Exception Request: Withdrawal After the 8th Week of Classes

Undergraduate Guidelines

GW policy indicates that students may not withdraw from classes after the 8th week, however circumstances can arise that make satisfactory academic progress not only difficult, but impossible. For this reason, GW understands that you may need to withdraw from coursework after the 8th week of classes; however, this decision to request an exception to GW’s academic withdrawal policy is not without consequences. The following guidelines should be utilized when making the decision to request to withdraw from classes. Please note that approval is not guaranteed. Additional questions should be directed to your academic advisor.

How many classes may I request to withdraw from?
A full withdrawal from all of your classes for the requested semester is the primary type of request that will be processed, but partial withdrawal requests will also be considered.

Why would I request a withdrawal?
You may withdraw from selective classes or from the entire semester for several reasons. The most common are medical concerns, family emergency, personal circumstances, a traumatic incident, or a disability. Requesting a partial or full withdrawal solely because you are doing poorly in class is not a reasonable request and will be denied. Additionally, a request for a partial withdrawal without strong documentation indicating why the issue affected that/those course(s) will be denied. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and should be used only as a guide.

What are the withdrawal deadlines for summer sessions and other shorter semester courses?
Academic policy indicates that students are unable to withdraw from summer classes after the 4th week so these Guidelines and Request Form do not need to be utilized prior to then. For classes on a different timeline held during Fall, Spring or Summer semesters, please speak with your academic advisor.

How long after the end of a semester may I request a withdrawal?
Requests must be made no longer than 1 academic year after the end of the semester you are requesting a withdrawal. For example, if you are requesting a withdrawal from Fall 2013, you would need to submit it before the end of Fall 2014.

What are the implications of a withdrawal?
A withdrawal is a very serious decision that should be undertaken in consultation with your academic advisor, and clinician (as appropriate). A withdrawal can affect your financial aid, housing, veteran’s benefits, and visa status. If you are contemplating a withdrawal, the university strongly encourages you to contact these offices (as applicable) to discuss the implications.

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Should I talk with my professor(s) before requesting a withdrawal?
You should talk with your professor regarding your thoughts on withdrawing from her/his course. Based on your performance and progress in the course, a professor might explore options that alleviate the need for you to take a withdrawal. These options might also alleviate academic/financial implications that could be an issue if you were to withdraw. Let your professor know what’s going on, in the event that there are other possibilities that could be more beneficial to you.

How is a withdrawal request processed/considered after the 8th week of classes? Who makes the decision?
After an initial conversation with your Academic Advisor and applicable offices, you should complete the Exception Request Form and submit it with substantive support information to your academic advisor or your advising office front desk staff. The Director of Academic Advising for that school/college will present your request to the Committee on Academic Withdrawals. The Committee consists of representatives from a cross-section of undergraduate academic schools and the Division of Student Affairs.

Will my faculty be contacted regarding the withdrawal request?
The Committee on Academic Withdrawals may contact faculty in the requested course(s) to learn more about your grades and participation during the time you attended the course(s). The Committee on Academic Withdrawals may also contact faculty in the course(s) in which you did not request a partial withdrawal, to learn more about the reasons why those courses were perhaps not impacted by your situation.

Why would a request be denied?
A request for a withdrawal could be denied for several reasons including an incomplete withdrawal request packet, lack of supporting documentation as requested, insufficient reason(s) for partial class withdrawal (particularly in comparison to other classes), pattern of withdrawal requests, insufficient reason(s) for timing of request after the deadline, concern for GPA manipulation etc.

Should I continue attending classes after submitting a request for a full withdrawal?
After the 8th week of classes, a partial or full withdrawal request is considered an exception to academic policy and is not automatically approved so you should continue to attend class, submit assignments, etc. under the assumption that you will remain in those classes and at GW.

How long does this process take and how am I notified?
The Committee on Academic Withdrawals takes approximately 10 - 15 business days to review your packet and make a decision. You are notified of the Committee’s decision via email communication sent to your official GW email address.

What if I want to appeal the decision?
The decision of the Committee on Academic Withdrawals cannot be appealed as the submission of the Exception Request Form is already considered an exception to current academic policy.

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What should I do if a full withdrawal request is approved?
If your withdrawal request is approved, you should do the following:

- Contact all offices that should be informed of your leaving. This list may include: GW Housing, Office of Student Financial Assistance, Student Accounts, International Services Office, Office of Military and Veteran Student Services, etc.
- Complete the *Tell Us Why You Are Leaving* form online. This can be found at: [http://go.gwu.edu/ugradexit](http://go.gwu.edu/ugradexit)
- Update your permanent address in GWeb at [http://banweb.gwu.edu](http://banweb.gwu.edu)

Will there be any requirements prior to returning from a full withdrawal?
Yes, but it depends upon the type of and reason for the withdrawal. If requesting a physical or mental health withdrawal, you may be asked to provide documentation supporting your readiness to return. It may be required that you take additional time away from GW to address concerns. University Counseling Center will provide additional guidance as appropriate. You may be asked to provide verification of academic progress at another institution if applicable.

Will I receive any refunded tuition money if the withdrawal is approved?
No, the approval of a partial or full withdrawal after the 8th week of classes does not mean that any money will be refunded. For more information on the university refund schedule, please see the Registrar’s website at [http://registrar.gwu.edu/withdrawals-refunds](http://registrar.gwu.edu/withdrawals-refunds)