

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
PETITIONS FOR EXCEPTIONS TO ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES*
(For students in degree and nondegree conditional status in the College)

Note: The Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education does not grant petitions automatically. If strong documented justification is provided, petitions are granted for unusual circumstances that are beyond the student's control. Petitions are typically rejected if the main justification appears to be to raise the student's grade-point average (e.g., to get into a major or medical school).

Trauma Drop is an option for students who require confidentiality (e.g., being a victim of a violent crime). At University Park, a trauma drop is initiated by the student in consultation with either Ms. Patricia Johnstone, Crisis Coordinator for Counseling and Psychological Services, 221 Ritenour Bldg. (814) 863-0395, or Dr. Dennis Heitzmann, Director of the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, 221 Ritenour Bldg. Students at commonwealth campuses should send their request for a trauma drop to one of these offices.

PREPARATION OF PETITIONS

The petition consists of the following items:

- A. Student Request:** A letter of request addressed to the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education is the critical part of the petition. It should be dated, concise, factual, signed, and should include:
1. A clear statement of the requested action(s),
 2. Reason(s) that warrant(ed) the requested action,
 3. Reason(s) that the procedures in *Policies and Rules* could not be followed at the time that conditions warranted. For example, if the request is for an increase of late drop credits, the student must explain the reasons that the allowable late drop credits were not sufficient. If the request is for a selective late drop of one or two courses from a previous semester, the student must explain why the circumstances did not affect all of courses that semester (e.g., a broken leg might affect a volleyball course, but not a calculus course.) If a retroactive withdrawal is requested, the student must explain why the withdrawal was not done before the last day of that semester's classes.
 4. Student PSU ID number, current address, email address and phone number
- B. University Forms:** http://www.psu.edu/registrar/student_forms/dropadd.pdf
- 1 For retroactive withdrawal, the completed Withdrawal Form must be included.
 2. For retroactive late drop or late add, a Registration/Drop/Add Form must be submitted.
 3. For late registration (after the last day of classes): This process is managed by the Office of the University Registrar and is described at:
http://www.registrar.psu.edu/registration/late_registration.cfm
- C. Documentation:** It is the student's responsibility to collect and submit, as part of the petition, any documentation that is relevant to the request. In some cases, documentation is required and in other cases, it is optional. The following are some examples:
1. For a retroactive late drop, a letter from the instructor of the course supporting the extenuating circumstances may be submitted. A request for a retroactive late drop is considered differently if

* A petition to the senate is not necessary if an error has occurred during scheduling and the student never attended the course; administrative course cancellation may be initiated through the Registrar's Office. Please contact the Office of Student Services, 208 Hammond Building, 865-7539.

it occurs before the semester has ended, but after the late drop deadline. If the request for a retroactive late drop is granted, an add/drop fee will be charged to the student's account.

2. Documentation from the appropriate academic unit or advising unit is required if the justification for the request is given as one of the following: unfair teaching practice, misinformation from University personnel about a University regulation, policy or procedure, an administrative, advising or clerical error.
3. Requests of grade changes after one year from the conclusion of a course must include a letter of support from the instructor, explaining the circumstances. A grade change authorization form must be submitted from the department offering the course directly to the Assistant Dean's Office.
4. For a request based on illness or a medical disorder, documentation must be provided. Information from the attending physician should establish the impact the medical condition had on the student's academic situation. If the student received care at University Health Services, documentation may be obtained by contacting the primary care clinician to request verification of illness for a Senate Petition. The director of University Health Services reviews all requests and decides the appropriate recommendation.

SUBMISSION OF PETITIONS

Students are responsible for preparing the request, completing University forms, and obtaining supporting documents. The whole package must then be submitted as follows:

Students in a major: After discussing the petition with their advisor, students must submit the whole petition package to the major's undergraduate coordinator. From there it will be forwarded to the Assistant Dean for Student Services, 208 Hammond Bldg, who will then forward the petition to the Faculty Senate.

Students in ENGR status at University Park: Students must discuss their petition with and submit the whole package to an advisor in the Engineering Advising Center, 208 Hammond Bldg. The advisor will forward the petition to the Assistant Dean for Student Services who will then forward the petition to the Faculty Senate.

Students in ENGR status at Commonwealth Campuses: Students should discuss their petition with their advisor and then submit the whole package to the appropriate individual at their campus location.

EVALUATION OF PETITIONS

Petitions are not reviewed on a regular schedule, but are considered by members of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education and processed by the Senate Office as quickly as possible.

Well-documented, fairly routine requests for retroactive withdrawal, course late drop (submitted after the deadline, but before the last day of the class), an increase of a maximum of two late drop credits, or a late grade change are reviewed by an appointed member of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education. These types of requests require only one signature; therefore, they are generally processed faster than other petitions. At least three members of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education review petitions that are initially denied. This committee also reviews petitions for less routine requests, such as retroactive late drop (submitted after the class has ended) or an increase of more than two credits to a student's late drop credit limit.

Students will be notified of the senate's decision in writing, directly by the Faculty Senate Office.

Updated: 7/25/2006

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