

## Policy on Withdrawals

(This policy statement supersedes relevant portions of PS 12-03 and PS 09-07 concerning Withdrawals. It complies with all relevant Executive Orders.)

This policy was recommended by the Academic Senate on December 2, 2021.  
and approved by the President on December 13, 2021.

### Preamble

Requests for withdrawal from any or all classes must be officially filed by the student with Enrollment Services whether the student has ever attended the class or not. Otherwise, the instructor may assign the student a grade of "WU" in the course. For more information about the "WU," see 3.0.

During the first two weeks of classes in a regular semester of instruction (13% of non-standard sessions), students are responsible for withdrawing from courses they do not intend to complete. Withdrawals during this period will not appear on the student's record. An instructor may withdraw a student who has never attended a class, if done before the end of the second week of classes. In courses without any scheduled class meetings, an instructor may withdraw a student who does not complete an assignment indicating that the student has begun the course; in this case, the instructor must indicate on the syllabus that the student must complete the assignment by the end of the second week of classes to stay in the class. Because instructors are not required to withdraw students from classes, students are responsible for officially withdrawing from the classes to avoid assignment of a "WU" in the course. For more information about the "WU," see 3.0.

An instructor may also withdraw a student during the first two weeks of classes who has enrolled in a course requiring "permission of the instructor," completion of prerequisites, or concurrent enrollment in co-requisites if the student has not properly secured this permission, satisfactorily completed the prerequisites before enrolling, or enrolled in the required co-requisites.

After the first two weeks of classes of a regular semester, there are three categories of withdrawal:

1. "W" — "Withdrawal"
2. "WE" — "Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances"
3. "WU" — "Unauthorized Withdrawal"

"W," "WE," and "WU" are all considered attempted units, and will apply to Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Financial Aid.

### 1.0 "W" - "Withdrawal."

The symbol "W" indicates that the student was permitted to withdraw from a course after the second week of instruction and prior to the final three weeks of the regular semester with the approval of the instructor and the department/program chair and/or dean (or designee). It carries no connotation of the quality of student performance and is not used in calculating grade point averages at CSULB. However, an investigation of an academic integrity violation will put a hold on this process.

1.1 Administrative Withdrawal ("W\*"): In rare circumstances, the University may need to administratively withdraw a student from a course due to reasons outside of the student's control. In such cases, the University will determine whether a "W" shall be assigned and attempt to ensure that no negative impacts occur on the student's behalf.

1.2 Withdrawal after the second week of instruction and prior to the final three weeks of the regular semester of instruction (20% of a non-standard session): Withdrawals during this period ("W") are permissible only for serious and compelling reasons. These reasons include but are not limited to changing employment and family commitments, medical concerns, changes in degree/career objectives, and recommendations based on assessment of student learning needs. The approval signatures of the instructor of record and department chair (or designee) are required. The request and approvals shall state the reasons for the Withdrawal. Faculty and administrators have broad discretion when determining what reasons are serious and compelling. Records of such approvals are kept on file by Enrollment Services.

1.3 Withdrawal during the final three weeks of instruction: Withdrawals during the final three weeks of instruction are not permitted except in cases such as accident or serious illness where the circumstances causing the Withdrawal are clearly beyond the student's control. Students must provide supporting documentation. For those students unable to initiate the

Withdrawal request or provide supporting documentation due to health or other challenges, the Dean of Students may act on their behalf. These requests must be approved by the instructor of record, department chair (or designee), college dean (or designee), and the academic administrator appointed by the President to act in such matters. Faculty and administrators have broad discretion when identifying circumstances to grant such requests. Records of such approvals are kept on file by Enrollment Services.

1.4 Partial withdrawal ("W"): Students may request permission to withdraw from some but not all courses. Students should be encouraged to pursue Incompletes if eligible.

1.5 Withdrawal from all courses: In such cases, the assignment of an Incomplete is not practical. If a "WE" is warranted, such withdrawals will not count against maximums provided for in 4.0. For more information about the "WE," see 2.0.

## **2.0 "WE" – "Withdrawal for Extenuating Circumstances."**

The symbol "WE" indicates the student withdrew for serious reasons, usually due to acute medical or behavioral (mental) health conditions. These reasons should be considered catastrophic in nature, and clearly beyond the student's control. Each case is reviewed on a case by case basis by Enrollment Services, in consultation with BMAC, CAPS, CARES, SHS, and the Dean of Students as needed.<sup>1</sup> Final decisions on requests for exceptions outside of policy are made by the AVP for Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies. Such cases will normally involve withdrawal from all courses that semester. Withdrawals for extenuating circumstances will not count toward the limits on withdrawal. The symbol "WE" is not a grade and does not alter a student's grade point averages. Depending on the reported last day of attendance, some financial aid may need to be returned.

