

## EGSC Drop and Withdrawal Policy

Adopted by Academic Policies and Curriculum Committee 6/7/18

Adopted by Faculty Senate 6/8/18

Adopted by President's Cabinet 6/14/18

Adopted by President 6/15/18

### I. Purpose and Scope of the Policy

The purposes of the policy are to guide the student's decision making with respect to course drops and course withdrawals by directing the student to relevant definitions, consequences, and procedures for requesting a course drop or course withdrawal. The policy applies to student initiated requests to drop or withdraw a course and does not address institution initiated drops for nonpayment of tuition and fees. This policy applies to the EGSC Swainsboro, Statesboro and Augusta campuses as well as to any other off-campus instructional sites where dual enrollment courses are offered.

EGSC distinguishes between:

- **drop** of a course(s) during the Drop/Add (schedule adjustment) period (course removed from the student's schedule);
- **withdrawal** from a course(s) after the Drop/Add period (schedule adjustment) period but **before** the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty (W);
- **withdrawal** from a course(s) after the Drop/Add (schedule adjustment) period and **after** the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty (WF);
- **withdrawal from all courses due to military orders (WM); and**
- **hardship withdrawal** from all courses after the Drop/Add period (schedule adjustment period) and after the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty ("W").

The policies and procedures that apply to each of these actions are described below, but it is important to note that students must remain continuously enrolled in the particular courses described below until the requirements set forth by the USG Board of Regents and EGSC policy are met.

### II. Courses in Which the Student Must Remain Continuously Enrolled Until Requirements Are Met

Students should note that dropping and/or withdrawing from the courses described below may adversely affect degree progress and enrollment in other courses may not be allowed until these requirements are met. These courses are required for future progress and success. The student must be continually enrolled in these courses until they are successfully completed.

#### A. *Learning Support Courses*

In accordance with the policies of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents Academic and Student Affairs Handbook section 2.9.1, students in need of Learning Support courses

- must be continuously enrolled in these courses in order to enroll for other courses.
  - Students who withdraw from the Learning Support course(s) in English and Math must withdraw from the credit-bearing co-requisite ENGL and MATH course(s) as well and will be required to register for both courses again during the next available term(s) until requirements are met;
  - Students who attempt to drop a learning support course during the Drop/Add schedule adjustment period will not be allowed to complete registration until they select the learning support course(s) and credit-bearing co-requisite course(s) they are required to take.
- who accumulate 30 credits of course work without exiting Learning Support will not be allowed to register for any other courses until Learning Support Requirements are met.

### *B. Required High School Curriculum (RHSC) Deficiencies*

In accordance with the policies of the University System of Georgia Board of Regents Academic and Student Affairs Handbook section 3.2.6, students who are admitted to EGSC with RHSC deficiencies must take courses to meet these deficiencies within the first 30 hours of their coursework at EGSC. Students who reach 30 credits without completing RHSC deficiencies will not be allowed to register for other courses until the deficiencies are met.

### *C. Critical Thinking and Academic Success Course (Area B CATS 1101)*

The EGSC catalog and other policy statements require registration for CATS during the first term of course work and continuous registration in CATS until the requirement is met. Students who:

- attempt to drop the CATS course during the Drop/Add (schedule adjustment period) will not be permitted to complete their registration until they enroll for a section of CATS.
- withdraw from the CATS course will have to register for the course in the next available term and thereafter until course requirements are met.

## **III. Dropping a Course(s) during the Drop/Add (Schedule Adjustment) Period**

### *Definition*

A “drop” at EGSC refers to a student’s removal of a class from his or her schedule during the period from registration through the end of the Drop/Add (schedule adjustment) period.

The Drop/Add (schedule adjustment) period occurs from the beginning of registration for a particular term through the end of the first three days of the term, defined as including the official first day of the term through the third day of the term, regardless of the days on which the student’s classes meet. See the academic calendar for exact dates for each term. .

