

## **Retroactive Withdrawal Policy**

Accommodations for individuals with disabilities in accessing these policies are available upon request by emailing [accessiblepolicy@wcupa.edu](mailto:accessiblepolicy@wcupa.edu).

### **Purpose**

It is the student's responsibility to adhere to all deadlines published in the university's academic calendar, however, the university is sensitive to students who find themselves facing urgent matters beyond their control. The retroactive withdrawal policy is designed to help those students when serious or unforeseen circumstances occur after the official withdrawal deadline for the term, making it impossible for them to complete that semester and adhere to published withdrawal deadlines.

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### **Definitions**

A retroactive withdrawal is defined as:

- A request to withdraw from a single course/multiple courses/ or the term after the last class day of class or term.

Once a degree has been conferred and the student's cumulative GPA has been sealed, changes to the academic record may only be made in instances where the University has made an error.

### **Retroactive Withdrawal Deadlines**

Completed requests for retroactive withdrawals will be considered if they are submitted to the Registrar within one calendar year of the start of the class. For example, a class that begins in August 2020 will have a retroactive withdraw request deadline of August 2021. Retroactive withdrawals will not be considered if submitted after the calendar year deadline.

### **Criteria for Retroactive Withdrawal**

West Chester University generally discourages retroactive changes but will consider exceptions to this rule when a student makes a compelling case that withdrawal is appropriate and is able to provide documentation supporting their case. A retroactive withdrawal is an extraordinary remedy that is available only for extreme circumstances such as:

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

When determining what the university will consider “extreme circumstances,” keep in mind that the reason for seeking retroactive withdrawal must be:

- Beyond the student’s control,
- Unanticipated, and
- Serious.

### **Retroactive Withdrawal Requirements**

A student submitting a request for retroactive withdrawal will be required to:

1. Include evidence that they were unable to complete the term. Non-attendance and/or failure to complete assignments would be expected in instances of “extreme circumstances” as detailed above.
2. Submit the withdrawal for all courses in the term unless a physical or mental health issue (or the issue’s required remedy – hospital visits,

counseling sessions, etc.) prevented the student from completing a particular course.

3. Explain why a request to withdraw was not submitted prior to the advertised deadline.
4. Include the following documentation:
  - a) An attendance record or other verification from the instructor indicating the student did not complete the course/term. Non-attendance and/or failure to complete assignments would be expected in instances of "extreme circumstances" as detailed above;
  - b) Documentation from the student's physician or mental health professional when the request is prompted by physical or mental health conditions;
  - c) Documentation of other extenuating circumstances (obituary or other evidence of family emergency, police report, eviction notice, etc.); and
  - d) A statement of support from the student's academic advisor or student success professional

### **Inadequate Reasons for Seeking Retroactive Withdrawal**

The retroactive withdrawal policy is not intended as a way for students to avoid receiving low grades. Faculty members are expected to give one major evaluation prior to the end of the eighth week of the semester so that students have an understanding of how they are doing in the class prior to the course withdrawal deadline. 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. Poor grades are not an adequate reason to seek retroactive withdrawal.

**Note on Tuition Adjustments**

Students seeking retroactive withdrawal may be entitled to a tuition adjustment. The amount will be dictated by the number of weeks the student completed in the term.

**Reviewed by:** The Graduate School, CAPC Exec., Registrar's Office

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June 28, 2021

**Effective Date:** June 2021

**Next Review Date:** 06/28/2022

**Initial Approval:** 06/21/2021