

Student Regulations Committee
March 15, 2004
Minutes

Present: K. Barefield (CHEM), R. Barke (PUBPOL), P. Benkeser (BME) – Chair, D. Kang (UG Student), J. McIver (Registrar), and B. Walker (LIB)

Absent: D. Anderson (UG Student), J. Benin (Grad Student), L. Jacobs (CEE), G. Di Sabatino (Student Affairs), and T. Habetler (ECE)

Guest: J. Stein (Student Affairs) and J. Ahmed (UG Student)

1. The Committee discussed feedback received from faculty and students on the proposed draft of a grade substitution policy the Committee circulated after its February 9, 2004 meeting. The general consensus was that most faculty were indifferent. Of those with strong opinions on the policy, more were in favor of it than opposed it. There were much stronger opinions expressed from the students, both in support and opposition to the proposed policy. Given the mixed feedback and the general concern of the Committee as to whether the proposed policy, if implemented, would have any affect on retention, the Committee decided to defer action on the proposal until additional statistics related to student retention could be examined. Specifically, the Committee is looking for data to answer the following questions:
 - What are the outcomes when students repeat courses in their freshman year?
 - Is the 2nd to 3rd year retention a more significant problem than the 1st to 2nd year retention?
 - Are the reports of other universities dropping their grade substitution policies true? If so, why are they dropping them?
2. The Committee previewed the attached proposal to modify the academic calendar under consideration by the IUCC. The Committee expressed unanimous support for the proposed modifications, but decided to wait to take action on it until the IUCC completed its review of it. At that time the Committee will conduct an e-mail vote on the proposal.

Note: The IUCC recommended approval of the proposal at its March 17th meeting. Subsequently the Committee, by an e-mail vote of 5-0-1 (favor-oppose-abstain), recommended approval of the following changes (~~deletion~~, **addition**) to the Student Rules and Regulations:

V. Grades and Scholastic Average

A. Grades

3. The following grades will be used in the cases indicated and will not be included in the calculation of scholastic average:

W- withdrawal without penalty. Withdrawals from individual courses without penalty will not be permitted after ~~the end of the sixth week of the spring and fall semesters, and at the end of the fifth week during the accelerated summer semester,~~ **50% of the term has been completed, as specified by the official calendar**, except in cases of hardship as determined by the Institute Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or Graduate Committee, as appropriate.....

5. ~~Midterm~~ **Progress report** grades will be submitted to the Registrar on all classes numbered 1000 and 2000 each term. These grades will be used for the advisement of students, not for the calculation of any GPA at Georgia Tech. ~~Midterm~~ **Progress report** grades will be S or U (a grade of U indicates that based on work completed to that point the student's standing is in the D or lower range). They will be submitted by ~~midterm~~ **after 40% of the term has been completed**, as specified by the official calendar, and be available to students no later than the following Monday.

MEMORANDUM

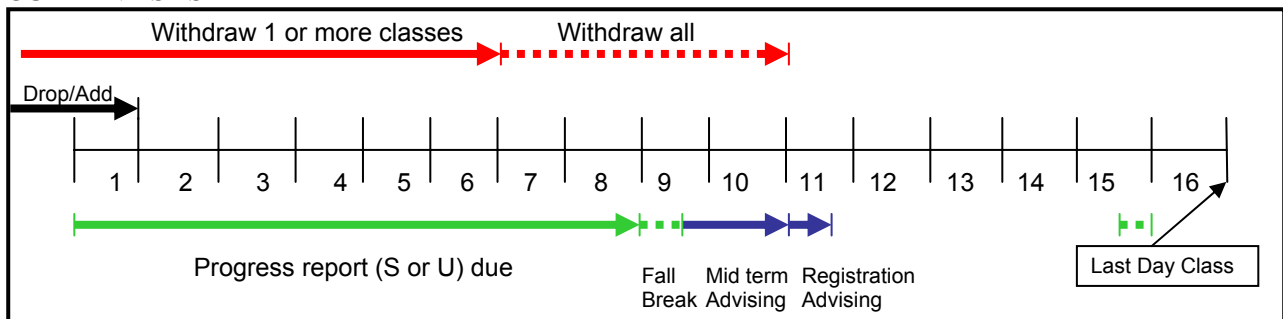
TO: IUCC

FROM: Leigh Bottomley (Undergraduate Studies), Jung Choi (Biology), Nate Watson (SGA), Jo McIver (Registrar)

