BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Florida Atlantic University

Item: AS: A-4

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

Wednesday, June 17, 2009

SUBJECT: Revisions to FAU Regulation 4.013, Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawals

PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION

Approval of proposed FAU Regulation 4.013, Exceptional Circumstance Withdrawals

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Division of Student Affairs seeks approval of the proposed FAU Regulation 4.013, Exceptional Circumstance Withdrawals. This regulation outlines the process and procedure for a student to request a withdrawal from the University for exceptional circumstances. Also, the proposed regulation describes the role and scope of the committee and informs students, faculty, and staff when it is appropriate to use.

The committee, composed of representatives from all campuses, spent several months drafting this regulation. It was also reviewed by the General Counsel's Office.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE

Fall 2009

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None

Supporting Documentation **Proposed Revision to Regulation 4.013**

Other Documentation Available:

Presented by: Dr. Charles Brown, Sr. VP for Student Affairs
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Florida Atlantic University

Regulation 4.013 Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawals

(1) Purpose. The purpose of this regulation is to outline the process and procedure for a student to request a withdrawal from the University for Exceptional Circumstances.

(2) The Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal Committee (ECW) is comprised of the following persons:

(A) Associate Vice President (AVP) and Dean of Students or designee (chairperson).
(B) Associate/Assistant Dean of Students from partner campuses or designee.
(C) Representative from Student Health Services.
(D) Representative from Counseling Center.
(E) Representative from the Office for Students with Disabilities.
(F) Others campus administrators may be invited to participate at the invitation of the AVP and Dean of Students.

(3) Meetings will be held weekly or as needed. A minimum of three (3) committee members must be present to hold a meeting or take action. The ECW committee will meet to discuss and take action on petitions. The petitioner may appear at the meeting only by invitation of the ECW committee.

(4) Process and Procedure for an Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal.

(A) A student who finds it necessary to withdraw from the University for an exceptional circumstance after the official drop/add of courses without consequences deadline must request to do so in writing to the AVP and Dean of Students or Associate/ Assistant Dean of Students on the partner campuses.

(B) Acceptable Reasons for Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawals.

(i) Physical illness or injury or mental illness.
(ii) Death of an immediate family member.
(iii) Involuntary call to active military duty.
(iv) Victim of a crime.
(v) Primary care-giver to immediate family member.
(vi) Other reasons on a per case basis.

(C) An Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal is for all classes during the current semester, not for any individual course(s).

(D) The application for Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal must be filed with all documentation attached within the semester for which the withdrawal is requested. Complete Applications received after the semester ends, but within six (6) months of the occurrence of one of the events listed under paragraph (4)(B) herein may be considered at the AVP and Dean of Students' sole discretion if the student's documents demonstrate that it was not possible for the student to file in a timely manner for reasons outside of the student's control.

(E) All documentation must be in English or translated into English, and the translator's signature must be notarized. The translator must be someone other than the student or a relative of the student.

(F) If the request for Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal is granted, the student will receive a "WM" on his/her transcript, which indicates that the student withdrew from all of his/her classes because of Exceptional Circumstances. "WM" notations do not affect the student's grade point average.

(G) An Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal that is granted may include a refund of applicable tuition but will not include a refund of fees. Students on Financial Aid are encouraged to speak with a representative from Financial Aid. Students residing on campus are encouraged to speak with a University Housing representative regarding their housing. Students with a meal plan are encouraged to speak with a Business Services representative.

(5) Documentation Guidelines pertaining to Reasons for Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawals.

(A) Physical Illness or Injury Withdrawals.

(i) Documentation must be on the official letterhead of the treating licensed health care provider and dated.

(ii) Documentation must explain or detail:

1. Diagnosis of the condition.
2. Reason the condition prevents successful completion of all course work.
3. Dates of treatment.
4. Prognosis.
5. Date the student will be able to assume full academic responsibilities.

(B) Mental Illness Withdrawals.

(i) Documentation must be on the official letterhead of the treating licensed mental health care provider and dated.

(ii) Documentation must explain or detail:

1. Presence of a mental disorder classifiable under the current American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, such disorder must be diagnosed and documented by an appropriately licensed mental health professional. Stress and mild clinical depression are examples of conditions that do not qualify for Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal.
2. Reason(s) the condition prevents successful completion of all course work.
3. Dates of treatment.
4. Prognosis.
5. Date the student will be able to assume full academic responsibilities.

(C) Death of an Immediate Family Member.

(i) For the purposes of this Regulation, an Immediate Family Member is defined as: Parent, Spouse, Child, Sibling or Grandparent.

(ii) Request must be accompanied by a death certificate or legal death notice.

(D) Involuntary Call to Active Military Duty.

(i) Provide copy of Military Orders.

(E) Victim of a Crime

(i) Letter from Victim Advocate and/or Police Report.

(ii) The reason(s) the crime prevents the student's successful completion of all coursework.

(F) Primary Care-Giver to Immediate Family Member.

(i) Letter from Medical Provider detailing the student's role in the care of the Immediate Family Member.

(ii) The reason(s) the family member's condition prevents the student's successful completion of all course work.

(G) Other Reasons.

(i) Official appropriate documentation to substantiate and/or verify the request.

(6) Procedure.

(A) Complete and sign Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal Form.

(B) Complete and sign Release of Medical Information Form, if applicable.
(C) Submit and attach personal letter explaining and justifying the reason for the request.
(D) Submit and attach supporting documentation.
(E) Return all forms and documentation to the AVP/Dean of Students Office two weeks prior to final exams.
(F) The student will be notified of the decision in writing by mail.

(7) Students who are denied Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal may appeal the decision in writing to the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs, postmarked or received within ten (10) academic days of mailing of ECW decision letter. The Senior Vice President for Student Affairs may, within a reasonable timeframe, approve, modify, or reject the original decision. The Senior Vice President for Student Affair's decision will be considered final agency action.

(8) Submitted documents shall remain in the AVP and Dean of Students Office, ensuring confidentiality in accordance to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Guidelines.

(9) When an Exceptional Circumstances Withdrawal is granted due to physical illness or injury or mental illness, a Student Affairs registration hold may be placed on the student's record and the student may be prohibited from enrolling for the semester following the exceptional circumstance withdrawal. In order for the Student Affairs hold to be lifted, the student must submit documentation from his or her treating licensed health care professional confirming that the student is medically and/or psychologically fit to return to school. The documentation will be reviewed by the ECW committee, which will make a recommendation to the AVP and Dean of Students or designee, as to whether to continue the student prohibition of enrollment, reinstate the student with conditions, or reinstate the student with no conditions.

(10) Nothing herein shall reduce the commitment of the University to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities who are able to participate in University functions without hazard to themselves or to others.

Specific Authority: Article IX of the Florida Constitution, Florida Board of Governors Resolution dated January 7, 2003, Florida Statutes 1001.74, 1004.07. History–New 2-27-09. (date must be changed by the board)