

TO: Joel Bloom, Chair  
Undergraduate Council

FROM: Rebecca Achée Thornton  
Academic Policies and Procedures Committee

DATE: January 9, 2007

The Academic Policies and Procedures Committee met several times during the fall semester of 2006 to discuss the proposed drop policy for the university. Committee members present at one or more meetings: Lane Gauthier, Charles Peters, Maria Solino, William Munson, William Chernish and Rebecca Achée Thornton. Agnes DeFranco, John Antel, Cassandra Heavrin, and Libby Barlow attended as guests.

The Enrollment Management Task Force has proposed a new university wide drop policy. Given new enrollment caps set forth by the state, a new policy is needed to help students stay on track for graduation. The current policy, while allowing students maximum flexibility in terms of dropping courses, is not in line with the state funding caps. In order to prevent students from excessive drops, the task force recommends limiting the number of drops a student is allowed.

Proposal summary: Each student will be allowed 6 drops (“Ws”) during their tenure at UH. Each W will be initiated by the student online, and will not require instructor signature. The deadline for taking a W in a course will be the current last day to drop a course for each semester (i.e. four weeks prior to the last class day of a fall or spring semester, six class days prior to the last class day of a summer I, II, or IV, and three weeks prior to the last class day of a summer III.).

The Q grade can be discontinued since the proposed W is to be used regardless of whether or not the student was passing or not passing the course.

Part of the proposal included a request that the W option be removed from the end of semester grade forms. The committee does not recommend approval of this request. There may be circumstances that warrant instructor assigned Ws at the end of the term. If this option is later determined to be unnecessary a second proposal to remove it can be submitted.

The following section should be revised, as follows, on page 66 of the undergraduate catalog (new catalog language is indicated in bold type; language regarding Q grades and F drops has been removed):

## **Dropping Courses**

**Beginning in the Fall 2007 Semester, all students (current, transfer and FTIC students) will be allowed a total of 6 Ws (withdrawals). W’s may be used at any time during their college career to drop a course up through the last day to drop a course or withdraw from all courses. When these 6 Ws have been used, the student must complete all subsequent courses. When a class which includes a lab (or recitation) is taken**

concurrently, the dropping of such a class and lab (or recitation) will count as one withdrawal if dropped simultaneously.

The last day to drop or withdraw from a course without receiving a grade is before the Official Reporting Day (ORD). Please see the academic calendar for the exact date.

[www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/general/academic\\_calendar.html](http://www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/general/academic_calendar.html).

The last day to drop or withdraw from a course with a grade of **W** or **U** (in the case of **S/U grade**) is generally four weeks prior to the last class day of a fall or spring semester, six class days prior to the last class day of summer I, II, or IV, and three weeks prior to the last class day of summer III. Consult the academic calendar for specific dates,

[www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/general/academic\\_calendar.html](http://www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/general/academic_calendar.html).

Enrollment in a course may be terminated in any one of the following ways:

1. **Undergraduate students who wish to drop a course must obtain the signature of the instructor.**
2. An instructor may drop students for any one of the following reasons:
  - a. Lack of prerequisites or corequisites for the course listed in the latest catalog, but only through the last day for dropping courses. Students who have not met the prerequisites will be dropped without a tuition refund if the drop date is after the refund date. (Students who enroll in a course for which they are not eligible and then remain in the course knowingly misrepresent their academic records or achievements as they pertain to course prerequisites or corequisites and are in violation of the university's academic honesty policy.)
  - b. Excessive absences, but after the last day for dropping courses only with the approval of the dean of the college in which the course is being offered.
  - c. Causes that tend to disrupt the academic process (except those actions involving academic honesty, which come under the jurisdiction of the academic honesty policy), but after the last day for dropping courses only with the approval of the dean of the college in which the course is being offered. Disruptive behavior includes the use of or the failure to deactivate cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices likely to disrupt the classroom. Students may make timely appeal of charges through the office of the dean of the college in which the course is taught.
3. After the last day for dropping courses, undergraduate students may drop or be dropped by their instructor from a course with a **W** or **U** , as determined by the instructor, only with the approval of the dean of the college in which the course is offered and only for rare, urgent, substantiated, nonacademic reasons.

Students are expected to commit themselves to courses as early as possible **in order to succeed in their courses.**

The effective date recorded for termination of enrollment for all matters relating to University of Houston records will be the date the student drops the course through the web site at <http://www.uh.edu/enroll/rar> or the date the **properly approved** current enrollment change request form, written request, or drop report is received by the Registrar's Office, **at the Welcome Center.**

Students are responsible for verifying that they have been dropped from a course with the Registrar's Office at the Welcome Center. (Students may also use the web site to check their enrollment status.) All F-1 and J-1 international students must see the International Student and Scholar Services Office before dropping courses. **Business majors must also secure permission from the Office of Undergraduate Business Programs in the Bauer College of Business.** Athletes must see the Assistant Director of Athletics before dropping courses.

**Students may not receive a W for courses in which they have been found guilty of a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy. If a W is received prior to a guilty finding, the student will become liable for the Academic Honesty penalty, including F grades.**

Students who find it necessary to request either a medical withdrawal or administrative withdrawal from the university before the end of the semester will not **have to** use their Ws for withdrawal. Likewise, financial withdrawals will not be included in the number of Ws used.

The committee recommends approval of the proposed drop policy.