RE: Proposal to Modify Academic Calendar

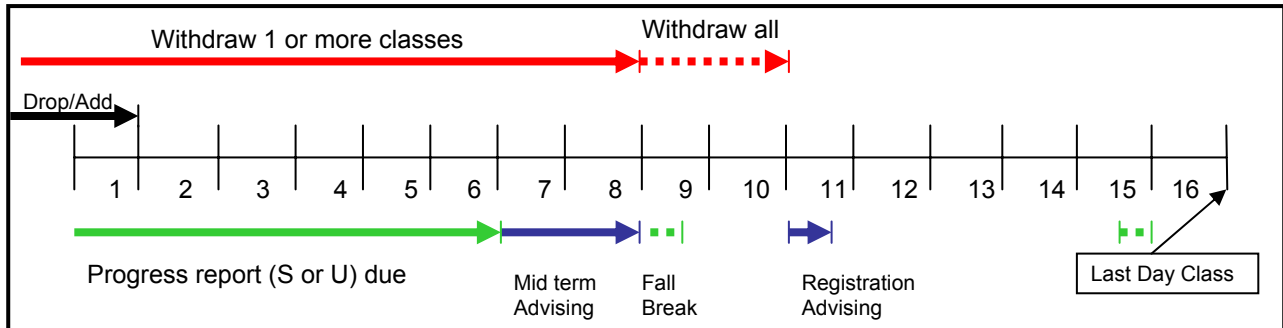
This is a proposal presented to the IUCC Committee for modifying the Academic Calendar to provide better and earlier student access to the academic support network at Georgia Tech and improve work flow for faculty, academic advisors and other professionals involved in student support. Currently the last day to drop individual classes is Friday of week six; sufficient graded materials are due by the faculty at that time as well. Mid term grades for all 1xxx & 2xxx classes are due two weeks later at the end of week 8. Mid term advising begins at week 9 1/2 for fall and week 9 for spring and runs for ~1 1/2 to 1 week to the end of week 10. Following advising, students have 5 1/2 weeks remaining in the term to be tutored, supported by faculty and other staff. Students may drop all classes (withdraw from school) up until week 10. The current system is diagrammed below. Note that an academic semester is 16 weeks long with 15 weeks of instruction; each semester has 5 days (1 week) of student vacation.

CURRENT SYSTEM-FALL

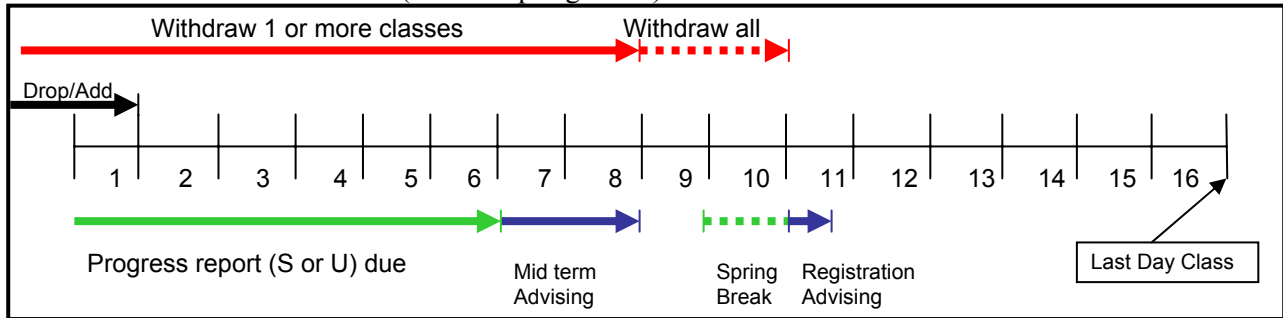


This committee proposes that the current mid term grades and withdrawal deadline for one or more classes be reversed. The due date for mid term or “progress report” would move up to week six; Drop day for one or more classes will be at the end of week eight; drop date for withdrawal from all classes will remain at the end of week ten. See proposed timelines below for Fall and Spring Semester.

