Unofficial Withdrawal
USSS-10

About This Policy

Effective Dates:
06-01-1999

Last Updated:
08-23-2019

Responsible University Administrator:
Executive Vice President for University Academic Affairs

Policy Contact:
Jim Kennedy
Assoc. Vice President for USSS
kennedjc@indiana.edu

Scope
All faculty, instructors, lecturers and others who record grades, and financial aid administrators.

Policy Statement
In accordance with federal regulations relating to Student Assistance General Provision, 34 CFR 668.22, Indiana University must determine whether a return of Title IV federal funds is necessary when a student fails to attend or ceases to attend all classes and does not withdraw. This situation is referred to as an "unofficial withdrawal" and is reflected on a student transcript.

“FNN” indicates those FN students who never attended a class.

Reason For Policy
This process is utilized to identify students who fail to attend or cease to attend classes without officially withdrawing and to facilitate required calculations determining the amount of Title IV federal funds which must be returned to the US Department of Education as a result of such unofficial withdrawals. Because students receiving federal financial aid may be financially impacted, compliance by university officials who record grades is critical.

Procedure

1. Determination of Potential Unofficial Withdrawals
2. Determination of Actual Unofficial Withdrawals
3. Last Date of Attendance/Enrollment Audits
   a. The last date of attendance for W grades is generally the withdrawal date. When an FN grade is recorded, the instructor must supply the last date of attendance. For online courses, the student’s last date of participation in an academically-related activity must be documented. For all federal aid recipients, the university must document that the student began attendance in each course.
   b. Faculty are to participate in the Registrar’s enrollment audit. This allows the registrar to maintain accurate enrollment records while complying with federal financial aid requirements. Enrollment audits are completed through the Student Engagement Rosters which are part of FLAGS (Fostering, Learning, Achievement and Student Success) system.
4. Return of Title IV Funds
5. Record-keeping
6. a. Report output that was used to identify students;
   b. Whether each student is considered an unofficial withdrawal, and if not, an explanation for that decision;
   c. The Last Date of Attendance as well as when and how that date was determined;
   d. The amount of any refund calculated and the amount(s) and type(s) of financial aid to be repaid and all calculations as tracked on the Return of Title IV Aid Worksheet

Additional information

IUUIE Report:
Unofficial Withdrawal All - SR - IE_SIS_FA_UNOFFICIAL_WITHDRAWAL_ALL
For students with Title IV aid (Direct Loan, Pell, SEOG) disbursed, identifies students who have all FN or FNN grades, or a combination of FN, FNN, NC, NR, NY, W or blank grades. Student must have at least 1 FN or FNN grade to be picked up on the report.

This process is performed by USSS as a shared service. USSS Financial Aid maintains procedural documentation for performing this work, as well as a Service Level Agreement that outlines USSS and campus financial aid office responsibilities related to this work.

Definitions

Grade definitions:
FN: Failed/Quit attending class as of a specific date
FNN: Failed/Never Attended
NC: Non-Credit
NR: Not Reported
NY: Special program enrollment for which credit earned will be recorded when completed, typically used for Study Abroad
W: Withdraw after the first week of classes

Sanctions

This work is audited annually by the State Board of Accounts during the Single Audit. Indiana University Internal Audit assists with the audit and may perform additional audits as needed to ensure compliance with federal regulations. Failure to adequately comply with this policy in the timeframes specified under federal regulations could result in an audit finding which could lead to federal aid repayments, fines, and potentially, the loss of the university’s eligibility to participate in the federal student aid programs.

History

This policy was adopted in 1999 and was updated in 2009, 2016, and 2019.

Related Information

Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 5, Chapter 1
University Faculty Council FN Grade Policy
ACA-66, Grading System and Implementation Procedures