

To: The University Senate
From: Educational Policy Committee
Subject: Revising Academic Regulations to Drop the WF and Associated Direct Grades
Reference: [Academic Regulations on Grades and Grade Reports, section D: Directed Grades](#)
Disposition: University Senate for Discussion and Adoption
Rationale: The current Academic Regulations provide instructors with the option to record a grade of “WF” for a credit course (or associated options for pass/no pass and zero credit courses) for students who withdraw from a class between week 5 and week 9 of a semester term (and proportionately for terms of other time lengths). This grade designation is only available to apply to students with a classification of “3” or higher (usually meaning a sophomore or higher), no matter what level course they are in. This grade designation carries no consequence to student’s GPA. Prior to week 5, an instructor may only designate a “W” for “withdraw,” even if a student dropping the course at that point has a failing grade so far.

Because the “WF” or equivalent designation is optional, because before week 5 the “WF” is not available, because it is already limited to more senior classifications of students, and because there is no consequence of the “WF” to a student’s GPA, it appears that the “WF” designation’s sole function is as a mechanism for some instructors to choose to shame a student on their transcript. At the same time, some professional schools use such designations on the transcript to determine admission (including converting WFs to Fs and recalculating GPA in light of this change).

These designations are unnecessarily punitive, akin to kicking students when they are already down. This shaming is counter to Purdue’s pillars of “respect” and “growth”: we should respect students for recognizing their limitations and taking steps to recover from mistakes (such as by dropping a course at whatever stage of their term), and we should recognize students can grow in their learning of how to be a student, so that taking a course again brings with it no prejudice.

The WF/WN/WU designations currently require the Office of the Registrar to reach out to the instructor to confirm whether the student is passing or not. Deleting this designation would reduce administrative labor for both instructors and the Office of the Registrar. It would also reduce the amount of explaining to anxious students that advisors and instructors would need to do when students receive such a designation.

Proposal: The University Senate modifies the Academic Regulations to remove the option of “WF,” “WN,” and “WU” from possible directed grade designations for a course, as per below and in other references throughout the Academic Regulations.

Original text	Revised text
<p>D. Directed Grades (University Senate Document 83-8, March 26, 1984; amended by University Senate Document 01-3, November 19, 2001)</p> <p>The registrar is directed to record the following grades and symbols under special circumstances in lieu of semester grades. The registrar may request from the faculty such information as he/she needs and on such forms as the registrar shall prescribe.</p> <p>W: Withdrew; a record of the fact that a student was enrolled in a credit course and withdrew from the course after the withdrawal date per campus time-frame.</p> <p>WF: Withdrew Failing; a record of the fact that a student with a classification of 3 or higher, was enrolled in a credit course and withdrew from the course after the fourth week at which time, according to a statement from the instructor, the student was not passing in his/her work. This grade does not affect GPA computations. A grade of WF may be directed by the Committee on Scholastic Delinquencies and Readmissions.</p>	<p>D. Directed Grades (University Senate Document 83-8, March 26, 1984; amended by University Senate Document 01-3, November 19, 2001)</p> <p>The registrar is directed to record the following grades and symbols under special circumstances in lieu of semester grades. The registrar may request from the faculty such information as he/she needs and on such forms as the registrar shall prescribe.</p> <p>W: Withdrew; a record of the fact that a student was enrolled in a credit course and withdrew from the course after the withdrawal date per campus time-frame.</p> <p>WF: Withdrew Failing; a record of the fact that a student with a classification of 3 or higher, was enrolled in a credit course and withdrew from the course after the fourth week at which time, according to a statement from the instructor, the student was not passing in his/her work. This grade does not affect GPA computations. A grade of WF may be directed by the Committee on Scholastic Delinquencies and Readmissions.</p>

<p>WN: Withdrew Not Passing; the same as WF for a credit course taken under the pass/not-pass option.</p> <p>WU: Withdrew Unsatisfactory; the same as WF for a zero credit course.</p> <p>IF: Unremoved Incomplete-Failing; for a credit course in which a student received an I grade, a directed record of the student's failure to achieve a permanent grade before the end of one year after the Incomplete was given. This grade counts in all respects as a failing grade.</p> <p>IN: Unremoved Incomplete-Not Passing; for a credit course taken under the pass/not-pass option and in which the student received a PI grade. The same as an IF grade except that it does not affect GPA computations.</p> <p>IU: Unremoved Incomplete-Unsatisfactory; for a zero credit course in which a student received an SI grade. The same as an IF grade except that it does not affect GPA computations.</p>	<p>WN: Withdrew Not Passing; the same as WF for a credit course taken under the pass/not-pass option.</p> <p>WU: Withdrew Unsatisfactory; the same as WF for a zero credit course.</p> <p>IF: Unremoved Incomplete-Failing; for a credit course in which a student received an I grade, a directed record of the student's failure to achieve a permanent grade before the end of one year after the Incomplete was given. This grade counts in all respects as a failing grade.</p> <p>IN: Unremoved Incomplete-Not Passing; for a credit course taken under the pass/not-pass option and in which the student received a PI grade. The same as an IF grade except that it does not affect GPA computations.</p> <p>IU: Unremoved Incomplete-Unsatisfactory; for a zero credit course in which a student received an SI grade. The same as an IF grade except that it does not affect GPA computations.</p>
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As with other changes to the academic regulations, these changes will be made by the Office of the Registrar, and reviewed for completeness by the Educational Policy Committee of the University Senate.

Committee Votes:

For:

Advisors

Jeff Elliott
Keith Gehres
Jenna Rickus
Jeffery Stefancic

Faculty

Thomas Brush
Jennifer Freeman
Eric Kvam
Alice Pawley
Steven Scott
John Sheffield
Thomas Siegmund
Howard Sypher
Jeffrey Watt

Students

Elli DiDonna

Against:

None

Abstained:

None

Absent:

Advisors

None

Faculty

Burton Lee Artz
Todor Cooklev
Erik Otárola-Castillo
Antônio Sá Barreto

Students

Izzy Weber