

Title of Issue (short descriptive title by which the issue may be referenced)

Grade Submission: Early Alert Policy Change

Description of Issue

Current Policy:
The University believes that regular assessment of students and feedback to them is essential to effective teaching and learning. Therefore, faculty members will provide all students with an evaluation of their progress in a course prior to mid-semester. Faculty teaching 100- and 200-level Undergraduate courses will provide specific feedback regarding progress in the course by submitting an early alert grade by the beginning of the fifth week of classes in the fall and spring semesters. Instructions for submitting early alert grades are sent out every semester by the Center for Advising, Administration, and Academic Partnerships.

Proposed Policy:
The University believes timely notifications and regular assessment of and feedback to students are essential to student success. Therefore, faculty members will utilize Student Progress Notifications to identify students who have never attended or stopped attending class before the 50% refund date; provide all undergraduate students with a mid-semester evaluation of their progress in a course; and identify students at risk of failing the course prior to the last day to withdraw.

Rationale for Submission

Rationale: Assessment of Early Alert Process and Proposed Revisions

Instructors of 100 and 200-level courses are required to submit 5-week progress reports known as the Early Alert Response System reports (EARs). On average, the faculty participation rate is 70-75% by the end of the 6th week. In Fall of 2024, 488 instructors submitted early alerts; 408 instructors submitted early alerts to students with grades C- or below. 4,157 students (28.42%) who received a report had a grade of C- or below or “no grade.”

1. Issue: The process and language of Early Alert are deficit based focused on giving students negative feedback.
Resolution: Changed name to Student Progress Notifications to normalize updates and reduce the stigma associated with “alert.” The drop-down menu includes options for positive feedback.

2. Issue: 5th week falls after the withdrawal for partial refund period. Many instructors did not submit until well into the 7th week. The timeline limited the effectiveness of academic support outreach.
Resolution: Revised the policy to require actionable information prior to tuition and registrar deadlines. Revised the process and decouple it from a grade to make it easier to give feedback and alert academic support staff.

3. Issue: Instructors often delayed providing information because they did not have a grade
Resolution: Decoupled the progress notification from a required grade. Included a drop-down menu to identify positive and negative classroom behaviors.

4. Issue: Only a subset of undergraduate students-- those in 100 and 200- level classes-- potentially received a progress report.
Resolution: Require teaching instructors to submit Student Progress Notifications (SPN) for all undergraduate courses.

5. Issue: Approximately 75% of faculty teaching 100 and 200-level classes submit early alert reports.
Resolution: Update the faculty handbook, improve communication about SPNs, share data on instructor participation with Deans/Associate Deans; redesign the platform and process to facilitate compliance

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