

## Withdrawing Questions:

- **What is it?**
- **What isn't it?**
- **How do you decide if it's the best option for you?**

## What is a W?

- Students are given the option to withdraw from a course within the first 14<sup>th</sup> weeks of each semester. Due to the unique circumstances of the Spring 2020 semester, the withdrawal deadline has been moved to the last day of classes: **Tuesday April 28th**.
- When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your official academic transcript with a W next to the course instead of a letter grade. The W is permanent. It doesn't go away if you attempt the course again in a future semester.
- Your transcript is simply a historical record. The W is a neutral reflection of the fact that you attended a course beyond the add/drop period, showing how many credits you started with.
- Withdrawing is a legitimate, often positive academic decision made in the middle of the term. Some colleges and universities issue WP or WF notations, indicating whether students are passing or failing at the point of the withdrawal. We don't do this.
- Students withdraw for a variety of reasons, including illness, injury, difficulty in a course, or evolving academic interest. We want students to stay in their classes wherever possible, but we recognize the many reasons why a W may become a student's best option.

## What isn't a W?

- A W is not a blemish on a student's record. When students consider how their transcripts will be viewed in the future, they should remember that they are presenting a long record of about 40 courses.
- A single W will not be scrutinized within a record that is populated with positive grades. A single W does not detract from a successful record. If it happens semester after semester, however, this may begin to look like a pattern or a behavior, rather than a deliberate, context-specific decision.
- We can't predict how every individual admissions officer or employer will examine transcripts and what they will prioritize. But a W is rarely a concern to graduate schools or a subject of discussion during job interviews.

- A W does not equal failure (see above). It's not an indication to anyone that a student was in danger of failing a course. It is neutral.

### **How do you decide if it's the best option for you?**

- Take time to speak with your professor about your progress in the course.
- Make an appointment with your dean or academic counselor to discuss the pros and cons of withdrawal.
- Students should continue to attend and participate in any class they are considering withdrawing from until after meeting with their dean or academic counselor.
- Consider your ability to succeed in the course, and whether the effort required to finish to your satisfaction is realistic (or whether it would be actually detrimental to your overall term, not to mention health and happiness).
- Consider how the energy and attention you are devoting to the course is affecting your ability to succeed in the rest of your courses.
- Consider how a withdrawal will affect your degree progress. Will you need to take a summer course in the future to stay on track? Will it affect any other academic goals?
- If the withdrawal means that you will no longer be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits, consider how this will affect your athletic eligibility, financial aid package, or Visa status. If you have questions, your dean or academic counselor can help you find the answers.