

College of Liberal & Creative Arts Policies on Withdrawals and Incompletes

The College of Liberal & Creative Arts adheres to Academic Senate's three-phase model regarding withdrawals as specified in Academic Senate Policy #S09-196:

1. "During the first two weeks of instruction, withdrawing from courses is permitted without restriction or academic penalty. This action is commonly referred to as 'dropping a class.' . . . Faculty are strongly encouraged to instructor-drop all students who are not attending class before the end of the drop period."
2. "From the beginning of the third week through the twelfth week of instruction, withdrawal from a course will be permissible, for serious and compelling reasons."
3. "Withdrawals shall not be permitted after the twelfth week of instruction except in cases, such as accident or serious illness, where the cause of withdrawal is due to circumstances clearly beyond the student's control and the assignment of an Incomplete is not practicable." Such withdrawals require documentation; instructors or Chairs may note online that they received this documentation. Although the documentation does not need to be sent to the Dean's office, Departments should retain documentation in case there is a challenge. For information on incompletes see the end of this document.

The College of Liberal & Creative Arts accepts any of the following as serious and compelling reasons for withdrawals from the third week to the twelfth week:

- Serious and extended personal or family illness
- Physical or mental health issues interfering with one's ability to complete the course
- Documented disability interfering with one's ability to complete the course
- Extended personal or family crisis
- Death of a loved one
- Significant financial problem making it impossible to come to class for extended periods
- Change in work schedule making it impossible to come to class for extended periods
- Change in child or other dependent care making it impossible to come to class for extended periods
- Unanticipated and valuable educational or employment opportunity at the same time as class for extended periods
- Military or extended jury service making it impossible to come to class for extended periods
- Error by San Francisco State University faculty, staff, or administrator
- The student never attended class and the instructor did not drop the student before the end of the drop period.
- Student is in first semester at SFSU and misjudged amount of time SFSU course work requires.

NOT Acceptable Reasons for Withdrawing:

- Never submitted an assignment or took a test
- Stopped submitting work or coming to class
- Cheated or other behavior problems
- Grades or academic standing
- Don't need or want the course
- Took too many units
- Need to study for other courses
- Course beyond student's ability
- Having problems with the instructor
- Will retake the course
- Changed majors

Withdrawals must be student-initiated, as enrollment may impact a student's financial aid, benefits, insurance, etc—it is the student's responsibility to drop or withdraw themselves. Faculty may only drop students who do not attend the first class meeting, who never attend during the first two weeks, or students who do not meet prerequisites for the course.

Plagiarism/Cheating and Withdrawal

Ordinarily, students who have submitted an assignment with plagiarized material or who cheated will not be permitted to withdraw from that class. However, where there has been a minor infraction **and** the student provides **documentation** of a serious and compelling reason to withdraw beyond the student's control, a petition for withdrawal may be considered, if supported by instructor and Chair.

Informing Students of Withdrawal Denials

Faculty should inform students about the Senate and College policies. When an instructor or Chair denies a withdrawal, it is also their responsibility or their designee's to inform the student of the denial.

Limits on Number of Withdrawals from Academic Senate Policy S09-196:

“Undergraduate students may withdraw from no more than 18 semester-units of courses taken in matriculated status at SF State.” In the case of a very serious illness or accident with documentation, students may petition the Board of Appeals for a withdrawal of an entire semester. If granted, withdrawals from the entire semester will be marked on the transcript with “WM” and will not count toward the 18 semester-unit limit on withdrawals.

Unauthorized Withdrawal (WU)

Faculty may assign a grade of WU (unauthorized withdrawal) for a student who stops attending a class, but faculty and students should be aware that a grade of WU is calculated as an F in the course for GPA purposes and can therefore lead to a student being on academic probation.

Bulletin Definitions of Incomplete Grades

taken from http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/sfstatebulletin/policies/grading/Grading_Policy_and_Systems

I: (Incomplete Authorized) Indicates that a portion of required course work has not been completed and evaluated in the prescribed time period due to unforeseen, but fully justified, reasons and that there is still a possibility of earning credit. It is the responsibility of the student to bring pertinent information to the attention of the instructor and to determine from the instructor the remaining course requirements which must be satisfied to remove the Incomplete. A final grade is assigned when the work agreed upon has been completed and evaluated. An I must normally be made up within one calendar year immediately following the end of the term during which it was assigned. This limitation prevails whether or not the student maintains continuous enrollment. Failure to complete the assigned work will result in an I being converted to an IC symbol, unless the faculty member assigns a specific letter grade at the time the Incomplete Authorized is assigned, which would replace the I in the student's record at the end of the calendar year deadline.

IC: (Incomplete Charged) Indicates that a student who received an authorized incomplete (I) has not completed the required course work within the allowed time limit. The IC replaces the I and is counted as a failing grade for grade point average and progress point computation."

Time to Complete an Incomplete: Faculty may specify the time in which an incomplete must be completed and that timeframe may be substantially less than one year.

Petition for incomplete found at <http://www.sfsu.edu/~admisrec/forms/regforms/incomplete.pdf>

The second page of the form list four requirements for assigning an incomplete grade:

1. Student has completed a substantial part (usually 75% or more) of the coursework and a "W" grade is not a viable alternative.
2. Student is unable to complete the course due to unforeseen circumstances beyond his/her control.
3. Student is doing passing work at the time the petition is filed and it is possible for him/her to earn credit if the course requirements are completed within the time allowed.
4. Student has consulted with the instructor about getting an incomplete grade for the course.

Policy on repeating a course in which an incomplete grade has been received: "Students cannot repeat a course that has a grade of 'I' (Incomplete) unless the I grade has been converted to a grade, including an 'IC' (Charged Incomplete)." found at <http://www.sfsu.edu/~admisrec/reg/academicpolicies.html>