

Petition Procedures

Purpose

The purpose of the petition process in the college is to request an exception to college or program-level policy. Common petitions include but are not limited to requests to waive a degree requirement, the ability to take a course during the Internship II semester in Teacher Education, and requests for special consideration around admission processes. Note that it is the student's responsibility to provide evidence of an extenuating circumstance that has resulted in a need for an exception. An extenuating circumstance is typically more than a delay in graduation and instead identifies how the situation was caused by unpredictable circumstances that prevented the individual from meeting the stated expectation.

Note: A university-level petition is required when the policy is university-wide. For example, an exception to the general education program would require university-level review.

Procedure

1. Meet with advisor and/or program coordinator to **determine the appropriateness of the petition**. Some requests can be handled with a course substitution form or a blanket petition. Blanket petitions are submitted by the program when a change to degree expectations are retroactive for previous catalogs and do not require individual action.
2. If it is determined that a petition is required, also **discuss whether an extenuating circumstance exists** and how the student can **best document the situation**. A discussion about whether the advisor/program would support such a request is encouraged. Students have the right to appeal without support, but the position of the program should be considered when creating the case for an extenuating circumstance. Such conversations can also facilitate a compromise that meets the student's needs while gaining the support of the program.
3. The student should **collect all evidence, clearly state the request, and provide a justification** for the request. The student should consider this professional communication and make sure that the information provided addresses the request being made. The student is strongly encouraged to get help and support from the advisor or another faculty member in crafting the case. In situations where the student is uncomfortable with discussing the issue directly with the advisor or program director, personnel in Student Academic Services will assist. However, it is an important part of the process to understand the position of the program as this will be part of the materials reviewed by the Petitions Committee.
4. The student should **complete the appropriate petition form, attach all documentation, and request signatures of the advisor and department chair**. Both the advisor and department chair will indicate whether s/he supports the petition and will state a justification for this decision. The student is encouraged to facilitate this process in person; however, if the student must leave the form for an individual to sign they should return to collect the form and move to the next level of review. This will further ensure that the student understands whether the program and department support the request and that the petition is submitted by the required due date. Support or lack of support is not personal; instead, these decisions are based on equity to all students and the integrity of the program.
5. Once all signatures are secured the **student should deliver the complete packet to the Student Academic Services Office** (Withers 144). Petitions are due by the following dates; when dates fall on a weekend the petition is due the next business day.
 - a. November 15 (all petitions concerning spring coursework should be submitted for this review cycle)
 - b. April 15
 - c. August 1
 - d. Thursday before graduation (for graduation-related requests)

The petitions are then reviewed by a committee and the Dean. Each individual student will receive an email indicating the final decision on the request. Decisions include accepting the request as written, accepting the request with conditions, or denying the request. Students have the right to appeal a decision. They should first meet with the Dean or Associate Dean so that they can receive more information on the reasons for the decision. In cases where the student wants to appeal further they should appeal

with a written request to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Associate Dean will help them with the process if needed.