



Policy AC073: Retroactive Hardship Withdrawal

Recommended for Approval by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Fisher".

James Fisher, Ph.D.
Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Anderson".

Jon Anderson, Ph.D.
President

Effective Date: 04/03/2025

A. Intent

The retroactive hardship withdrawal policy provides a path for students to appeal tuition/fee charges when unforeseen circumstances occurred during a term that prevented them from meeting normal refund deadlines.

B. Definitions:

A *retroactive hardship withdrawal* is a request to withdraw from, or drop, a course or courses after normal deadlines.

C. Policy

1. Requests for a retroactive hardship withdrawal are granted only in extraordinary circumstances. A hardship withdrawal, for example, will not be granted as a way to retroactively address the receipt of low or failing grades without additional justification.
2. A hardship withdrawal request must be supported with documentation of extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances that prevented the student from completing the semester and meeting normal drop, withdrawal, and refund deadlines, such as:
 - a. Mental or physical illness, injury or other circumstance that significantly limited their capacity to withdraw in a timely manner
 - b. The student being forced to leave the University abruptly due to a health or safety emergency to themselves or in their immediate family
 - c. Abrupt relocation due to employment, loss of employment, or a housing

emergency

3. A completed request for a retroactive/hardship withdrawal must be submitted to the Registrar within one calendar year of the start date of the class.
4. Once a degree has been conferred and the student's cumulative GPA has been calculated, changes to a student's academic record may be made only in instances where the University has made an error.
5. The grant of a retroactive hardship withdrawal may impact a student's financial aid. The University will review a student's aid to determine if any or all aid needs to be returned if a retroactive withdrawal is approved.
6. Students granted a retroactive hardship withdrawal may be entitled to a tuition adjustment. The amount will be dictated by the number of weeks the student completed in the term.

D. Procedure

1. A request for a retroactive hardship withdrawal may be submitted to the Office of the Registrar and will explain:
 - a. Why a course withdrawal or term withdrawal was not submitted prior to the advertised deadline and why a deviation from the refund schedule is requested
 - b. Why a waiver of tuition or fees is appropriate in this situation
2. A student will provide the following documentation where relevant:
 - a. Attendance records or other form of verification indicating that the student did not attend, or stopped attending, a class or classes at some point during the term.
 - b. Documentation of extenuating circumstances, for example, documentation from a physician or mental health professional attesting to the immediate need for the student to no longer attend a course or courses for/during the term.

E. Related Policies

AC020, Incomplete Grade
AC022, Grade Appeal
AC035, University Withdrawal
AC036, Add-Drop
AC046, Course Withdrawal
AC069, Academic Grade Forgiveness

F. Contact Information

For additional information, contact the Office of the Registrar.

G. Policy Review Schedule

All policies will be reviewed every two years, or on an as-needed basis if a change in BOG, PASSHE, or Pennsylvania law suggests or requires it.