

2-28-1991

SR-90-91-(60)212 (ASCR)

Marshall University

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SR-90-91-(60)212 (ASCR)

To approve the following withdrawal policy:

- I. The "IW" grade shall be eliminated.
- II. Students may withdraw from individual classes or from the University during the first fifty percent of classes with a "W." Faculty members are responsible for ensuring that students are informed of their grade to date by mid-term.

Students (including those with priority in registration), however, who withdraw from Designated classes (classes that have a record of being oversubscribed) after the conclusion of schedule adjustment, or the first week of class, will be restricted to regular registration for that class in subsequent semesters. No opportunity will be given this student for an overload.

It is the responsibility of the deans to establish designated classes for their respective colleges. This new withdrawal policy is not to be applied retroactively.

- III. Students may withdraw from individual classes or from the university with a "WP" or "WF" grade during weeks 9-12 (or before the final 25% of a course). After this period, (usually during weeks 13-15) students cannot withdraw from individual classes, but may withdraw from the university as late as the final day of classes with a "WP" or "WF" grade acquired at that point. The restrictions concerning Designated classes in Section II also apply to students withdrawing during this period.

RATIONALE:

The present liberal withdrawal policy contributes to the serious problem of oversubscribed classes. Many students register for more hours than they intend to complete. In effect they "shop around" before deciding what courses to finish. Other students withdraw to avoid a low or failing grade.

This category of student, sometimes called "repeaters," withdraws from certain courses semester after semester. Freshmen presently drop 14.76 percent of their registrations, sophomores, 13.48 percent, juniors 12.77

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percent, and seniors, 9.96 percent. Because the existing withdrawal policy encourages the dropping of classes, many students are unable to find a place their required courses. Moreover, approximately one third of the faculty is now made up of part-time instructors, many of whom are hired to relieve the pressure on oversubscribed classes. Does the present withdrawal policy serve the best interests of students? Also, does this policy provide for the best allocation of the university's limited resources?

I. This policy is designed to eliminate the "IW" grade which is given to students who register for but never attend a class. This policy should also make it possible for some students to enroll in classes that previously were closed. The Registrar has promised to provide faculty with prompt, up-to-date class lists. (Note: During the Fall and Spring semesters, 1989-1990, 661 "IW" grades were recorded.)

II. This policy is designed to discourage students from repeatedly signing up for but not completing required lower level courses such as composition, speech, modern languages and mathematics. This policy, however, would not apply to class adjustment which takes place during the first week of class. (Note: During the Fall and Spring semesters, 1989-1990, 5,834 "W" grades were recorded.)

III. Marshall University's present withdrawal policy has resulted in many students never making a commitment to some of the classes in which they enroll. Some students, although passing, now withdraw from individual classes as late as the final week of classes. During the Fall and Spring semesters, 1989-1990, 3,145 "WP" grades were recorded. Only 382 "WF" grades were recorded. Since many of these students were doing passing work when they withdrew, they could have completed their courses. Most universities do not allow students to withdraw from individual classes during the last week or weeks of a course. The Director of Admissions and Records at West Virginia University conducted a survey of the withdrawal policies of nine schools, West Virginia University, the University of Pittsburgh, Virginia Tech, Pennsylvania State University, University of Maryland, George Mason University, Rutgers University, James Madison, and Marshall University. Only Marshall University had a policy that allowed students to withdraw from individual classes without permission during the last week of classes. Most of these schools do not allow individual withdrawals after a certain date under any circumstances.

FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT:

APPROVED
BY SENATE: Kathryn Heizek DATE: 2/28/91

DISAPPROVED
BY SENATE: _____ DATE: _____

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:

APPROVED: _____ DATE: _____

DISAPPROVED: Geoff Yule DATE: 3/20/91

COMMENTS:

Amended on the Senate floor.

See attached letter from President for explanation of disapproval.

KNC



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
400 Hal Greer Boulevard
Huntington, West Virginia 25755-1000
304-696-2300

March 20, 1991

Professor Kathy Chezik
President, Faculty Senate
Marshall University

Dear Kathy:

With regard to SR-90-91-(60) 212 (ASCR), the proposed withdrawal policy, it would be helpful to clarify some vague language. For example, the motion states that students may withdraw during the "first fifty percent of classes." When the semester does not begin on a Monday, would the drop date fall on a Friday or on some other day of the week? The current catalog language on the "W" period is much more precise: "the eighth Friday after the first class day of the regular semester." There is no chance for ambiguity or confusion in this statement; with the proposed policy, there is.

While AS&CR is attending to this technical matter, I would like it to reconsider the issue of dealing with students who fail to materialize during the first week of class. I think it is unfortunate that this provision was dropped by the Faculty Senate because this is precisely the point in the semester when we have an opportunity to accommodate student demand for required classes. If the goal is to utilize university resources more wisely, more effort should be made to register students into classes which are officially closed but which have not actually reached their established limits.

I would prefer that this new policy (once it is amended as I have recommended) be implemented on a provisional basis and that it be monitored during the first two semester to see whether the withdrawal rate declines substantially as projected.

Basically, I agree with the proposed policy, and I appreciate the fact that the Academic Standards and Curriculum Review Committee members have already devoted a great deal of time to this issue, but given the momentous implications of the withdrawal policy to the future of Marshall University, I respectfully request that they address the concerns I have raised.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan B. Gould', written in a cursive style.

Alan B. Gould
Interim President

ABG:mif