



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council (March 21, 2017)
Faculty Council (April 10, 2017)

From: Professor James Davis
Chair, Examinations Committee

Date: March 21, 2017

Re: **Changes to the Policy on Students Taking Courses during the Second Probation Withdrawal Period**

REPORT CLASSIFICATION

This is a major policy matter that will be considered by the Executive Committee for endorsing and forwarding to Faculty Council for vote as a regular motion (requiring a simple majority of members present and voting to carry).

BACKGROUND

The current regulations related to the second probation withdrawal period are found in Section VIII of the Academic Regulations Chapter in the calendar:

2. Required Withdrawal:

A student who has failed a session is required to withdraw and must discontinue their studies as soon as grades are made official. This applies whether or not the student is enrolled in courses that continue in the following session. In all cases where a full year course is dropped, the student will not receive credit for any work already done in the course. A student who is required to withdraw after a Fall Session will be withdrawn by the Registrar's Office and will receive a refund for the Winter Session. A student who wishes to withdraw voluntarily must complete a withdrawal form at the Registrar's Office. A student who is required to withdraw after a Winter Session need not complete a withdrawal form.

The Faculty Committee on Examinations regularly receives petitions from students placed on second probation asking to be allowed to take courses during the eight-month mandatory withdrawal period. For students in years 2-4, many of these requests are approved for two main reasons:

1. To allow students to maintain access to the University's medical and academic improvement resources.
2. To give the student an opportunity to make up failed courses from previous terms.

In the first case, to facilitate a student's continued access to medical care, we will often approve their taking a complementary studies elective course which has the added benefit of reducing the student's course load in one or more terms ahead. In both cases, the general philosophy of the Committee is to be rehabilitative rather than punitive where possible.

Petitions of this type are generally prepared on the advice of, and with the aid of, the student's academic advisor. However, this requires that the student meet with their advisor to even know that such possibilities exist. It is often the case that the students in most need of such assistance are the most reluctant to seek out help. We would like, therefore, to amend the wording of the paragraph on required withdrawals to explicitly allow students on mandatory withdrawal to take courses under some circumstances. The new wording also serves to codify, and, hence, regularize, the Faculty's practices in these cases. It will also allow academic advisors to implement agree-upon academic plans for students more quickly, without the need for petitions to the Examinations Committee.

PROCESS AND CONSULTATION

This change in policy has been discussed at many Examinations Committee meetings over several years, with the final version approved at our meeting on March 6, 2017.

MOTION FOR COUNCIL

THAT the calendar entry for Academic Regulation VIII.2 be changed to:

2. Required Withdrawal:

A student who has failed a session is required to withdraw and must discontinue their studies as soon as grades are made official. This applies whether or not the student is enrolled in courses that continue in the following session. In all cases where a full year course is dropped, the student will not receive credit for any work already done in the course. A student who is required to withdraw after a Fall Session will be withdrawn by the Registrar's Office and will receive a refund for the Winter Session. A student who wishes to withdraw voluntarily must complete a withdrawal form at the Registrar's Office. A student who is required to withdraw after a Winter Session need not complete a withdrawal form.

Under some conditions, students in years 2-4 may request to be enrolled in a maximum of 3 half-course equivalents during the withdrawal period. These courses must consist of previously failed technical courses (not from the term leading to second probation status) and, in special cases, complementary studies courses. Students who receive second probation status following term 1S may request to be enrolled in a maximum of 2 half-course equivalents during the following fall term

session. Students will make such requests through their academic advisor; decisions will be made on a departmental basis. Petitions to the Examinations Committee are required for requests outside this scope.