

2011

# Academic Standards and Calendar Committee Report #10-11-3: Drop Period, Final Examinations, Basis for Credit.

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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## Recommended Citation

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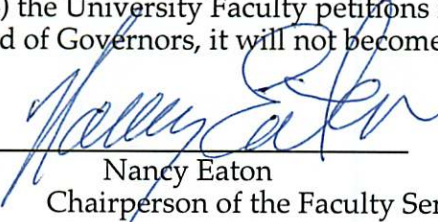
Serial Number #10-11--23

TO: President David Dooley

FROM: Nancy Eaton, Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

1. The attached BILL titled, Academic Standards and Calendar Committee Report #10-11-3: Drop Period, Final Examinations, Basis for Credit, is forwarded for your consideration.
2. This BILL was adopted by vote of the Faculty Senate on April 21, 2011.
3. After considering this bill, will you please indicate your approval or disapproval. Return the original or forward it to the Board of Governors, completing the appropriate endorsement below.
4. In accordance with Section 10, paragraph 4 of the Senate's By-Laws, this bill will become effective May 12, 2011 three weeks after Senate approval, unless: (1) specific dates for implementation are written into the bill; (2) you return it disapproved; (3) you forward it to the Board of Governors for their approval; or (4) the University Faculty petitions for a referendum. If the bill is forwarded to the Board of Governors, it will not become effective until approved by the Board.

April 25, 2011  
(date)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy Eaton  
Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

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ENDORSEMENT

TO: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

FROM: President of the University

Returned.

- a. Approved  *With the stipulation that the effective date for implementation is no sooner than*
- b. Approved subject to final approval by Board of Governors  *Fall 2012 Drop Period only*

c. Disapproved

May 9, 2011  
(date)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President

## **Academic Standards & Calendar Committee**

### **Report 2010-11-3**

**April 5, 2011**

*As amended by the Faculty Senate on April 21, 2011*

#### **Drop Period, Final Examinations, Basis for Credit**

I. The committee recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the revised policy 8.34.10 (to begin Fall 2011) that appears in the following section:

##### **Existing Drop Period Section 8.34.10:**

A course may be dropped by official procedures determined by the Office of Enrollment Services on or before the end of the eighth week of classes. If the student has not dropped a course by the end of the drop period the instructor must submit a grade. A student may drop a course after the end of the drop period only in exceptional circumstances and only with authorization of the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled. Fees will not be adjusted downward for courses dropped after the end of the "add" period (see 8.43.20 for adjustment of fees).

##### **Proposed Drop Period Section 8.34.10:**

A course may be dropped by official procedures determined by the Office of Enrollment Services (e-campus) on or before the end of the third week of classes (Drop Period) with no mark on a student's transcript. Courses may be dropped through e-campus between the fourth and the end of the sixth week of classes (Withdrawal Period) and will be recognized on a student's transcript with a "W." After the end of the sixth week (Late Withdrawal Period), a student may drop a course only in exceptional circumstances and only with authorization of the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled. Such drops will also be recognized on a student's transcript with a "W." If the student has not dropped a course by the end of the withdrawal period the instructor must submit a grade. Fees will not be adjusted downward for courses dropped after the end of the "add" period (see 8.43.20 for adjustment of fees).

##### **Rationale:**

The purpose of a drop period is to give students an opportunity to decide whether they wish to continue and commit to a class after they have had some experience in the course. An excessively long drop period allows students to postpone this decision which can impact their academic career. The rationale for the proposed revision is to encourage proactive academic behavior in terms of following through with a course selection after six full weeks of experiencing a class. The "W" mark will encourage students to make well-informed, responsible decisions concerning needed credits and required courses for graduation. The "W" also serves as a record, useful particularly for advising purposes, so that advisors can notice patterns of withdrawal and help students make different decisions to keep them on track for a timely graduation.

II. The committee recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the amended section 8.51.16 that appears in the following section:

**Existing Final Exams Section 8.51.16**

All final examinations, with the exception of take-home examinations, shall be administered during the final examination period and in accordance with the final examination schedule prepared and distributed by the Office of Enrollment Services. A faculty member cannot change the date, time or place of a scheduled final examination without the approval of the Office of Enrollment Services. In courses where no final examination is to be administered, a faculty member cannot administer any other examination during the last five days that classes are in session; instead, he or she must administer that examination according to the final examination schedule. In courses where a faculty member wishes not to administer an end of the semester examination, or instead wishes to administer a take-home final examination, then that faculty member must seek a waiver from the original schedule through his/her department chairperson or immediate academic supervisor so that the Office of Enrollment Services is made aware of the room vacancy.

**Proposed Final Exams Section 8.51.16**

Final examinations are not required by the university, but any final examination, with the exception of take-home examinations, must be administered according to the final examination schedule prepared by the Office of Enrollment Services. Any change must be approved by the Office of Enrollment Services. Take-home examinations may be turned in, by mutual agreement, as early as the first day of finals, but students shall have up to the date and time identified in the final exam schedule. Faculty members cannot administer an examination during the last five days classes are in session in lieu of a final examination, but must instead postpone such an examination to be administered according to the final examination schedule. Given university time and space constraints, the Office of Enrollment Services needs to know when a course section will not need a scheduled examination room. Faculty must notify their chairperson or academic supervisor about sections in which they will either administer a take-home examination or no final examination. The department chairperson or academic supervisor must then notify the Office of Enrollment Services of all sections that will not require final examination rooms.

**Rationale:**

This revision clarifies that final examinations are not required, about which there has been significant confusion. It adds language specific to take-home examinations, which are increasingly popular. (Take-home examinations may account for many of the 50% of classrooms that are currently scheduled but not used during the final examination period; creating a policy for dealing with take-home exams separate from the room-based scheduling will significantly reduce space/time constraints.) The revision clarifies the policy about reserving end-of-term examinations for the final examination period, and better explains why and how the Office of Enrollment Services needs to be notified of sections that do not give physical final exams.

III. The committee recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the amended section 8.31.10 that appears in the following section:

**Existing Basis for Credit Section 8.31.10**

The basis of a credit shall normally be three hours work; for example, one credit for each lecture or recitation and two hours of preparation, or one credit for each two-hour laboratory and one hour of preparation, or one credit for each three-hour laboratory with no outside preparation. Individual evaluation of courses offering practice in a professional major shall be made by the respective deans to determine non-lecture hour credits.

**Proposed Basis for Credit Section 8.31.10**

The basis of a credit shall normally be three hours work; for example, one credit for each lecture or recitation and two hours of preparation, or one credit for each two-hour laboratory and one hour of preparation, or one credit for each three-hour laboratory with no outside preparation, **the student workload for an online class shall be equivalent to the in-class and out-of-class work in its face-to-face equivalent.** Individual evaluation of courses offering practice in a professional major shall be made by the respective deans to determine non-lecture hour credits **and will include at least an equivalent amount of work as required in the definitions cited above.**

**Rationale:**

The revised section keeps the University in compliance with the Department of Education, which requires a specific definition of the basis for a credit.