Guideline Related to Fostering Undergraduate Student Success

These guidelines provide additional information related to interpreting UNC Policy 400.1.5 and its associated regulations. Specifically, these guidelines more fully describe how campuses can implement programs and system to help foster undergraduate student success.

I.   Determining Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress

A.   Good Academic Standing is determined by cumulative grade point average and ratio of attempted to completed semester hours. No specific criteria related to term GPA have been included in the Policy or regulations, and thus each campus can determine how to incorporate semester or summer term GPA into Academic Standing determinations. An appropriate use of semester or summer term GPA would be in the early warning process. For example, if a student's semester or summer term GPA is below 2.0, then the campus early warning system (EWS) may identify the student for intervention and follow up.

B.   Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is commonly used in financial aid eligibility determinations but is also used to determine a student's ability to continue enrollment. This same measure should be applied to all students in order to measure progress toward degree. The minimum SAP should be in accord with Federal Title IV regulations.

II.   Allowing Course Withdrawals

A.   Withdrawal With Serious Extenuating Circumstances

1.   Consistent with the requirements set out in Section II.C.1., of UNC Policy 400.1.5[R], each campus must develop a policy whereby undergraduate students can request course withdrawals due to serious extenuating circumstances. Each campus must widely distribute this policy.

2.   Campuses will need to code the course withdrawals in their ERP systems as separate grade codes in order to distinguish between withdrawals with extenuating circumstances and those without extenuating circumstances.

3.   Campuses should not communicate on the transcript that a course withdrawal was for extenuating circumstances. Campuses should develop a mechanism whereby withdrawals due to extenuating circumstances are designated on the transcript in a manner that respects and protects the privacy of the student.

B.   Withdrawals Without Extenuating Circumstances

1.   Effective beginning with the 2014-15 academic year, campuses must adopt policies that allow for students to withdraw from either a maximum of up to four courses **or** up to 16 credit hours over the course of the student's degree or degrees. Campuses should have one policy in place for all undergraduate students.

2.   Students will sometimes voluntarily withdraw from all of their courses without indicating any extenuating circumstances. Campuses have the option to designate extenuating circumstance withdrawals to these students provided the process for requesting course withdrawals with extenuating circumstances is followed.

3.   Course withdrawals that result in a student exceeding the designated campus limit will not be allowed. Students will receive a grade for all courses they enroll in after they reach the limit, unless course withdrawal with extenuating circumstances is allowed. Developing Effective Early Warning Systems.

III.   Developing Effective Early Warning Systems

A.   Consistent with Section III.E., of UNC Policy 400.1.5[R], as of the fall 2014 semester each campus must implement EWS, which identifies students experiencing or at-risk for academic difficulties. The EWS should at a minimum monitor all first time and transfer students, sophomores, student athletes, students on academic warning or probation, students whose semester or term GPA is less than 2.0, students returning from academic suspension or academic dismissal, and other at-risk populations as determined by the campus.

B.   At least one alert to the relevant campus personnel should be sent each semester with the first one being no later than the end of the third week of a regular term and no later than 25 percent through an irregular term.

C.   Chief academic officers, deans, and chairpersons are responsible for ensuring that faculty and other relevant campus personnel comply with EWS.