

Memo To: All UH-Downtown PS Holders
From: Dr. Antonio Tillis, Interim President
Subject: Course Drop Limit

UH-Downtown/PS 03.A.36
Issue No. 3
Effective Date: 08/10/2020
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1. PURPOSE

The 80th Legislature passed SB 1231 in Spring 2007, which added section 51.907 to the Texas Education Code (TEC). Section TEC 51.907 placed limitations on the number of courses that could be dropped under certain circumstances. The legislation states that “an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another [public] institution of higher education” in Texas. There are certain stipulations and exceptions associated with this legislation. This policy serves to establish the policies and procedures followed by the University of Houston - Downtown (UHD) for the implementation of this legislation.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Affected Students: Beginning Fall 2007 all undergraduate students who enroll in any public institution of higher education in Texas.
- 2.2 Dropped Course: A course in which an undergraduate student at a Texas public institution of higher education has enrolled for credit, but did not complete, under these conditions: (A) the student was able to drop the course without receiving a grade or incurring an academic penalty; (B) the student’s transcript indicates or will indicate that the student was enrolled in the course past the census date for the semester or term; and (C) the student is not dropping the course in order to withdraw from the institution.
- 2.3 Complete Withdrawal: A student withdraws from the university by dropping all courses in which s/he is enrolled for the semester or term.

3. POLICY

3.1 State Requirement:

A Texas public institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another public institution of higher education in Texas.

3.2 Exceptions:

The following exceptions to the six drop limit are provided in SB 1231 and TEC 51.907:

- 3.2.1 High school students who enroll through dual credit programs are not affected by the six drop limit until after they graduate from high school and subsequently enroll in Texas public institutions of higher education.
- 3.2.2 Transfer students from private or out-of-state institutions of higher education who entered those institutions in Fall 2007 begin the Undergraduate Course Drop Counter (as defined in section 4.1) when they first enroll in a Texas public higher education institution.
- 3.2.3 Students returning to an institution of higher education who elect to take advantage of the “Academic Fresh Start” policy for credit earned prior to Fall 2007 are not affected under this legislation.
- 3.2.4 Students who graduated from high school and enrolled in higher education prior to Fall 2007, including May/June 2007 high school graduates who began taking courses at a Texas public institution of higher education in Summer 2007, are not affected by this legislation.
- 3.2.5 Students who have completed a baccalaureate degree at a recognized public or private institution are not affected by this legislation.
- 3.2.6 If a student chooses to withdraw from the University for the semester or term, those courses will not be counted in the drop limit.
- 3.2.7 Developmental coursework will not be counted in the drop limit because such courses are considered “pre-college” and do not provide academic credit.
- 3.2.8 A student may show good cause for dropping more than six courses. Good cause may include, but is not limited to, showing proof of any of the following:
 - a. Severe illness or other debilitating condition that affects a student’s ability to satisfactorily complete a course;
 - b. The student’s responsibility for the care of a sick, injured, or needy person if the provision of that care affects the student’s ability to satisfactorily complete the course;

- c. The death of a person who is considered to be a member of the student's family (defined in Texas Administrative Code 19.1.4.A, Rule §4.10(b)) or who is otherwise considered to have a sufficiently close relationship (defined in Texas Administrative Code 19.1.4.A, Rule §4.10(b)) to the student;
- d. The active duty service as a member of the armed forces of the United States or the Texas National Guard of either the student or person who is considered to be a member of the student's family or who is otherwise considered to have sufficiently close relationship to the student;
- e. The change of the student's work schedule that is beyond the control of the student and that affects the student's ability to satisfactorily complete the course;
- f. Other good cause as determined by agreement of the Registrar, Dean of Enrollment Management, and the Dean of the college in which the dropped course is housed.

3.3 Courses Counted for Drop Limit: The following rules apply to define courses that are counted for the drop limit at UHD:

- 3.3.1 Courses that are dropped after the published census date for any semester or term (e.g., 12th class day for Fall/Spring, 4th class day for summer sessions, and 2nd class day for intersessions).
- 3.3.2 Courses that are marked in the grade column with a 'W' indicating that the student dropped or failed to complete the course during the semester or term of enrollment.
- 3.3.3 Courses taken through enrollment at a Texas public institution of higher learning at a non-Texas location or via some form of distance learning.
- 3.3.4 If a student drops a course that consists of a required lecture and lab, these will be counted as one drop (i.e., not two drops) because enrollment in one requires enrollment in the other.
- 3.3.5 Linked courses that are part of a learning community and are intended to be taken during the same semester or term may count as one drop (i.e., not two drops). Drops related to linked courses require pre-approval by the Dean of the University College.

3.3.6 Any course that a transfer student has dropped at another Texas public institution of higher education.

3.4 Students with Six Drops: Once a student has dropped the maximum of six courses, s/he will not be allowed to drop additional courses except in special circumstances described in section 3.5. The student will be required to remain enrolled in the course for the duration of the semester.

3.5 Seventh Drop Option: in specific instances, undergraduate students reenrolling after a break of 24 months or more, and with 50 or more earned semester credit hours, are permitted to drop one additional course.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Notation on Official Transcripts

The official transcript of UHD will include a line at the end of the coursework listings that includes:

- TEC 51.907 Undergraduate Course Drop Counter: #
- The # is a single digit from zero to six (0-6) that indicates the number of drops at UHD only.

4.2 Unknown Transfer Course Drops

4.2.1 When the student is a new transfer student and all transcripts have not yet been received from previous Texas public institutions, s/he will not be permitted to drop courses until official transcripts are received.

4.2.2 If a student does not report a prior enrollment at a Texas public institution of higher education and it is discovered later, a hold will be placed on the student's records to stop all drops until the official transcripts from the prior enrollment are on file. This hold also prevents registration for future semesters.

4.3 Appeals

4.3.1 Students who have completed six drops and/or are facing extenuating circumstances (see section 3.2.8) may file an appeal through the Office of the Registrar.

- 4.3.2 To appeal the inclusion of a dropped course in the six drop limit, a student must complete the “Request to Waive Course Drop Limitation Related to SB 1231” form within one week following the drop with the Office of the Registrar.
- 4.3.3 Students are still enrolled in a course until officially dropped by the University.
- 4.3.4 A student must provide sufficient documentation to prove “good cause” for their petition. Examples of possible “good cause” circumstances are described in section 3.2.8 (a-f) of this policy.
- 4.3.5 Once an appeal form has been submitted, the Office of the Registrar will evaluate and rule on the student’s petition.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Senior VP for Academic & Student Affairs & Provost

Review: Every five years on or before July 1, or as necessary

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

6. POLICY HISTORY

Issue #1: 05/28/13

Issue #2: 06/27/14

7. REFERENCES

Texas Education Code 51.907 (80th Texas Legislature (2007), SB 1231)

Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter A, Rule §4.10