

Dear colleagues,

As you may know, **October 23 is the last day for students to Withdraw** from a course with no penalty other than a W on their transcript. In case you have a student or an advisee who might, or should, withdraw from a course, we are writing with advice.

### **When should a student consider withdrawing from a class?**

- When they decide that they will not be able to finish the course successfully.
- When they decide that their total course load is too much for them, and that lessening it by one course could help them be successful in the others.

### **What are the results of withdrawing?**

- They will get a permanent “W” on their transcript.
- Their GPA will not be affected
- Their status as a full-time student will not be affected (their total number of courses is determined by “courses attempted” by the end of add/drop, which would include a course they withdraw from)
- Depending on their current number of credits, withdrawing might affect their progress toward graduation, requiring them to take extra credits in future semesters and/or in J-term or summer
- Their academic standing could be affected, depending on their GPA and other credits. [Find the rules for academic standing on page 47 of the Bulletin.](#)

### **What if a student wants to withdraw after October 23?**

They must petition the Academic Affairs Committee, which involves documenting medical or other reasons for withdrawal. Being behind in the work, or getting poor grades, are not valid reason for that petition.

### **What should I say to a student who wants to withdraw?**

It’s useful to have a conversation about their individual situation. Sometimes it’s worth it for the student to reach out to professors, TA’s, and other academic resources for help, and turn themselves around in a class, even if they get a lower grade than they would like. Other times they can benefit from having one fewer course. It’s useful to talk through those possibilities with the student, and to respond to their reasoning. Of course, it’s the student’s decision whether to withdraw or not, but you can help them to strategize.

### **How does a student withdraw by Oct 23?**

They fill out the form on the Registrar's Website—[the last item listed under Undergraduate Forms/Registration](#). The registrar will need their advisor's approval as well.