

**ACADEMIC SENATE  
of  
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
San Luis Obispo, CA**

**AS-669-08**

**RESOLUTION ON WU GRADE**

- 1 WHEREAS, AS-449-95/IC *Resolution on 'U' Grades* established a policy to allow students to  
2 change a '[W]U' grade to a 'W' one time in their academic career; and  
3
- 4 WHEREAS, AS-449-95/IC recognized that registration is a student responsibility, and that  
5 students enrolling but failing to attend class are potentially preventing other  
6 students from enrolling; and  
7
- 8 WHEREAS, Prior to 1995, registration information was not readily accessible to students  
9 online, thus making procedural errors more likely; and  
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- 11 WHEREAS, Students currently can easily view their schedules at any time using the My Cal  
12 Poly portal; and  
13
- 14 WHEREAS, Many faculty members are unaware or unclear of policies regarding the WU  
15 grade; and  
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- 17 WHEREAS, Inconsistent use of the WU grade leads to differing treatment of students across  
18 campus; and  
19
- 20 WHEREAS, Historically faculty members were reminded of grading policies each quarter in  
21 the form of an attachment to paper grade sheets; be it therefore  
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- 23 RESOLVED: That AS-449-95/IC be repealed; and  
24
- 25 RESOLVED: That the grading policies, including detailed definitions of all grading symbols  
26 used, be disseminated quarterly to all faculty members prior to grade entry and  
27 that the grade definitions be made easily available for reference during grade  
28 entry; and be it further  
29
- 30 RESOLVED: That these changes be implemented beginning Fall 2008.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Instruction Committee  
Date: January 17, 2008  
Revised: March 27, 2008

## Background Material

### Executive Order 792

EO 792 defines the WU Grade as follows:

*WU (Withdrawal Unauthorized). The symbol 'WU' shall be used where a student, who is enrolled on the census date, does not officially withdraw from a course but fails to complete it. Its most common use is in those instances where a student has not completed sufficient course assignments or participated in sufficient course activity to make it possible, in the opinion of the instructor, to report satisfactory or unsatisfactory completion of the class by use of the letter grade (A - F). The instructor shall report the last known date of attendance by the student. The symbol "WU" shall be identified as a failing grade in the transcript legend and shall be counted as units attempted but not passed in computing the grade point average. In courses which are graded Credit/No Credit or in cases where the student has elected Credit/No Credit evaluation, use of the symbol "WU" is inappropriate and "NC" shall be used instead, The following statement shall appear in the campus catalog:*

*The symbol "WU" indicates that an enrolled student did not withdraw from the course and also failed to complete course requirements. It is used when, in the opinion of the instructor, completed assignments or course activities or both were insufficient to make normal evaluation of academic performance possible. For purposes of grade point average and progress point computation this symbol is equivalent to an "F."*

*If local campus policy prescribes other instances where this symbol may be used, the foregoing statement shall be extended to cover such instances.*

The full text of EO 792 is available online at: <http://www.calstate.edu/EO/EO-792.pdf>. Note that the above does not mandate the use of the WU grade, but rather prescribes its intended use.

#### **Some comments related to WU use at Cal Poly**

- Some students who have attended a portion of a course, submitted assignments, and are earning a failing grade are being advised by campus personnel to request that faculty members issue or change failing grades to WU so that the grade can be later changed to a W. This results in giving some students an extra course of "grade forgiveness" above and beyond the 16-unit, one-time-per-course policy allowed by AS-645-06.
- Since 2002 there have been over 4000 WU grades assigned. The vast majority of these grades are coming from seven departments suggesting that students are not being treated equitably across the campus.
- Cal Poly has both regular and emergency withdrawal processes for students who need to withdraw from a class for serious and compelling reasons.

**AS449-95/IC**

Adopted: November 28, 1995

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**AS-449-95/IC  
RESOLUTION ON  
"U" GRADES**

WHEREAS, Executive Order 268 specifies that "The symbol 'W' indicates that the student was permitted to drop the course after the (day/week) of instruction with the approval of the instructor and appropriate campus officials. It carries no connotation of quality of student performance and is not used in calculating grade point average or progress points"; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 268 specifies that the grade of "U" is used "when, in the opinion of the instructor, completed assignments or course activities or both were insufficient to make normal evaluation of academic performance possible. For purposes of grade point average and progress point computation this symbol is equivalent to an "F"; and

WHEREAS, It is recognized that registration is a student responsibility, and that students enrolling but failing to attend class are potentially preventing other students from utilizing campus resources; and

WHEREAS, In some cases, the "U" grade may represent an unduly harsh performance grade consequence for a procedural error; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That students may request a grade change from "U" to "W"; and, be it further

RESOLVED: That students may receive only one such grade change from "U" to "W" during their academic career at Cal Poly; and, be it further

RESOLVED: That such student-initiated grade changes will be governed by the policy set out in AS-384-92 (Resolution on Change of Grade) adopted April 14, 1992.

Proposed by the Academic Senate  
Instruction Committee  
May 11, 1995

State of California  
**Memorandum**

To: John Soares  
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: July 10, 2008



From: Warren J. Baker  
President

Copies: W. Durgin  
B. Giberti

Subject: Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-669-08-Resolution on WU Grade

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This is to approve the above-referenced Academic Senate Resolution.

Please express my appreciation to the Academic Senate Instruction Committee for its efforts.