### *What is the result of Dropping a Course(s)?*

Dropping a course will remove the course from the student’s schedule without academic penalty. Nothing will show on the student’s transcript.

### *A. Procedures to Initiate and Complete a Drop*

#### **1. Meet with the Advisor Prior to Initiating a Drop**

Students should check with their advisors about the impact of dropping a course on their degree program progress and their financial aid to ensure that they are making Satisfactory Academic Progress.

*Note:* Athletes must obtain the signature of the Director of Athletic Advisement prior to submitting the Schedule Adjustment Form to the Registrar’s Office.

#### **2. Meet with Student Financial Aid Counselors Prior to Initiating a Drop**

It is important to realize that modifications to the schedule may impact financial aid eligibility.

3. Students who are classified as military students must consult with and report any changes to the degree, major and/or transfer pathway or enrollment (drop/add/withdrawals) to the VA Certifying Official, Georgia T. Mathews.

- a. Students must present official documentation of the call to active duty.

4. Complete the Schedule Adjustment Form and Submit it to the Registrar

Students may choose to drop one or more courses or all of their courses prior to the first day of the term and/or the end of the Drop/Add period by completing the Schedule Adjustment Form and selecting the option to indicate they do not wish to attend the upcoming semester. The form must be submitted to the Registrar.

#### *Non-Attendance Does Not Result in Dropping a Course (s)*

A student who simply stops attending class without following the official procedure described above to officially drop a course(s) will receive an “F” in the course. The course and the grade will remain on the transcript.

#### *Refunds*

If the student has made a payment for tuition and fees, a 100% refund for the course(s) dropped will be issued.

### **IV. Withdrawals**

#### *Definition*

A “withdrawal” at EGSC refers to an attempt to exit a course **after** the end of the Drop/Add (schedule adjustment) period. Withdrawals result in a grade of “W,” “WM” or “WF,” depending on the date that the withdrawal request is submitted to the registrar. A withdrawal may be for one or more courses or for all courses in which one is enrolled.

#### **A. Withdrawals from a Course(s)**

##### *What is the Grade Given for Withdrawing From a Course(s) **On or Before** the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty?*

Students who withdraw after the registration and Drop/Add (schedule adjustment) period ends but **before the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty** (see Academic Calendar for the exact dates) will receive a grade of "W" in all courses in which they are enrolled and for which they request a withdrawal. “W” indicates a withdrawal with no penalty.

- The “W” does not count in the GPA
- The “W” will appear on the transcript

##### *What is the Grade Given for a Withdrawal From a Course(s) **After** the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty?*

Students who withdraw from a course(s) **after** the *Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty* (see the Academic Calendar for the exact dates) will receive grade of "WF" in courses for which they request a withdrawal. “WF” indicates a withdrawal with penalty. The student is assigned an “F” for the course(s).

- The “WF” counts in the GPA as an “F.”

- The “WF” will appear on the transcript.

*What is the grade given for a withdrawal due to receipt of emergency orders to active duty in the military?*

Students who receive emergency orders to active duty in the military receive a **WM**. Students who receive a Military Withdrawal are withdrawn as of the first day of classes.

- The student will receive “WM” grades for all courses for which he/she registered.
- A “WM” appears on the transcript.
- A grade of WM entails no penalties that would ordinarily apply for federal or state aid. For example, the student does not have to pay back money already spent for books and fees, and a WM does not count against attempted hours for HOPE.

#### *Non-Attendance Does Not Initiate or Complete a Withdrawal*

Important Note: Merely informing an instructor that the student will not return to the course does not constitute a formal withdrawal from a course. As well, failure to attend the course does not initiate or complete a formal withdrawal. Students **must complete the Schedule Adjustment Form and follow the approved withdrawal procedure** described below and found on the registrar’s web page to ensure that they are officially withdrawn from the course. Simply abandoning a course(s) through failure to attend classes and/or complete course requirements will result in a grade of 'F' being assigned by the instructor.

