limit. Although – for financial aid and other reasons – this action must be handled administratively as a University Withdrawal. ~~the student is not charged with his/her one possible University Withdrawal.~~

Exceptions to Withdrawal Procedures

Exceptions to the withdrawal procedures may be granted upon recommendation of the Vice President for Student Affairs in cases of documented medical or other non-academic reasons (i.e., medical leave of absence).

(From p. 37-38 of the *2010-2011 Graduate Catalog*)

Withdrawal from the University (All Courses)

A graduate student withdrawing from all courses during a given semester must contact the Office of the Registrar in Heth Hall in writing or via e-mail. The registrar must confirm receipt of the notice. This process must be followed to ensure the student will receive any eligible refunds and the appropriate grades for the semester.

Students who withdraw from the university before the end of the tenth day of classes (census date) will receive no grade. A student who withdraws from the university (all classes) after the census date, but prior to the end of the twelfth week of the semester (80 percent of summer session) will receive “W’s” in all classes. Withdrawals from the university after the twelfth week will result in automatic “F’s.”

~~A graduate student may withdraw from the university only once during his or her RU academic career. (Cancelling enrollment to the university prior to the census date or receiving a medical withdrawal does not count as a withdrawal from the university.) Exceptions will be granted by the dean of the Graduate College or by the vice president for student affairs.~~

Withdrawal from a Degree Program

Graduate students who wish to withdraw from a degree program at Radford University should submit a letter in writing to the Graduate Admissions Manager, Box 6928, Radford University, Radford, VA 24142. The manager will confirm receipt of the notice.

Withdrawal from Off-campus Course

Students who register for off-campus courses must adhere to withdrawal policies and procedures published as outlined above.

Exceptions to Withdrawal Procedures

Exceptions to the withdrawal procedures may be granted upon recommendation of the Office of the Vice President for Students Affairs in cases of documented medical or other non-academic reasons.