

Amended by S99-12 for implementation Spring Semester 2000

S97-7 DROP POLICY AND THE "W" SYMBOL

Legislative History:

At its meeting of May 5, 1997, the Academic Senate approved the following Policy Recommendation presented by Shirley Reekie for the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee.

Replaces: S93-10; S-93-13

Amended by [S99-12](#)

ACTION BY THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:

Approved as University Policy." Signed Robert L. Caret, 5-9-97.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION

DROP POLICY AND THE "W" SYMBOL

- Whereas: The present drop/withdrawal policy is problematic and inconsistently enforced across the University; and
- Whereas: There exists a widespread, but misplaced (and contrary to Executive Order 268), perception among students that they ought to be allowed to drop classes in which they are doing poorly ; and
- Whereas: The current policy on Academic Renewal gives ample opportunity for students to make a genuine attempt at a better academic performance; and
- Whereas: There exists an urgent need to clarify the difference between dropping a course, and failing a course, and to resolve the current situation in which students drop out of, or attempt to drop out of, courses they are failing; and
- Whereas: In order to attain a more uniformly interpreted policy, the responsibility for determining the validity of circumstances surrounding the student's application for withdrawal should lie not with individual faculty members, but with the administration; and
- Whereas: With the advent of Touch Tone Registration, and faculty access to the Student Information System, certain procedures may be simplified, and their timing changed to benefit students; therefore be it
- Resolved: That the attached policy be implemented, effective as soon as is administratively possible; and be it further
- Resolved:
- That the San Jose State University Academic Senate urge the Statewide Senate to consider reform of Executive Order 268 (for example, the institution of WP [Withdraw Passing] and

WF [Withdrew Failing] as grading symbols).

Drop Policy and the "W" Symbol

1. The consequences of dropping a course are to be determined by the following schedule:

Refund Day: Last day for a student to drop a class with a refund

Census day: Last day for the student to add a class, or drop without a "W"; also the last day for instructor drops.

2. Refund Day is the 14th day of instruction; Census Day is the 20th day of instruction.
3. After the 20th day of instruction (Census Day), a student may withdraw from class only for "serious and compelling reasons" which shall be defined as circumstances and genuine emergencies beyond the student's control.
4. These circumstances must be documented with such evidence as death certificates (or equivalent) of immediate family members, letters from employers, or notes from doctors. Failure, or anticipated failure, or non-attendance, is not a valid reason for withdrawing from a course.
5. The Vice President for Student Affairs shall develop a list of acceptable circumstances and guidelines for certification of said circumstances, petition forms to be issued to all colleges (which shall include space to state the reasons for the proposed withdrawal, and the current grade the student is earning), and appropriate sanctions for those submitting fraudulent certification.
6. The President shall appoint one individual (in accordance with Executive Order 268) to administer course and university withdrawals. This individual will be responsible for distributing and receiving petitions, verifying certification, and approving withdrawal from the University.
7. In the case of course withdrawals, students must first obtain the faculty member's signature. This signature indicates that the student has been advised of his/her options regarding the course. Students will be advised about the possible negative impact of the "W" on their transcript and where appropriate, be encouraged to consult with the Student Resource Center. If a faculty member does not sign the petition, the matter will be resolved by the President's appointee. The President's appointee will verify the certification that the student uses to indicate "serious and compelling" reasons for needing to withdraw before signing the petition.
8. When a "W" appears on a student's transcript, the transcript will contain a notice that withdrawals at San Jose State University are given only for circumstances beyond the student's control, and not for any other reason, including academic performance. The "W" will remain uncounted in the student's GPA, as before.
9. The option of the Incomplete remains, as before.
10. Nothing in the above prevents an instructor from dropping a student who has neither attended class nor contacted the instructor by the "Instructor Drop" deadline which is Census Day.
11. A "U" remains appropriate to assign when a student, who is enrolled on Census Day, does not successfully petition for a "W" but fails to complete course requirements, and those assignments which were completed were insufficient to make normal evaluation of academic performance possible.