#### *Procedure to Withdraw from a Course(s)*

Students who wish to withdraw from one or more courses should:

- Complete a Schedule Adjustment Form. Indicate on the form from which course(s) the student wishes to withdraw, the date of the request, and whether the withdrawal is due to emergency orders to active military duty.
  - The *Schedule Adjustment Form* can be found at the front desk of the Enrollment Management office located in the JAM on the Swainsboro campus; or at the Statesboro front desk on the EGSC-Statesboro campus or Augusta front desk on the EGSC-Augusta Office in Paine Hall; or on the Registrar’s Office Forms webpage (here).
- Complete the following steps:
- Consult with their academic advisor to understand the impact of the withdrawal on their academic progress towards their degree.
  - a. Athletes must meet with the Director of Athletic Advisement before proceeding further.
    - i. Obtain the Director of Athletic Advisement’s signature on the Schedule Adjustment Form, if applicable.
- Consult with the Student Affairs Financial Aid Counselor for students who receive financial aid to discuss the impact of a ‘W’ or “WF” grade on their record and understand the consequences of how a final grade of ‘W’ and/or “WF” may impact their financial aid and satisfactory academic progress.
  - a. Obtain the signature of a Financial Aid Counselor, if applicable.
- Consult with the Director of Housing, if the student lives in EGSC Housing, to understand the impact of the withdrawal on the student’s housing agreement.
  - a. Obtain the signature of the Director of Housing, if applicable.
- Students who are classified as military students must consult with and report any changes to the degree, major and/or transfer pathway or enrollment (drop/add/withdrawals) to the VA Certifying Official, Georgia T. Mathews.

- a. Students must present official documentation of the call to active duty.
- Consult with the instructor(s) and get the instructor’s permission to withdraw from the course.
- Obtain the instructor’s signature for each class from which the student requests a withdrawal. The student must arrange to meet with their instructor to sign-off on the form indicating their approval of the withdrawal.
  - a. If the course is an **online course** and the student is unable to meet with the instructor on campus, then the student **must contact the instructor and request an email** from the instructor indicating that they agree to sign-off on the form.
- Submit the Schedule Adjustment Form to the Registrar’s Office by the close of business on the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty in order to receive a “W”; withdrawals submitted after the Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty will result in a grade of “WF.” Withdrawal for emergency orders to active military service will receive a “WM.” The form can be submitted in one of three ways:
  - email to documents@ega.edu for processing;
  - turn into the Office of Enrollment Management (Swainsboro) at the front desk in the JAM;
  - turn into the front desks at the EGSC-Statesboro & EGSC-Augusta campuses.

### *Refunds*

Any refund due to the student, other than a student withdrawing due to military orders, will be based on a percentage of term attendance calculated by the Business Office. Please contact the Business Office for more detailed information concerning refund percentages. Generally, there will be no refunds given for withdrawal requests submitted after the *Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty*, except for military students called to active duty.

### *Refunds for Students Who Withdraw Due to Emergency Orders to Active Service*

Students must officially withdraw and present official orders to qualify for refunds of tuition and fees. In accordance with USG BOR Policy manual section 7.3.5.3 and subject to institutional policies, full refunds of tuition and mandatory fees and pro rata refunds of elective fees are hereby authorized for students who are:

1. Military reservists (including members of the National Guard) who, after having enrolled in a USG institution and paid tuition and fees, receive orders to active duty or are reassigned for temporary duty or mandatory training that prevents completion of the term; (BoR Minutes, June 2011)
2. Commissioned officers of the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (PHSCC) who receive deployment orders in response to a public health crisis or national emergency after having enrolled in a USG institution and paid tuition and fees; (BoR Minutes, February 2010)
3. Active duty military personnel who, after having enrolled in a USG institution and paid fees, receive reassignment or a temporary duty assignment or a training assignment that would prevent completion of the term; (BoR Minutes, June 2011) or,
4. Otherwise unusually and detrimentally affected by the activation of members of the reserve components or the deployment of active duty personnel of the Armed Forces of the United States who demonstrate a need for exceptional equitable relief. (BoR Minutes, June 2011)

