

Retroactive Withdrawal Petition: Suggestions for Preparing your Request

YOUR MOST IMPORTANT STEP: WORK WITH YOUR ADVISOR!

Before deciding to submit a petition for Retroactive Withdrawal, work with your advisor to review the Retroactive Withdrawal Policy and determine if filing a Retroactive Withdrawal petition is the right choice for you. Below is a list of question you and your advisor should consider before you decide to pursue a Retroactive Withdrawal.

If the answer to most of the questions below is “Yes,” filing for retroactive withdrawal might be a good choice for you.

If the answer to most of the questions below is “No,” continue to work with your advisor to find other ways for you to improve your academic standing at Cal Poly Pomona.

Questions you and your advisor should consider:

- Did you stop attending your classes for a compelling reason?
- Can you provide documentation of that compelling reason?
- Were you prevented from following other university procedures such as official withdrawal because of this compelling reason, and can you document this?
- At the time you withdrew from your classes, did you attempt to gain support or guidance from resources on-campus? If so, are you able to obtain documentation such as letters from your advisors or other resources?
- Does your academic history demonstrate that you are making progress on your degree, and that other than during the term under question, you made all efforts to maintain good academic standing? Can you provide documentation of this effort?
- Did you receive all “WU” grades for the term in question?
- If you earned A-F grades during the term in question, can you explain and document why you did not receive all “WU” grades?
- If you are filing a petition for a term after one calendar year has passed since the end of that term, can you provide documentation of exceptional circumstances that prevented you from filing before the deadline?

Preparing Your Statement and Documentation

Suggestions for Writing Your Statement

Your statement is a typed letter, addressed to the Retroactive Withdrawal Committee, clearly explaining the extenuating circumstances supporting your retroactive withdrawal appeal. The committee will read your letter carefully, as well as all supporting documentation. Therefore, the statement should be written carefully. Some suggestions for writing your statement are:

- **Consider your statement a concise, clear and accurate explanation for unofficial withdrawal from the university during the term in question.** This statement should outline specific circumstances that prevented you from utilizing other university procedures in an attempt to resolve the matter prior to filing a Retroactive Withdrawal.

This is very important. All students have official options for withdrawing from classes. You should demonstrate that you could not take advantage of these official options for compelling reasons.

- **State facts only.** Be accurate and detailed. It is important that you provide facts that can be verified through documentation, and that you are accurate in your description of events and dates, actions taken, and other factors that give a clear picture of why you could not follow other university procedures to withdraw from the term in question. The connection between events and circumstances and the term in question should be clear to the reader.
- **Avoid long narratives regarding personal history or academic background not relevant to the specific situation(s) on which you are basing your retroactive withdrawal petition.** Keep your statement focused closely on the term in question and the specific event(s) or circumstance(s) that impacted the term. Avoid giving extensive personal and academic background that represents long standing circumstances that did not impact the term in question.
- **Include a detailed explanation for grades not reflecting a “WU” during the term in question, if applicable.** You may need to contact the instructor(s) for further clarification of the assigned grade(s).
- **Include a detailed explanation for the reason(s) the petition was not submitted within one calendar year of the last day of the term for which you are requesting a retroactive withdrawal, if applicable.** These reasons must represent exceptional circumstances.

Suggestions for Choosing Documentation to Support Your Statement

The documentation should address statements and timelines outlined in your letter corresponding to the term for which Retroactive Withdrawal is being requested in the petition. These documents should provide specific evidence of the statements in your letter. The committee looks at your statement and the supporting documentation carefully. Therefore, it is important that your documentation be relevant to those statements.

As you choose documentation, consider the following:

- **Documentation must refer directly to your explanation of why you could not withdraw officially from the term in question.** Please do not include documentation that represents events and circumstances outside this question or that is overly general.
- **Documentation should provide detailed and clear evidence of events and circumstances described in your statement.** Documentation could provide evidence for how the event(s) described in your statement impacted the term in question. Documentation might include supporting letters from on campus advisors or resources,

documentation of care associated with your own illness, your participation in the primary care of a family member's illness, medical or insurance records, etc. All documentation should relate specifically to the explanation you have given in your statement as to the impact of an event on your ability to withdraw from the university utilizing official means. Dates included in documentation should support the connection of events and circumstances to the term in question.

- **If you include letters of support from the Cal Poly Pomona community members, these letters must be specific and provided by persons aware of your circumstances and academic history.** Letters from on-campus resources such as advisors, faculty and counselors in special programs should specifically verify that the circumstances you describe in your statement did impact your ability to withdraw officially.
- **If you include letters of support from persons outside the Cal Poly community, these letters should specifically address the facts, dates and reasons for unofficial withdrawal that you describe in your statement.** Avoid general character references or support letters that do not support your specific claims. All support letters must be dated and signed.
- **Avoid suggesting to the committee that support references may be phoned or contacted.** No support resource will be telephoned, emailed or otherwise contacted. Your support resources must be in written form only.
- **The documentation needs to be clear and legible.** Documentation that is unreadable, illegible, or in which dates, signatures, and other critical information are obscured in any way will not support your statements.
- **If you are providing medical documentation, it must be on official letterhead and include your name and doctor's contact information.** The documentation does not need to disclose a diagnosis.
- **If you are providing photos as documentation, do not submit photos of deceased people or body parts.**

Leave plenty of time to meet with your advisor, write your statement, compile your documentation and prepare your completed petition packet. Submit your completed and reviewed packet via the e-form linked on the Office of Student Success website. If you are unable to access the form, email studentsuccess@cpp.edu.

For additional information on the Retroactive Withdrawal petition process, visit the Office of Student Success webpage.

If you have additional questions, please contact the Office of Student Success at studentsuccess@cpp.edu.