Dear Andrew and Nancy:

I request that Steering (and CAP) consider the College's withdrawal policy.  Currently, students may withdraw from a course up through the 9th week of the semester with no impact on their right to take the class again, multiple times.  (The College allows students who have failed a course to retake it once; students flirting with a second failure sometimes skirt the issue with timely withdrawals.)  In the School of Culture an Society in this semester alone we have several students who have had multiple withdrawals from the same course enrolling again and again in classes with limited seats, thus preventing other students from accessing the given course.

In addition, the College might want to consider implementing a "career limit" on course withdrawals that are not justified by medical reasons or true family emergencies (e.g., a mother very ill, a sibling in a car accident, etc.).  Some other institutions have such limits (no more than 5 or 6 withdrawals over the academic career of any given student) to reduce "grade shopping" and help focus students on doing good work the first time they take a course, rather than taking a more nonchalant approach with the attitude, "I can always drop and stay an extra semester or over a summer to finish this course."

In requesting a review of these issues, I am not making a recommendation of a particular policy.  Rather, I am asking for the committee designated to review the issues to propose such a policy if it is deemed useful.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ben

Benjamin Rifkin  
Dean of the School of Culture and Society  
The College of New Jersey

PO Box 7718

Ewing, NJ 08628

(v) 609.771.3434

(f) 609.637.5173