

Troubleshooting Course Challenges: Considering Withdrawing from a Course

Welcome to the Troubleshooting Course Challenges series from the Student Success Centre. In this video, we meet Ingrid, who is wondering if she should withdraw from a course where her grade to date has been very low.

Overview

This video will share what Ingrid's situation is and what steps Ingrid needs to take as she considers a withdrawal. Withdrawing from a course means that Ingrid would not be complete the course and would receive a W on her transcript. If you would like to learn more about withdrawals, you can follow the link to the calendar definitions in the resource section alongside this video. We will also talk about who can advise her in gathering information. Lastly, we will discuss when it is important for Ingrid to take action and why it is important for Ingrid to explore her options in this circumstance.

What is the situation?

'I am in my first year, living in residence. As a science major, I am taking five courses. I think that is too much for me. Math is a required course in my program. I am not currently at a passing grade and would like to withdraw from math, but I am worried about the impact of doing this'.

Who can advise Ingrid?

Ingrid should first go see her faculty advisor to determine whether the course she is considering withdrawing from is a required course for her program and if it is a prerequisite for future courses. If it is a required course for her program, her advisor can let her know if she needs permission from her faculty to withdraw from or repeat the course. An advisor can help her make a plan for completing the course in an upcoming term. She can also ask what grade she needs to achieve in the course to use the course as a prerequisite. This is usually a grade of C

The last thing Ingrid should check with her faculty advisor about is whether or not a withdrawal from this course will affect her full-time status at the university and what the additional consequences might be if withdrawing from the course moves her to part-time status.

courses have six units over two terms. International students here on a study permit are often required to maintain fulltime status or three courses per semester.

Before moving to parttime status, it is extremely important that international students consult an immigration advisor at International Student Services or ISS to be sure that a study permit, visa, or postgraduation work permit are not jeopardized by their decision.

Student athletes on varsity teams are also required to have full status as are students living in residence. Depending on funding sources, students may need to maintain three or more courses to continue to receive scholarships, band funding, or Alberta and federal student aid. In each case, students must check with funders to be sure they are still eligible for funding if they reduce their course load.

Students considering graduate and professional programs should be aware that some programs require a certain course load for several years of the preceding undergraduate degree.

How will a withdrawal affect Ingrid?

Ingrid is a domestic student, not an international student, so she does not need to consult with ISS about immigration concerns. Regardless, since Ingrid is in the Faculty of Science, she only needs to have three courses to maintain full status and withdrawing from one of her five courses will leave her still with four. This means that there would be no impacts to Residence or athletics. She does have a scholarship though so this is something she would need more information on. We will talk about the required steps to get that information next.

Lastly the math course is a required course for Ingrid. So, as we mentioned earlier, making a plan to retake that course and subsequent courses with her faculty advisor is an important step to take before deciding to withdraw. To assess how withdrawing from a course might impact her scholarship, Ingrid should speak with an Enrolment Services Advisor and her scholarship provider to see if withdrawing from a course might impact her scholarship.

What other information does Ingrid need?

Once Ingrid knows all the possible implications of withdrawing, she may want to determine her current grade in the course and decide if it is possible to achieve a passing grade or the required pre-