In accordance with the USG BOR Academic and Student Affairs Handbook section 2.5.2,

- A grade of WM entails no penalties that would ordinarily apply for federal or state aid. For example, the student does not have to pay back money already spent for books and fees, and a WM does not count against attempted hours for HOPE.
- Requests for exceptional relief (as specified above under (4), are made directly to the president of the institution. The president will make a determination on each request expeditiously. Such requests must be made at the time of the withdrawal petition.

## **B. Hardship Withdrawals**

### *Definition*

A Hardship Withdrawal refers to a withdrawal from **all courses after** the official *Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty*. A hardship withdrawal is intended for the student who has experienced an acute, traumatic event that prevents him/her from completing the semester **after** the official Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty has passed. That same event also makes it impossible for the student to take an Incomplete and finish the work the next semester. The Hardship Withdrawal is based on **unusual or emergency circumstances that are non-academic in nature and beyond the student's control**. A Hardship Withdrawal is not available as a remedy to address academic difficulties.

A Hardship Withdrawal Request is granted only when the special non-academic circumstances beyond the control of a student described above can be thoroughly documented.

### *What is the Grade Given For a Hardship Withdrawal?*

A Hardship Withdrawal results in a withdrawal from all classes and results in a grade of "W".

- A hardship withdrawal does not remove courses from the academic record.
- A grade of "W" does not impact the GPA, but may impact the student's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and, hence, their eligibility for continued financial aid.

### *What Circumstances May Qualify a Student for a Hardship Withdrawal?*

Non-Academic emergency circumstances that may qualify a student for a Hardship Withdrawal include:

#### **Physical**

Examples include bodily injury or invasive surgery resulting in prolonged absences from class, or unexpected physical disability preventing completion of course work. Necessary documentation to support such claims must include a licensed physician's report, including name, address, phone, documentation of the nature of illness and/or accidents, dates of treatment, prognosis, and recommendation in the form of a signed licensed physician's letter indicating whether the student is or is not able to continue in their courses.

#### **Psychological**

Examples include extreme mental duress suffered from traumatic experiences of such a severity and frequency as to prevent completion of course work. Necessary documentation to support such claims must include documentation from any licensed physician, psychiatrist, or counselor treating the student that includes dates of treatment and a clear recommendation of whether the student is able or not to continue their coursework.

#### **Personal**

Examples include a significant change in financial status, such as through loss of job, or personal tragedy, such as the death of a loved one or domestic disruptions, to such a degree as to prevent completion of coursework. Necessary documentation to support such claims might include copies of divorce papers, papers related to employment and/or unemployment status, police reports, obituaries, or other pertinent documents that are verified.

### **Invalid Reasons for Requesting a Hardship Withdrawal**

Hardship Withdrawal Requests are strictly granted for **non-academic reasons beyond the student's control**. Often students experience academic difficulties of various kinds. These are considered invalid reasons for a Hardship Withdrawal Request. A request based on any of these reasons will not be approved. Examples of **invalid reasons** for initiating a Hardship Withdrawal Request include but are not limited to:

1. Poor performance in one or more courses.
2. Registration for the wrong course.
3. Preference for a different professor or class section.
4. Failure to drop course during the drop/add period.
5. Failure to withdraw by the published deadline using normal procedures.

Hardship Withdrawal Requests will *not* be approved if the student has completed all course requirements such as a final examination and/or a final project.

*Can A Student Request a Hardship Withdrawal From Some But Not All Courses?*

Hardship Withdrawal Requests are generally approved only for *withdrawal from all courses*.

