Minutes of meeting of November 18, 2003

The minutes of the November 18, 2003 meeting were approved as amended.

Motion to Revise the Add/Drop Policy

The motion to revise the Add/Drop Policy was approved as amended.

Motion:

Effective Spring 2004, the administrative add/drop policy is revised as follows:

Administrative adds and drops occur when anyone other than the student adds or drops the student from a class. Add/drops are only authorized in the following cases. Only the Registrar’s Office is authorized to process administrative adds/drops.

1. Tuition and fee cancellation. Any student who has not paid their tuition and fees may be dropped from her courses.

2. Failure to take required courses. If GSU policy requires that a student take a certain course(s) either as prerequisite requisites or conditions of enrollment and the student does not take the required course(s), at the request of the Director of the SAC or a Director of the college OAA office, the Registrar’s Office may drop the student from all her classes. (For example, some students are required to take Regents' Test Prep courses.)

3. Late award of transfer credit. In those cases in which a new transfer student does not get a transfer credit evaluation until after term has started and evaluation indicates that the student should get transfer credit for a course in which she is currently enrolled, the Registrar’s Office, at the request of the Director of the Student Advisement Center (SAC) or a Director of an Office of Academic Assistance (OAA) may drop the student from the course(s) for which she will receive transfer credit.

4. Faculty schedule adjustment period. For one week following the end of late registration and at the request of the instructor, the Registrar's Office will add or drop students in that instructor's courses.

5. Roll verification drops. If, during roll verification, an instructor discovers that a student has never attended a class, the Registrar's Office shall, at the request of the instructor, drop the student from the class.

6. Misadvisement. At the request of the chair of the department offering the course and either the Director of the college OAA office or the Director of the SAC, the Registrar's office will drop a student if there is documented misadvisement.

7. Other cases. There may be other cases in which administrative adds and drops are warranted. These adds and drops must be approved by two of the following four individuals: the instructor of the course, the department chair, the associate dean, the dean.
After the end of the semester, all administrative adds and drops require the signature of an associate dean or dean.

In cases 4, 5, 6 and 7, Programs, Departments, Schools or Colleges may require signatures in addition to those indicated above. Any unit which requires additional signatures must inform the Office of the Registrar (in writing). This policy is effective immediately.

**Rationale:**
The effect of the policy is to encourage students to drop themselves from classes rather than forcing faculty to go through the paper work to drop students who are not attending. Rather than dropping students, faculty would withdraw them (using GoSOLAR) according to the involuntary withdrawal policy. (See below.) Students who are withdrawn are responsible for a portion of their tuition and fees while students who are dropped are entitled to a refund of all tuition and fees. So the change would give students a financial incentive to drop themselves during late registration. In spring of 2003 there were over 18,000 drops. Students are not taking responsibility for dropping themselves and this is placing a burden on faculty and staff. The burden is particularly great on the Office of Financial Aid because dropped students who received aid are required by federal law to pay it back. However, GSU is required to seek this money from the student and reimburse the government if the student does not do so. Thus the current policy is allowing some students to get aid, be dropped from all their classes and then placing a financial burden on GSU by not returning their financial aid money. Both UGA and Tech have a policy of withdrawing (not dropping) students after the end of late registration. The policy change would bring GSU in line with UGA and Tech.

1332.30 Involuntary Withdrawal
Students are expected to observe all policies governing the class. Faculty must clearly state these policies in the course syllabus. When a faculty member determines that a student is in violation of one of the class policies (e.g., has missed a required assignment or has excessive absences), that faculty member may withdraw the student from the course. Students involuntarily withdrawn prior to the midpoint of the course will be assigned a grade of W or WF by the instructor. Students involuntarily withdrawn after the midpoint of the course will be assigned a grade of WF. Note that a WF is treated as an F for GPA calculation purposes. The instructor will notify, in writing, a student who is involuntarily withdrawn, and within ten days of this notification, the student may petition to the department chair for reinstatement in the course.

Students involuntarily withdrawn from all classes may be entitled to a refund of a portion of their fees (see Section 1240).

**Motion to Revise the Withdrawal Policies**
The motion to revise the withdrawal policies to add a new Administrative Withdrawal Policy was defeated. Issues following under this category will be treated as an appeal through the Admissions and Standards University-level appeal process.

**Administrative Withdrawal Policy**
As a general rule, a student who withdraws after the semester mid-point receives a grade of WF. There are a few exceptional cases in which withdrawal after the semester mid-point with a grade of W is warranted even though it does not fall under the Involuntary Withdrawal, Hardship Withdrawal or Non-Academic Withdrawal policy. These exceptional cases are administrative withdrawals. An administrative withdrawal with a grade of W requires the following: the last date attended must be after the semester mid-point, the approval of the Dean of Students, and the approval of two of the following four individuals: the instructor of the course, the department chair, the associate dean, the dean. After the end of the semester, these withdrawals require the signature of an associate dean or dean.

The Dean of Students will verify that the Administrative Withdrawal Policy is not being used to circumvent the Hardship Withdrawal Policy.

