

Special University Senate Meeting  
May 7, 2007

Three-Year Pilot for Change to Course Withdrawal Deadline (freshmen only)

On Monday, April 23, the Senate Council reviewed a proposal to extend the course withdrawal deadlines for freshmen students. (See memorandum from Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Phil Kraemer, next page.)

After discussion, the Senate Council moved (with a positive recommendation, to be effective fall 2007) that to improve retention and six-year graduation rates, to send to the Senate the proposal to extend the course withdrawal deadline by three weeks for freshmen only, with the following four (4) stipulations:

1. The course withdrawal deadline extension will only apply to first-year students who are enrolled full-time for the first time at UK in or after fall 2007;
2. The course withdrawal deadline extension will be for a three-year pilot period;
3. Eligible students must have the approval of an advisor in order to withdraw after the official mid-term date; and
4. Appropriate persons will report back to the Senate Council yearly on the success of this three-year pilot extension of the withdrawal date.

**Recommendation: that the Senate, in order to improve retention and six-year graduation rates, approve extending the course withdrawal deadline by three weeks for freshmen only, effective fall 2007, with the following four (4) stipulations:**

- 1. The course withdrawal deadline extension will only apply to first-year students who are enrolled full-time for the first time at UK in or after fall 2007;**
- 2. The course withdrawal deadline extension will be for a three-year pilot period;**
- 3. Eligible students must have the approval of an advisor in order to withdraw after the official mid-term date; and**
- 4. Appropriate persons will report back to the Senate Council yearly on the success of this three-year pilot extension of the withdrawal date.**



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**ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION**

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Kaveh Tagavi, Chair  
University Senate Council

FROM Philipp J. Kraemer

DATE: April 16, 2007

As described by the Provost during his recent address to the Senate, we face a grave situation with respect to the quality of undergraduate education at UK. Our embarrassingly low retention and six-year graduation rates must be addressed. Given all that is riding on improving this situation, we have developed an overall plan with which to intervene. The A&S proposal now under consideration by the Senate to extend the withdrawal deadline is a crucial element of the plan. The very thoughtful analysis upon which A&S based the proposal is supported by research of the recent ad hoc Retention Workgroup appointed by the Provost. The current withdrawal deadline does not allow students to use midterm grades in deciding whether to drop a course because of the proximity of the deadline to the availability of midterm grade reports. The rationale for extending the deadline is strong, and we had hoped that we could initiate that change with the fall 2007 cohort.

As you know, it now appears that the A&S proposals will not reach the Senate in time to be implemented fall 2007. Accordingly, I offer an alternative proposal that would achieve significant benefits and minimize unintended consequences. Per our discussion Friday, April 13, 2007, I recommend the following:

As Chair of the Senate Council, approve a rule change that would move the withdrawal for fall and spring semesters deadline to the end of the 11th week of the semester, as recommended in the A&S proposal, but with three conditions:

- It would apply only to first-year students enrolling full-time for the first time at UK in fall 2007.
- Implement this rule change as a pilot program for a three year period.
- Require students to have approval of an advisor in order to withdraw after the official mid-term date.

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If this change can be implemented, Don Witt and I will ensure that all relevant parties are informed so that students who will be affected will be well aware of the change. We will meet with the advising network, among other constituencies, in preparation for the pending summer advising conferences. In addition, my office, in collaboration with Connie Ray, will assume responsibility for a detailed assessment and analysis of the impact of this change, which can be made available to the University Senate at the appropriate time. Finally, in working with Don Witt we will develop a mechanism to implement the requirement that an advisor must approve withdrawal after the official midterm.

By having at least this component of the A&S proposal in place for fall 2007, we can make considerable progress in implementing a range of interventions that address academic success of undergraduates. This strategy will also allow the full A&S proposals to be considered by the University Senate in the normal manner.

We greatly appreciate your willingness to assist in this crucial matter. I would be happy to discuss this matter further upon your request.

c: Kumble Subbaswamy, Provost

Don Witt, Assistant Provost

Steve Hoch, Dean  
College of Arts & Sciences