**TO:** Steering Committee

**FROM:** Committee on Academic Programs

**RE:** Final Recommendation on Course Withdrawal Policy

**DATE:** November 13, 2013

**Background:**

In February 2011, Steering sent CAP a memo from Dean Benjamin Rifkin, concerning course withdrawal. Steering noted that while the College has a policy on the deadline for course withdrawal (<http://www.tcnj.edu/~academic/policy/coursewithdrawal.html> ), it did not have a policy concerning the number of times a student may withdraw from the same course or the total number of times a student may withdraw from courses during their academic career at TCNJ (career withdrawals).

**Charge:**

The Steering Committee requests that CAP review Dean Rifkin’s memo and decide whether there needs to be a policy placing any limits on course withdrawal beyond those of the deadline. Should it be decided that the policy is needed, CAP is asked to develop a policy that is both realistic and fair.

Current Course Withdrawal Policy:

Whereas the current date for unrestricted withdrawal from courses does not always provide students with adequate graded feedback before the withdrawal deadline; and Whereas extending the deadline by two additional weeks should allow students in all classes to have graded feedback from professors; be it therefore resolved that the date for unrestricted withdrawal from courses be set at the end of the ninth week of classes in a semester.

**Testimony:**

Records and Registration provided CAP with significant data on course withdrawals which covered the years Spring 2009 through Spring 2012. The data indicated that the number of students that withdrew from more than three unique classes in this period of time was less than two percent. Analysis of the data showed that if a withdrawal from a class is treated as having taken the class (i.e., as an instance of the class) the number of career withdrawals would be significantly reduced. Furthermore, considering a withdrawal an instance of the class would limit the number of times a student may take any one course under the repeat course policy.

In addition to the data analysis described above, CAP and Faculty Senate co-hosted an open forum on March 20, 2013. Email testimony was also gathered. Student Government provided testimony on October 9, 2013. And on October 16, 2013, CAP gathered testimony from the Staff Senate. The testimony heard supported the concept that a withdrawal should be considered an instance of the course.

**Final Recommendation:**

CAP recommends the following:

1. That the old policy on "Course Withdrawal Date" be archived: <http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=8043>
2. That the policy on “Withdrawing From a Course”

(<http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=8289>) be replaced with the following:

A course withdrawal is defined as an official separation from a given course initiated by the student any time after the Add/Drop deadline and before the withdrawal deadline. Deadlines for withdrawals are strictly adhered to. Specific dates are posted on the Records and Registration Calendar. Students withdrawing from courses within the withdrawal period will automatically receive a grade of "W". The "W" has no effect on the student's grade point average.

When a student withdraws from a course, that enrollment falls under the course repeat policy. A student may repeat any course only once without permission, regardless of whether a grade or a W was earned. For more information, see the policy on repeating courses: http://policies.tcnj.edu/policies/digest.php?docId=6362

It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from a course. Failure to withdraw formally may result in failing grades and dismissal.

During the traditional academic year, students may withdraw from a full semester course up to the ninth (9th) week of the semester. For courses in other formats (e.g., Maymester, summer session or winter session), students must withdraw by a date corresponding to 60% of the term. Deadlines for these withdrawals are strictly enforced. Specific dates are posted on the Academic and Registration Calendar.