



## **Course Withdrawals**

### **1. Student-Initiated Withdrawal**

#### **a. Withdrawing from a Required Course:**

- i.** A student may not withdraw from an assigned, required course without the written permission of the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. Permission to withdraw from an assigned, required course will be granted only in extraordinary circumstances, or as may be required by applicable law. The Vice Dean's decision may not be appealed to the faculty or any faculty committee.
- ii.** If a student is permitted to withdraw from an assigned, required course, the student must complete that course the next semester the course is offered and in which the student is registered, absent written permission from the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. Students should understand that withdrawing from a required course may delay graduation.

#### **b. Withdrawing from an Elective Course:**

- i.** After the relevant "withdraw pass" deadline noted on the academic calendar but before the last day of classes for a semester or term, a student may "withdraw pass" from an elective course only with the written permission of the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. To withdraw, the student must submit a written request to the Vice Dean and demonstrate extraordinary cause why the request should be granted. Examples of "extraordinary cause" are listed in the Final Examination Conflict and Rescheduling Policy. The Vice Dean's decision may not be appealed to the faculty or any faculty committee. It is the student's burden to demonstrate the request was timely submitted.
- ii.** Students in an Honors Programs, on interscholastic competition teams, law journals, externships, clinics, study-abroad programs, LL.M. programs, M.J. programs, dual-degree programs, exchange program, certificate programs, or other special programs should review the specific policies that relate to those programs and consult with the program director or

faculty advisor for the specific program before submitting a request to withdraw to the Vice Dean. For the specific programs listed above, the Vice Dean will consult with the program director or faculty advisor before ruling on the petition.

**c. Withdrawing from an Elective During a Student's Final Semester:** After the relevant add/drop period, but during the semester in which a student expects to graduate, a student may withdraw from any course not needed to fulfill a graduation requirement, as follows:

- i.** The course may not be one of the following, unless the student also receives the written permission of the faculty advisor or program director: clinic, externship, law journal, interscholastic competition team, course that would satisfy the skills requirement, or course in a study-abroad program.
- ii.** The course is not needed to fulfill the Mandate Program, an aspect of academic probation, or a condition of readmission;
- iii.** The written request to withdraw is submitted to the Registrar before the final class session in the course or the final day of classes for that semester, whichever is earlier (a student may not withdraw during the reading period or examination period; the student has the burden to demonstrate that the request was timely submitted); and
- iv.** The Vice Dean for Academic Affairs approves the student's request to withdraw.

**2. School-Initiated Withdrawal:** Under certain circumstances approved by the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs in consultation with the course professor, the law school may administratively withdraw a student from a course. Non-exhaustive examples of circumstances when a student may be withdrawn from a course include a student's repeated disruption of the course, a serious conflict among students within the course, a health or safety emergency, or missing more than 25 percent of the total number of class meetings.

**3. Withdrawal v. Incomplete Grade:** When evaluating a petition to withdraw, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs will consider whether an "Incomplete" grade may be more appropriate under the circumstances. If the Vice Dean believes that an "Incomplete" is appropriate, the Vice Dean will consult with the course professor.

**4. Effective Date of Withdrawal:** A withdrawal process is not complete until the Vice Dean signs the written request and the "W" appears on the student's transcript. The effective date of withdrawal usually is the last day the student attended a class, but the Executive Director of Financial Aid will be

consulted to ensure the effective date is accurate. A student has a burden to follow up on any request to withdraw. Withdrawals cannot and will not be back-dated.

**5. Impact of a Course Withdrawal on a Student's Transcript and Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Purposes:**

- a. Withdrawing With Permission:** After the add/drop period, when a student withdraws with permission, or is withdrawn from a course by the law school, the course name and a grade of "W" ("withdraw pass") will appear on the student's transcript. In extraordinary circumstances, the Dean in conjunction with the Registrar and Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee can approve a different transcript notation. A "W" grade does not impact a student's GPA. It does, however, impact a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress for purposes of applying for and receiving federal financial aid.
- b. Withdrawing Without Permission:** If the Vice Dean does not grant the petition and the student decides to withdraw, a "WF" will appear on the student's transcript. The "WF" grade counts as an "F" in the student's GPA. It also impacts a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress for purposes of applying for and receiving federal financial aid.

**6. Impact on Visa Status:** A course withdrawal by or affecting an international student may affect his or her status to remain in the United States.

**7. Tuition Refunds and Impact on Scholarship Awards:** Withdrawing from a class may result in a financial loss for students. Students should consult the Tuition Refund policy for information about whether they may be entitled to a full or partial refund. Students also should consider whether they will need to pay again for taking the same course in a future semester. Students on scholarships should check the terms of the scholarship award.

*Faculty policy approved December 15, 2017; effective for the Spring 2018 semester.*