UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE DOCUMENT NO. 1558, MAY 12, 1987

APPROVED AS AMENDED
Recommendation of the University Committee for changes
to the Current Drop, Withdrawal, Repeat, and Incomplete Policies
for Undergraduate Students

DROP POLICY

Current Policy (For Doc. 76-144A, April 28, 1976 [voided 1976])

Unless more stringent deadlines are established by individual departments, students may drop courses any time during the first eight weeks of classes with either departmental or instructor approval. From the beginning of the ninth week of classes until two weeks prior to the first day of the final examination period, students may drop classes only with the written approval of the instructor.

Recommended Change

Unless a shorter deadline has been established by an individual department and is stated in the Schedule of Classes, undergraduate students may drop courses with the written approval of either instructor or department through the end of the eighth week of classes. Students attempting to drop courses after the eighth week of classes may do so only for reasons of extraordinary circumstances not related to academic performance in the course. In order to do this, they must first obtain written approval from the instructor and then file a written petition with the advising office of their school or college. Only if both the instructor and the school/college approve will such drops be permitted.

All courses which are dropped after the fourth week of classes will remain on the student record and will be reflected on transcripts with the "W" symbol.

For courses which meet for less than the full academic semester (15-16 weeks), the above deadlines will be shortened in proportion to the length of the course as indicated in the Schedule of Classes.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Current Policy

Through the office of their academic dean, students may withdraw from all courses in a semester until two weeks prior to the first day of the final examination period.

Recommended Change

Through the office of their academic dean, undergraduate students may withdraw from all courses in a semester through the eighth week of classes. Withdrawals after the eighth week of classes may be granted on appeal only for reasons other than academic difficulty.

All courses from which a student withdraws after the fourth week of classes will remain on the student record and will be reflected on transcripts with the "W" symbol.
For courses which meet for less than the full academic semester (15-16 weeks), the above deadlines will be shortened in proportion to the length of the course as indicated in the Schedule of Classes.

**REPEAT POLICY**

**Current Policy** *(Fac. Aca. # 654, Resolution 1, April 8, 1974)*

Students are permitted to repeat courses as many times as desired, unless such repeats are specifically prohibited in Schedule of Classes course description copy. Except in the case of courses with variable content, all grades earned appear on the record, but only the highest grade is calculated into the grade point average.

**Recommended Change**

Unless a restriction is stated in the Schedule of Classes, undergraduate students may repeat any course only once. Under exceptional circumstances, one more repeat may be allowed following approval of a written appeal to the advising office of the student's school or college. Except in the case of courses with variable content, all grades earned appear on the record, but only the highest grade is calculated into the grade point average.

**INCOMPLETE POLICY** *(Fac. Aca. # 1034, Oct 20, 1977)*

**Preface**

An incomplete may be given to an undergraduate student who has carried a subject successfully until near the end of the semester but, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond that student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work. An incomplete is not given unless the student proves to the instructor that s/he was prevented from completing course requirements for just cause as indicated above.

**Current Policy**

A course marked incomplete must be completed in the next succeeding semester of enrollment but no later than the next calendar year.

If the student enrolls and does not remove the incomplete in the next semester of enrollment, the report of "I" will lapse to "F". If the student does not enroll, the report of "I" will lapse to "W" (withdrawal) after one year.

**Recommended Change**

For undergraduate students, a course marked incomplete must be completed during the first eight weeks of the next succeeding semester of enrollment, excluding summer sessions. An extension of time to the end of the semester is possible if extenuating circumstances prevent the student
from completing the course during the first eight weeks. Extensions must be recommended by the instructor and approved by the dean of the student's school or college. If the student does not remove the incomplete during the first eight weeks of the next semester of enrollment, the report of "I" will lapse to "F". If the student does not enroll, the report of "I" will lapse to "W" (withdrawal) after one calendar year.

Implementation Schedule: Repeat Policy to start in Fall 1988; other policies to start in Spring 1988, if possible, but no later than Fall 1988.

RATIONALE:

Over the past year, UW System has encouraged each campus to review drop and repeat policies with a view toward assuring equitable access, supporting a commitment toward quality education, and making maximal use of available resources. In response to UWS concerns and at the request of the Faculty Senate (February 1987), the Academic Policy and University Committees embarked on a critical review of drop and withdrawal policies. At the suggestion of both the Registrar and several academic advising personnel, the withdrawal and incomplete policies were also incorporated in the review to maintain consistency. With the assistance of the Vice Chancellor's and Registrar's Offices who provided data sets, the committees completed the proposed revisions. Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor Ruth Williams and directors of UWM's various minority/disadvantaged support programs provided significant input as the revisions were finalized.

The data sets revealed the following pertinent patterns:

1. The greatest drop activity occurs among those students originally enrolling for 13-19 credits (15 credits exhibited the highest drop rate).

2. The total drop percentage subsequent to the second week is 11.61% (based on Fall 1985). One half drop by the eighth week; the remaining one half by the last drop date (second to last week of the semester).

3. Urban 14 and UWS drop policies suggest that UWM has more "liberal" policies. The trend in both referents is an eight week drop policy, with the Urban 14 being slightly more "liberal."

4. The indication of "W" on transcripts after week four is the pattern in UWS.

5. During the Spring, 1984 to Fall, 1986 timeline, 11,487 students repeated courses. The vast majority are "one-time repeaters." Courses with the highest number of repeaters are those tied to programs with GPA and/or grade minima (by courses) for admission to the junior year (e.g., Engineering and Business). Also, students in DE0 tend to repeat with higher frequency.
Thus, the University Committee and APC with input from appropriate others propose these revisions. The revisions collectively support the quest to provide equity, quality, and appropriate utilization of available resources.

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