Exceptions to the requirement that a Hardship Withdrawal Request result in a *withdrawal from all courses* may be made by the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs for extreme non-academic circumstances that impact some but not all courses. For example, a student who is passing a fitness walking class may acquire injuries that prevent walking. While the student cannot complete the fitness walking class, the injuries may not prevent completion of the requirements for other courses. Thus, a student might be allowed to withdraw from the fitness walking class on the basis of a documented physical hardship but allowed to complete other courses being taken concurrently.

### **Deadline for Hardship Withdrawal Request**

Hardship Withdrawal Requests must be received **prior to the last day of class for the term in question**. Please see the academic calendar for specific dates. A student who knows that they are in such extreme circumstances that they cannot complete the term should file the Hardship Withdrawal Petition as soon as possible prior to the end of classes for the term in question.

### **Procedure for Initiating a Hardship Withdrawal Request**

*For the Student to Complete*

- Consult, where and when possible, with the academic advisor and instructors to understand the impact of the hardship withdrawal on their academic progress and to ensure that there are no other options, such as an “incomplete” available. Students who are near the end of the term might be better advised to seek an “incomplete.”
- Consult, where and when possible, with the Student Affairs financial aid counselor prior to initiating a hardship withdrawal to ensure that SAP and financial aid eligibility is not impacted.

- If a resident student, consult with the Director of Housing to understand the impact of the hardship withdrawal on the student's current and future semester's housing obligations. A hardship withdrawal granted under this policy may result in a waiver of housing cancellation fees.
- File the Hardship Withdrawal petition on a timely basis. This should be done as soon as possible after the student becomes aware that they are unable to continue due to non-academic reasons beyond their control.
  - Students who know prior to the *Last Day to Drop Without Academic Penalty* that they have a hardship that may prevent continuing progress in classes are best advised to follow the procedures above to withdraw from one or more of their courses.
  - Students who file for *Hardship Withdrawal* after the *Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty* must document continuing hardship circumstances in the period after the *Last Day to Withdraw Without Academic Penalty* in order to qualify for consideration.
- Complete the "Request for Hardship Withdrawal" form found on the Registrar's Website (here).
- Submit the request and all supporting documentation to the Office of the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs via the electronic submission area of the Registrar's Website, found here.

*For the College to Complete*

- Consultation between the VPASA and other personnel, which may include but not be limited to the Office of Counseling and Disability Services, the registrar, and the deans of the academic schools. The VPASA may choose, together with others consulted, to interview the student.
- Determination by the VPASA as to whether to approve or not the petition.
- Transmission by VPASA of the original records of the Hardship Withdrawal Petition to the Registrar's office.
- Communication of the decision by the VPASA to the registrar and the student within five days of receipt of the request.

**Refunds**

Students who are granted a hardship withdrawal do not receive refunds of expenditures for the semester for which the hardship was requested/approved.

**V. Appeals**

The student may appeal the decision to the College President within five days of the student's receipt of the VPASA's decision. Appeals may only be made on the following basis:

- Claims that stated procedures described above were not followed;
- Claims that policies described above were not properly applied and/or followed.
- The appeal is a review of the record only and is not a hearing. No new documentation may be submitted, and all documents previously submitted must be sent along with the appeal. The appeal will be granted only if the president finds there is no substantial evidence in the record to support the finding by the VPASA that non-emergency circumstances qualifying a student for Hardship Withdrawal as defined in the policy do not exist.

Students should use the form "appeal of hardship withdrawal decision" found on the Registrar's Website and submit it to the College President via email or in hard copy form to the president's office. The

President will render a decision on the appeal within 10 days of receipt of the appeal request and will notify the student of the decision. This is the final institutional decision. The student may apply for discretionary review of the decision to the University System of Georgia Office of Legal Affairs within 20 days of receipt of the President's decision: [www.usg.edu/policy](http://www.usg.edu/policy) manual.