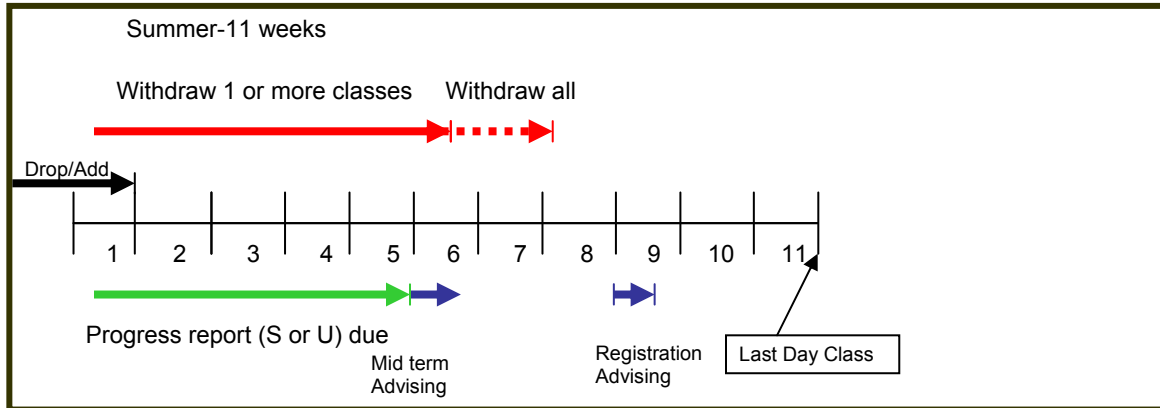
PROPOSED SYSTEM-FALL



PROPOSED SYSTEM-SPRING (Current spring break)



PROPOSED SYSTEM-SUMMER

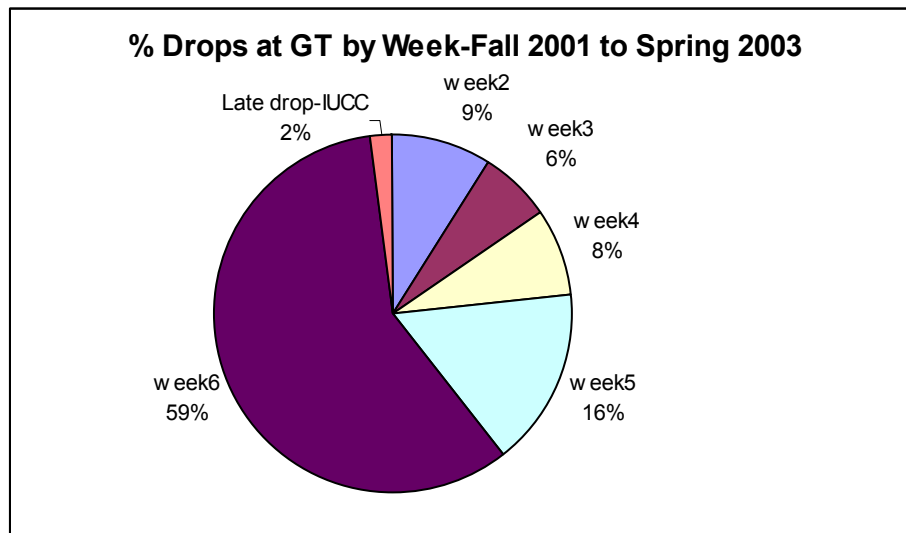


Advantages of the proposed timeline are:

- Students would have more time after advising, tutoring, etc. during the term to change their grade outcome. This rectifies a deficiency with the current calendar where support advising concludes late in the term- often too late in the semester for many students to turn around a failing grade
- Students would have more experience with a course when considering a withdrawal. This may reduce impulse drops following the first exam.
- More time would be available for the advising period (two weeks vs. 1½). This should improve the effectiveness of persons involved in academic advising and academic support.
- Mid Term Advising (Support Advising) is separated from Registration Advising (Prescriptive Advising).