The Committee approved the motion as amended to change what is now called the Administrative Withdrawal Policy and renamed to the Non-Academic Withdrawal Policy and modified as indicated below. **Additions**

1332.50 Non-Academic Withdrawal
A student may be non-academically withdrawn from the university when in the judgment of the dean of students, in consultation with the Chair of Admissions and Standards and other appropriate University officials, the director of the Counseling Center, and the university physician, if any, and after consultation with the student’s parents and/or personal physician, if any, it is determined that the student has demonstrated behavior that suffers from a physical, mental, emotional, or psychological health condition which: (a) poses a significant danger or threat of physical harm to the student or to the person or property of others; or (b) causes the student to interfere with the rights of other members of the university community or with the exercise of any proper activities or functions of the university or its personnel; or (c) causes the student to be unable to meet institutional requirements for admission and continued enrollment, as defined in the fee payment rules of the university, Student Conduct Code and Policies, and other academic policies of the university. Except in some situations where the student is believed to be an imminent threat to self or others, as determined at the sole discretion of the University, a student shall, upon request, be accorded an appropriate hearing prior to the final decision concerning his or her continued enrollment at the university. Students who are non-academically withdrawn will be assigned a grade of W or WF by the instructor if they are withdrawn before the semester midpoint and a WF if they are withdrawn after the semester midpoint.

Rationale:
For new administrative withdrawal policy: There are cases which do not fall under our current policies in which a grade of W is justified even though a student has withdrawn after the semester midpoint. For example, suppose that an instructor promised on her syllabus that the first paper would be handed back before the semester mid-point but then the instructor became ill and was unable to grade the papers until after the mid-point. The common feature that our current policies overlook is a problem (illness, etc.) not with the student but with the instructor, lab assistant, or some other GSU employee. It is not possible to list all such situations in advance. The current policies allow chairs/deans to drop students but not to withdraw them. Both options should be available to chairs/deans.

For the renaming: the new names are clearer and bring GSU’s names in line with standard national norms.

For the changes to the non-academic withdrawal policy: Federal ADA law requires that university decisions be based on behavior, not psychological state. GSU’s Legal Affairs Office feels that the current text is not as clear about this as it could be. The proposed revisions make no substantive changes. They merely clarify that it is behavior that is at issue, not psychological state.

Other Policies Referred to in the Motion

1332.30 Involuntary Withdrawal
Students are expected to observe all policies governing the class. Faculty must clearly state these policies in the course syllabus. When a faculty member determines that a student is in violation of one of the class policies (e.g., has missed a required assignment or has excessive absences), that faculty member may withdraw the student from the course. Students involuntarily withdrawn prior to the midpoint of the course will be assigned a grade of W or WF by the instructor. Students involuntarily withdrawn after the midpoint of the course will be assigned a grade of WF. Note that a WF is treated as an F for GPA calculation purposes. The instructor will notify, in writing, a student who is involuntarily withdrawn, and within ten days of this notification, the student may petition to the department chair for reinstatement in the course.

Students involuntarily withdrawn from all classes may be entitled to a refund of a portion of their fees (see Section 1240).

1332.40 Hardship Withdrawal
Students may be granted hardship withdrawals after the midpoint of the semester when nonacademic emergency situations which prevent them from completing their course work occur. Hardship withdrawals are subject to the following restrictions:

1. Students are not eligible for hardship withdrawals in any course in which they have completed the course requirements (e.g., taking the final exam or submitting the final project).
2. Students must initiate an application for a hardship withdrawal no later than one academic year after the semester in which the courses were taken.

Hardship status normally applies to all the courses a student took in a semester but in some cases may be granted for some of a student=s courses. Students requesting a hardship withdrawal in some but not all of their courses must provide documentation to justify such a partial withdrawal. If a student is granted a hardship withdrawal (full or partial), the instructors of the courses from which the student is withdrawing must award a grade of AW@ or AWF, depending on whether the student was doing passing work as of the effective date of the hardship.

Decisions regarding hardship withdrawals shall be made, in the first instance, by the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students is not authorized to grant exceptions to the two restrictions above. If the student or the faculty members involved in a case wish to appeal the decision of the Dean of Students, or if the Dean of Students feels that an exception to the two restrictions above is justified, the student=s case shall be considered by the Hardship Withdrawal Appeals Committee. If the Hardship Withdrawals Appeals Committee is considering granting an exception to the two restrictions above, the instructor of the course(s) in question shall be contacted in advance of the Committee=s meeting and offered the opportunity to write a letter to the Committee stating anything the instructor feels is relevant to the case. Appeals of the decisions of the Committee may be initiated by either the faculty or the students involved in the case and shall be heard by the Provost.

For further information on hardship withdrawals, contact the Office of the Dean of Students by calling 404/463-9023.

Report from Registrar on changes in Add, Drop, Withdrawal and Grade Change Procedures

The Registrar presented proposals to streamline the Add, Drop, Withdrawal and Grade Change procedures and eliminate forms.

To streamline the hardship withdrawal process, the Registrar proposed that since 95% of grades assigned in a hardship case are AW@, once the Hardship Committee notifies the Registrar=s office it has approved a hardship, the AW@ will be automatically assigned. Faculty will be notified and asked to complete a grade change form only if they want the AW@ to be changed to a AWF.@ Students would be notified if the grade changes from a W to WF.

There was considerable discussion regarding this proposal and displeasure with the Hardship process including the fact that someone other than the faculty member can change a student=s grade, the proposal was amended to allow the W to be entered within two weeks of the date on the memo notifying faculty of the hardship approval. The proposal was tabled and will be sent to subcommittee for further discussion.

The proposal to do adds, drops, withdrawals and grade changes by e-mail was discussed. The committee was generally supportive. Several suggestions for improvement of the process were made. The Registrar will incorporate those suggestions.

Minutes Recorded by:
Wanda F. Taylor