

# Withdrawal Procedures at SPSU

*A Guide for Faculty and Students*

The basic rule is that students can withdraw without GPA penalty up until the mid point of the term (date is published in the academic calendar each term).

- Students can withdraw themselves on line using the banner on line registration system, or
- If for some reason they can't access that, there is a form they can fill out (found in the registrar's office).
- We will also accept a signed request to withdraw via fax either on the form or on a free-flow piece of paper as long as the student provides identifying information and indicates which class they want to withdraw from.

AFTER the mid point of the term, students can NO LONGER unilaterally withdraw without penalty (meaning they can unilaterally withdraw with penalty; they are issued a WF which counts the same way as an F in the GPA).

Variation One: If for some reason it becomes apparent that a student has ceased participating in a class, and the mid-point of the term has not yet passed, a professor has the **OPTION** to initiate a withdrawal. This should be done (and is encouraged) if the student has passed the point where it is reasonable that he or she might rejoin the class and still attain a passing grade. The assumption is that the student has in effect withdrawn, but has not completed the administrative process. The penalty for not completing an administrative process need not be an academic one.

Variation Two: The mid-point of the term is the last day to withdraw from a class without academic penalty. This is a system policy over which we have no control. However, exceptions may be approved. Exceptions on this campus are approved by the faculty and the faculty committee that is designated to approve exceptions has delegated that authority to the teaching professor. There are two cases where you should consider approving a withdrawal after the mid point of the term.

**Case one:** If a student is struggling to master material and the mid-point of the term is approaching, and you believe that some academic mile-stone such as a test or project that is due within a reasonable time after the mid-point of the term may be the deciding factor in whether or not a student should continue in the course, you can agree with the student to allow continued participation in the course until that academic mile-stone has been reached and award a W if the student does not do well enough. What is reasonable? You decide. A good rule of thumb would be within a couple of weeks of the mid-point, but circumstances can be such that extending the date even further would be ok. Again, **you have no obligation** to make such arrangements with a student, but you are free to do so if you choose.

**Case two:** A student has been participating in class in a normal manner and the mid-point of the term has passed but some unforeseen circumstance has arisen that is beyond the student's control and has a significant impact on the student's ability to continue in the course or concentrate on the material. Examples may include a death in the family, a sudden reassignment in work making it impossible to continue attending, or a sudden debilitating illness. These generally fall into the category of "hardship" and should be dealt with on a humanitarian basis. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable awarding a W to the student, you can require the student to petition the faculty and the committee will review the case and make a determination. But if you would

recommend approval on a petition, you should just go ahead and approve the withdrawal. In cases such as these, you should require the student to present some kind of proof of the situation (a letter from work on stationary, a newspaper obituary, or a doctor's note), but you are not required to maintain such documentation or to submit it. The only requirement is for you to send the form to the registrar's office that you have approved a late W for the student. Please include the student's full name and the CRN of the class.

Note that if you approve a W for a student after the mid-point of the term that the notation on your banner class roster will be a WF (withdrawn failing). This is necessary in order to meet the requirements of the system office that students who withdraw after the deadline are awarded a WF. After the WF is entered, the grade is changed in academic history to a W and that is the only grade the student will see. The class roster will always reflect the required grade and the academic history will reflect the result of the "petition" to the faculty for an exception to the rule.

**Also note that the delegation to the individual faculty member ends with the end of the term.** A student can still petition for and receive a W after the term is over, but such petitions must be formalized and in some cases will have to be reviewed by the student status committee. A student wishing to file such a petition should be referred to the registrar's office to attain the proper form which must be signed by the teaching faculty member, the chair of the department in which the course is controlled, and the student's academic chair. In some cases, a dean's endorsement is also required.

A third note: If a student stops attending after the mid-point, and you want to withdraw the student, please be sure to indicate whether the student gets a WF or a W. If you just tell us to withdraw the student, we will apply the standing rule and the student will get a WF.

Summary:

- a faculty member is never required to withdraw a student
- students can withdraw themselves either on line or via a form up until the mid point of the term
- students can fax a withdrawal request to the registrar's office (678 915-7292)
- faculty can withdraw students who are not participating in class (encouraged)
- faculty can approve a late withdrawal with sufficient cause
- late withdrawals approved for W's rather than WF's show on the roll as WF's, though in academic history they show as W's
- faculty can send the appropriate form to the registrar's office to effect a withdrawal
- students can petition for a late W after the term ends, but it must be a formal petition