2.1 Medical Withdrawal: Medical Withdrawals require a different form and process from other "WEs". CSULB may allow a student to withdraw without academic penalty from classes if the following criteria are met:

- a. A completed Medical Withdrawal Form, including any required documentation, is submitted to Enrollment Services before the end of the semester, and
- b. The student presents evidence to demonstrate that a severe acute medical or debilitating psychological condition prevented the student from attending the course(s) and/or doing the required work of the course(s) to the extent that it was impossible to complete the course(s) or receive an Incomplete.
- c. For those students unable to initiate the Withdrawal request or provide supporting documentation due to health or other challenges, the Dean of Students may act on their behalf.

2.2. Although students with a Medical Withdrawal will normally withdraw from all courses, those with serious and compelling reasons may withdraw from only some of their courses; such instances will require additional justification.

2.3 The academic administrator appointed by the President to act in such matters will review the evidence presented and, in consultation with appropriate medical or psychological professionals as needed, determine whether the request for a Medical Withdrawal should be granted. Once granted, all such medical withdrawals will show on the student's record as a "WE" to indicate the basis for withdrawal and will not count toward the limit described in section 4 below.

2.4 Return to Study after Medical Withdrawal. After a Medical Withdrawal is granted, the student may be required to obtain a clearance from an appropriate medical or psychological professional that states the student is well enough to return to classes with the full expectation that the student will be able to complete the semester and intended educational objectives. In certain situations, students may be advised to take an educational leave following Medical Withdrawal.

2.5 Repeat Medical Withdrawals will not be granted, but additional withdrawals for the semester will be considered on a case by case basis.

2.6 Retroactive Medical Withdrawals may be requested if the student was unable to initiate the request due to their medical condition. These requests will only be considered within the semester immediately following the medical incident.

## **3.0 "WU" - "Unauthorized Withdrawal."**

The symbol "WU" indicates that an enrolled student did not complete course requirements but did not withdraw from the course. It is used when, according to the instructor, completion of assignments and/or course activities was insufficient to evaluate academic performance in the course as a whole (letter grades "A," "B," "C," "D," "F", or an "I"). If a student is assigned a letter grade for partial work instead of a "WU," it will be assumed that the student earned that grade, and the

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<sup>1</sup> BMAC designates the Bob Murphy Access Center; CAPS is the abbreviation for CSULB's office of Counseling and Psychological Services; CARES stands for the Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation for Students team; SHS indicates Student Health Services.

student will not be able to request a retroactive "WE" at a later time.

3.1 Instructors of record must report the last known date of attendance or occasion of completed educational activity for all students who receive a "WU." In courses that are graded "Credit/No Credit" or in cases where the student has elected "Credit/No Credit" evaluation, use of the symbol "WU" is inappropriate and "NC" must be used instead. For purposes of grade point averages a "WU" is equivalent to an "F."

3.2 The "WU" should not be issued if the student returns to the class.

#### **4.0 Limits on Withdrawal.**

No undergraduate student may withdraw from (i.e., receive a "W" in) more than a total of 18 units. This restriction extends throughout the entire undergraduate enrollment of a student at CSULB for a single graduation, including special sessions, enrollment by extension, and re-enrolling after separation from the university for any reason.

4.1 The following exceptions apply:

- a. Withdrawals prior to the end of the first two weeks of classes in a regular semester of instruction (13% of non-standard sessions) at CSULB,
- b. Withdrawals in terms prior to fall 2009 at CSULB,
- c. Withdrawals at institutions other than CSULB,
- d. Withdrawals at CSULB for exceptional circumstances such as serious illness or accident. The student's academic record will show these as a "WE" to indicate the basis for withdrawal, and
- e. Administrative Withdrawals.

4.2 In cases of academic integrity violations, a student is not permitted to withdraw from the course at any time during the semester. The instructor should contact Enrollment Services to ensure that a Withdrawal is not processed.

#### **5.0 Refund of Student Fees after Withdrawals.**

Regulations governing the refund of student fees after withdrawals are prescribed by the CSU Board of Trustees; see California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education, Section 41802.

EFFECTIVE: Upon the commencement of the Spring 2022 semester.