



Retroactive Withdrawal Policy

Purpose and Scope

The University generally discourages retroactive changes to the academic record but will consider exceptions to this rule when a student provides compelling evidence that withdrawal is appropriate and can provide documentation to support their case. The retroactive withdrawal policy is designed to help students when serious and/or unforeseen circumstances occur after the official withdrawal deadline for the term; however, students are encouraged to use all resources at their disposal for successful course completion.

In order to be eligible for a retroactive withdrawal from a course or series of courses, a student must have experienced an extenuating circumstance which prohibited a traditional withdrawal (i.e., by the end of the 10th week) during the term in question. Such circumstances must be (1) unforeseeable and/or beyond the student's control, (2) serious, and (3) documented and verifiable. A retroactive withdrawal is an extraordinary remedy that is available only for extreme circumstances such as:

- The student experienced a mental or physical illness, injury, or other extreme circumstance that significantly limited their capacity to withdraw in a timely manner;
- The student was forced to leave the University abruptly due to a health or safety emergency within their immediate family; and/or
- The student was forced to abruptly relocate due to employment, loss of employment, or a housing emergency.

This list is **NOT** exhaustive but serves to illustrate the severity of the circumstances required to qualify. Students should consult with their academic advisor in advance of filing a petition for a retroactive withdrawal. Retroactive withdrawal requests will not be considered in cases of academic dishonesty.

The retroactive withdrawal policy is **NOT** intended as a way for students to avoid receiving low grades. If a student has doubts about their ability to complete a course successfully, they are encouraged to reach out to their instructor or academic advisor before the course withdrawal deadline to discuss their next steps. That may mean seeking additional support through University resources or withdrawing from the course. The student is expected to make the decision by the course withdrawal deadline and not wait until the grades are posted for the semester.

Students are **NOT** eligible for a retroactive withdrawal if any of the following conditions are true:

- The student is applying primarily because of dissatisfaction with the course content, method of instruction, or final grade in the course.
- The student underestimated time commitments for the course or courses in question, including balancing work and academics, sports and academics, extracurricular activities and academics, etc.
- The student was unaware of the processes and deadlines for withdrawal during the semester.
- The student experienced an extenuating circumstance early in the semester and had the ability to withdraw from courses during that semester.
- The student voluntarily took on non-academic duties or activities during the semester which restricted available time for academic pursuits.
- The student changed majors and no longer needs the course or courses in question for degree completion.
- The student had multiple, unexcused absences.



A petition for a retroactive withdrawal must be made no later than the end of the semester (defined as the close of business on the last day of final exams) in which the student was enrolled in the course(s) in question.

The successful petition for retroactive withdrawal does **NOT** entitle the student to a tuition refund or adjustment. In addition, withdrawal from courses could have consequences for other aspects of student eligibility (e.g., financial aid). These are beyond the purview of this policy. The student should contact relevant University offices to discuss possible consequences prior to completion of the petition for retroactive withdrawal.

Petition Process

In order to initiate the process of petitioning for a retroactive withdrawal, the student will need to produce the following.

Detailed Narrative: The student must write a detailed letter explaining the extraordinary circumstances that qualify them for a retroactive withdrawal. This should include a clear timeline showing why the student could not invoke the traditional withdrawal process during the semester. In extreme situations where the student may be seriously incapacitated, verbal or written communication from the student, a spouse/significant other, parent/guardian, colleague, etc. addressed to the Registrar may be used to initiate this process in place of a first-person narrative. If a retroactive withdrawal is being requested only from certain courses in a semester, the narrative must address why the extenuating circumstances did not impact all courses.

Appropriate Documentation: The student must supply objective, third-party documentation that corroborates the circumstances detailed in the student's narrative. Common forms of documentation include notes from a physician or mental health professional (on official letterhead), obituaries or other evidence of a family emergency, police report, eviction notice, etc. A statement of support from the student's academic advisor or student success professional must also be included.

Petition for Retroactive Withdrawal: The student must complete and sign the Petition for Retroactive Withdrawal to be submitted to the Office of the Registrar along with the narrative and appropriate documentation.

Review Process

As appropriate, the review committee will be composed of representatives from the Office of the Registrar, Academic Advising, Student-Athlete Support Services, and Financial Aid; a faculty member; and the Chair of the academic department – and the Associate Dean of the College/School – for which the student is requesting the retroactive withdrawal. The committee is chaired by the Registrar. Each appeal is evaluated based on the student's documented circumstances and the timing of the request, to determine if a retroactive withdrawal is warranted. Decisions are guided by institutional policies and consider potential implications on financial aid and academic standing. Once a decision is reached, it is communicated to the student in writing, with an explanation of any conditions or recommendations if the appeal is granted.

If a student's petition for a retroactive withdrawal is denied by the Committee, they may submit an appeal in writing to the Provost (or their designee) within five business days of the decision. The



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Provost (or their designee) shall notify the student and the Retroactive Withdrawal Committee in writing of the final decision within five business days of receiving the student appeal request unless special circumstances make that impossible. The Provost (or their designee) is the final arbiter of the Retroactive Withdrawal Policy and its application.