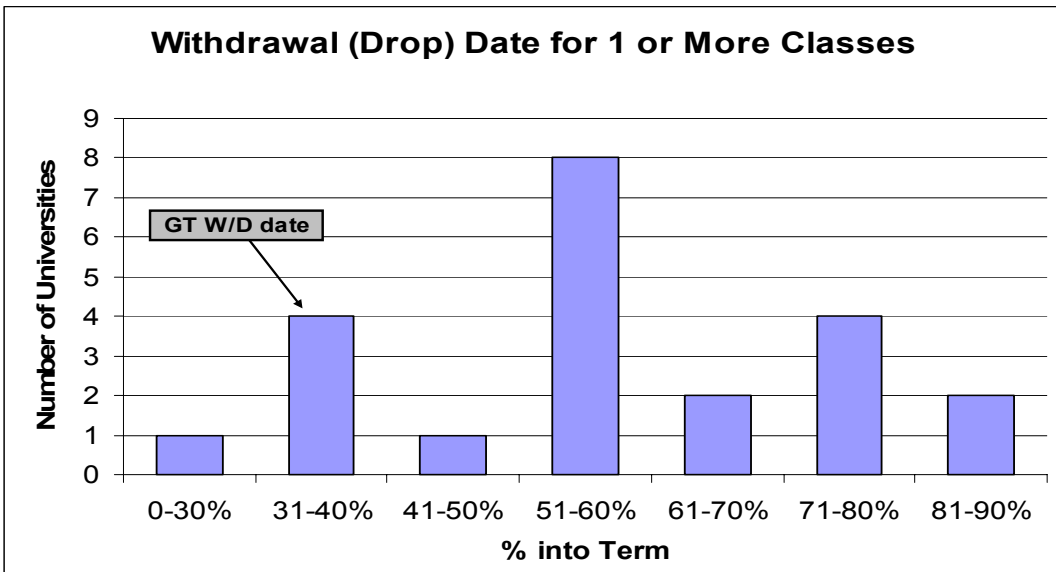
These changes will require faculty that are teaching 1xxx, 2xxx classes to have sufficient graded material by week six; but this is generally accepted practice for the existing withdrawal deadline. The ad hoc committee recommends that academic units that teach design courses, problem-based group learning and labs continue to set “no drop without consent of school” holds in BANNER for courses where students dropping out might adversely affect the learning outcome of the remaining students. None of these recommendations will affect student tuition revenues. Students currently only get a tuition refund when they withdraw from all classes-that date was not changed.

GT currently has a low rate of drops for both undergraduate and graduate classes. Since Fall 1999 (semester conversion) the drop rate for undergraduate classes has been 3.58% and for graduate classes has been 1.93%. The majority of withdrawals from one or more classes at GT are in the last 2 weeks of the drop date time line.



Listed below are the withdrawal dates for several of Georgia Tech's Peer Institutions. All data have been normalized to % percent of term with holidays accounted for. The most frequent is at 53% of term which is week 8 for a 15 week semester (same as proposed timeline). Many universities did let the students totally withdraw later in the term (will cost GT money so we are not proposing this) and several charged the students a \$20 fee to drop after a certain date. The schools that did have mid term grades had withdrawal dates after mid term grade.

Name of University	% of Term
California Institute of Technology	75
Carnegie Mellon University	66
Cornell University	
Georgia Institute of Technology	40
Georgia State University	53
John Hopkins University	70
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	85
North Carolina State University	40
Northwestern University	55
Pennsylvania State University	73
Purdue University	60
Stanford University	80
Texas A&M University	71
University of California---Berkeley	53
University of California---Los Angeles	40
University of Florida	87
University of Georgia	53
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	53
University of Michigan---Ann Arbor	21
University of Minnesota	57
University of Texas---Austin	53
University of Washington---Seattle	43
Virginia Polytechnic and State University	40



The proposed changes in the academic timeline are supported by the Student Government Association (SGA) and Georgia Tech's Academic Advising Network (GTAAN). Both groups feel most students will use the earlier dates for receiving early warning about their performance and subsequent advising and support in a timely fashion to help them succeed in their courses and that drop rates will not increase significantly. This change in the academic timeline should help maximize effective student learning without overburdening Institute resources.