

From: 3D Memos [ppgs@email.arizona.edu]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2009 8:10 AM
To: 'PPSS3DS@LISTSERV.ARIZONA.EDU'
Subject: Late Drop Fee for Courses

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 17, 2009

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads, and Advisors

FROM: George Gehrels, Chair, Undergraduate Council
Celeste F. Pardee, Curriculum Associate, Academic Affairs

RE: **Late Drop Fee for Courses**

In AY 2008-2009, the Undergraduate Council (UGC) focused on ways to increase class availability to students. Members examined UA data on registration, course adds and drops to better understand how students construct a class schedule that they will complete. Members also researched change-of-schedule policies and procedures at UA peer institutions. One of the changes approved by UGC and the Graduate Council (and by Wanda Howell for the faculty) to increase access to classes is the implementation of a late drop fee to encourage students to drop courses prior to or during the first week of classes. Approved in March 2009, the fee goes into effect on Monday, August 31, 2009, the second week of the Fall 2009 Semester for all undergraduate and graduate courses.

Late Course Drop Fee:

Students may drop courses without penalty through the first week of the Fall and Spring semesters. Beginning the second week and continuing through the last day of classes, a \$25 penalty fee will be charged to the student per student-initiated drop and per administrative drop (but not for a department drop or section change). This penalty does not apply to summer or winter sessions, or to courses with non-standard start and end dates. It does not apply to complete withdrawals from the University.

Justification for Charging a Late Drop Fee:

- **Problem:** There are insufficient seats in many undergraduate classes that students need to complete degree requirements. Following priority registration for continuing students, many incoming freshmen and transfer students are unable to register for the courses they need.
- **Issue:** Approximately 13,000 undergraduate classes were dropped by students from the second week of the Fall Semester 2007 through the last day of classes; two-thirds of these were lower-division courses that incoming students might need. Since most instructors do not permit students to add classes after the first week of the semester, these dropped classes are a wasted resource.
- **Solution:** If students were to drop their unwanted classes prior to or during the first week of the semester, students who need those classes to complete degree requirements could add them.
- Many UA peer institutions charge a late drop penalty for courses (some charge on the first day of the term), ranging from \$5 to \$50; \$25 is in the mid-range. Any late drop penalty must be sufficient to change student behavior--\$25 is not so low as to be ignored, nor so high as to disadvantage students on a tight budget.
- Of the many strategies considered by Undergraduate Council, the late drop fee was deemed the most effective and least punitive way to encourage students to release courses early if they do not intend to complete them.

- The late drop fee for courses is relatively easy to implement (automate) in current systems.
- **Note:** This drop penalty is optimized with the 1-day extension of WebReg access for adding courses.

Implementation of the Fee:

- The late drop fee date is published in the Dates & Deadlines section of the *Schedule of Classes*, <http://www.em.arizona.edu/datesdeadlines/datesdeadlines.aspx?t=094> where other fees are posted (e.g., late payment charge, census date late charge). An explanation of the fee is provided on the Registrar's site, <http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/webreg.htm>.
- The late drop fee will be charged beginning on Monday of the second week of the Fall Semester (i.e., August 31, 2009), and beginning on Thursday of the second week of the Spring Semester (the additional day is in recognition of the MLK Jr Holiday).
- Students are being notified of the new fee on Student Link and upon logging into WebReg.
- The proceeds from the late drop penalty for courses will be designated for instruction, specifically to increase the number of courses, sections, and seats in high-demand areas, such as General Education and over-subscribed majors/minors.
- The Office of Institutional Research & Planning Support (OIRPS) will compile data on late course drops and adds during the first Fall and Spring semesters when the late drop penalty is charged. OIRPS will provide a report to Undergraduate Council (UGC) comparing the volume and timing of course drops and adds for the year prior to the new policy (AY 2008-09) and the year when the fee is implemented (AY 2009-10). Undergraduate Council will review and analyze the data on course drops and adds. If the late drop penalty for courses is not deemed effective in increasing class/seat accessibility, UGC will reevaluate the penalty.

Questions or comments about the late course drop fee may be addressed to Celeste Pardee, Curriculum Associate, at 621-5375, or at cpardee@u.arizona.edu