

Policy 203.1 – Student Enrollment & Attendance Policy

Date Adopted: 4/21/09

Issuing Office: Academic Affairs

Date Revised:

Approved By:

References: BOR 305.2, PL 110-315 Higher Education Opportunity Act, Reauthorization Amendments, effective 8/14/2008

I. POLICY

Students at the University of Montana Western enroll on a semester basis and are expected to register (including paying tuition and fees) prior to the start of the term for all classes they plan to complete during that term and, once registered, to actively participate in learning activities associated with courses in which they are enrolled. Based on this policy, the following procedures will enable university officials to determine the enrollment status of students.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth conditions and definitions related to student enrollment at Montana Western, to describe attendance expectations, to clarify the effects of student actions related to enrollment and attendance, and to encourage students to make timely and thoughtful course enrollment choices (i.e., taking program-pertinent courses or courses that satisfy their intellectual curiosity) with the intent of keeping student enrollment costs down and minimizing the time needed to graduate, and to ensure compliance with federal financial aid regulations and athletic eligibility.

III. DEFINITIONS & PROCEDURES

A. Definitions

1. **Student Enrollment Status**—based on weeks of actual attendance **AND** student credit load.
 - a. **Full-time** – registering for twelve (12) or more credits of academic classes **AND** attending classes through the entire semester.
 - b. **Part-term** – registering for twelve (12) or more credits in the semester but attending classes less than the full semester.
 - c. **Part-time** – registering for less than twelve (12) credits in the semester.
2. **Semester or Term** – a 16-week period of enrollment at the start of which students register for all courses they plan to attempt. UMW has three semesters: fall semester, spring semester, and summer session. For purposes of this policy, “semester” and “term” are interchangeable.
3. **Credit Load** – total credits for which a student is registered during the term.
4. **Registration or Registering** – officially signing up for a class or classes AND paying all costs associated with such enrollment and within the published deadlines for that term.
5. **Academic Courses/Classes** – classes that are generally open to any qualified student, have specified attendance/meeting/instructional days, have defined learning outcomes, and satisfy published degree or program of study requirements.
6. **Attendance or Attending** – registering for, attending, and actively participating in learning/instructional activities associated with a class or classes.

7. **Course Exchange** – simultaneously dropping and adding courses covering the same time period or part of the term (“Block 3” for example). The following conditions define or govern a course “exchange”:
 - a. the course exchange is completed within the deadline to add for the applicable part of term.
 - b. there is an even exchange of courses and credits (see Student Enrollment Status above – does not change).
 - c. the add and drop are recorded on the SAME form and they are offered in the same part of term.
 - d. the exchange is approved by all necessary officials – course instructors, student advisor, division dean, etc.
8. **Hold** – temporary designation on a student’s record indicating the need for that student to rectify specific deficiencies in the student’s file **or account**. A hold prohibits the student from gaining access to their account, registering for classes, viewing grades, obtaining transcripts, or other request for service until the deficiency is fulfilled.
9. **Withdraw from the University** – individuals who, after registering for the term, take action to drop all classes, cease attendance, and leave the university.
10. **Student Enrollment Status Committee** – A campus committee established to review and decide student appeals related to administrative enrollment policies.

B. Procedures

1. The University of Montana Western operates on a semester calendar organized into 4 blocks per Fall and Spring Semester, and a Summer Session organized into three blocks.
2. Students are held responsible for making informed enrollment decisions and for knowledge of and compliance with policies and procedures affecting their enrollment at Montana Western.
3. Admitted students are expected to register (including paying tuition and fees) prior to the start of the term for all classes they plan to complete during that term, and, once registered, to attend class each day and actively participate in class learning activities as assigned by the instructor.
4. Student enrollment status is determined at the start of the term.
5. Individuals who wish to maximize enrollment benefits are encouraged to initiate and maintain full-time status during each term of enrollment. After the second week of the term, no student will be eligible to change to full-time status except by approval of the Enrollment Status Committee. Individuals registering after the second week of the term will be classified as either part-time or part-term depending upon the student’s credit load.
6. Only students who start with and maintain full-time enrollment status throughout the term are eligible for intercollegiate athletic certification and participation.
7. Federal student financial aid is awarded based on actual weeks of attendance **AND** class/credit load (credits attempted) **during the term**. By law, only eligible students who start with and maintain full-time enrollment status can receive maximum federal aid benefits. Eligible part-time or part-term students will NOT be funded as full-time students for financial aid.
8. Attendance is based on when a student took action to add or register for a class, NOT the scheduled/published beginning date of a class.

9. Students are allowed to add and drop classes during the term according to published institutional policy. However, such action may cause a student's enrollment status to change as described above and elsewhere in the catalog.
10. Students may exchange courses without jeopardizing their enrollment status (see Definitions).
11. Students who wish to add or to drop classes or withdraw from Montana Western (cease enrollment) must communicate their intentions to the Registrar's Office within the appropriate deadline.
12. Once the term begins, dropping a class that causes the student's enrollment status to change requires the student to report the rationale for such action on a Planned Absence/Block Off Form and a properly completed Add/Drop Card, both available at the Registrar's Office.
13. Late fees will be charged for course adds or drops beginning Monday of the fourth week of the term; adds/drops involving course exchanges are exempt from late fees.
14. Courses that are dropped during the term will be identified on a student's academic record as follows: "WA"- withdrawn attended – drop is submitted after the start date of a class; or, "WN"- withdrawn not attended – drop is submitted before the start date of the class. Petitions to drop classes after the deadline for such action must also include a properly completed Policy Waiver Request Form (petition to late drop or late withdrawal).
15. Course section codes will clearly identify the required attendance dates of all courses. Courses identified as full-term academic stringers must require student attendance of at least 15 weeks of the term. Classes with open (no fixed) start dates will be identified with a section code with a leading "X". These designations facilitate determination of student enrollment status.
16. Enrollment changes cannot be processed if "holds" are present. Students with "holds" on their accounts must take action immediately.

C. Appeals

Student appeals regarding administration of this policy should be submitted within two weeks (10 business days) of initial determination or change of student enrollment status. Students wishing to appeal must complete a Policy Waiver Request Form and applicable documentation outlined in the current Student Handbook/Planner.

The Student Enrollment Status Committee reviews and decides student appeals related to administrative enrollment policies.

IV. AUTHORITY

BOR 305.2; PL 110-315 Higher Education Opportunity Act, Reauthorization Amendments, effective 8/14/2008

V. RESPONSIBILITY

Provost, Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance/Student Affairs, Director of Financial Aid, Registrar