



Communicating About Course Withdrawal

Instructors at the University of Toledo developed emails they could send to students who were struggling in the course approaching the course withdrawal deadline, to communicate that they were there to support the student and help them succeed, that challenges are normal in college, and encouraging students to talk to their academic advisors and the financial aid office if they are considering withdrawing.

Example Email 1

Class,

At this time in the semester, if a student is not feeling as though they can end the semester successfully, they may begin to consider what their best path forward is and begin wrestling with choices. Most importantly, I want all of you to know that regardless of your grade in my class, I want to support you. I share this information with you so that you understand UToledo policy better.

The last day to withdraw from a class this semester is 11/05/2021. I thought it might be helpful to talk over a few points.

First let us consider the differences between a W and an F.

Grade of W: This means you have officially withdrawn from the course and stopped attending by a specific date set by the university. Withdrawing from a class will show a W on your transcripts. Your overall GPA will be calculated from the letter grades received. The W will not affect your GPA. Sometimes scholarships, financial aid, and even health care can be affected by a grade of a W.

Grade of F: This means that the student failed the course. Receiving an F will affect your overall GPA. Sometimes scholarships, financial aid, and even health care can be affected by a grade of an F. A student may repeat the course and ask for a GPA recalculation by the university. Please review more details on GPA recalculation [here](#).

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Example Email 2

First of all, I would like to congratulate those of you who are where you want to be with respect to your performance in BIOL 2150. Keep up the great work! Keep doing what you are doing and think ahead to Exam 4 and the comprehensive final exam, which is still worth a hefty chunk of your final grade, 25% to be exact.

If you are not where you would like to be in the course, keep in mind that 45% of your grade is yet to be determined so you still have the opportunity to make a substantial change to your grade. Remember that I am here to help you and I want you to succeed. Just contact me and we can get you on the right track for the rest of the semester!

Alternatively, if it's looking like you will not be successful in the course this semester, you might want to consider the withdraw option. Withdrawing from the course will not affect your GPA, but it may affect your financial aid, scholarship standing or other factors. If you stick with the course to the end of the semester, the grade you receive, even an F, will be used for the calculation of your GPA.

You should definitely talk with your academic advisor or success coach for help with this decision. Check out the UToledo "[How-To](#)" page if you don't know your success coach or advisor. **Note that the last day to withdraw from the course is Friday, April 9.**

Let me know if you have any questions, but remember, no matter how well you are doing in the course it's always a good idea to take advantage of office hours to let me help you excel.

Example Email 3:

Choices. We usually have more than we realize.

A choice some of you may be considering this week is whether to withdraw from this course. **Friday, April 9 is the last day to withdraw.** Before you make that decision please:

1. Check in with me to make sure you know where you stand in the course. Connect Quizzes + ALEKS + recitation total = 350 points (almost half your grade). Exams total = 400 points. You can make an appointment to talk with me here: <https://meetings.hubspot.com/amy-toole>
2. Check in with a Success Coach or Advisor to understand the implications, *specifically for you in your program*, of choosing to withdraw. Here's a link to help you find those coaches and advisors if you're not sure who they are: <https://www.utoledo.edu/success/how-to/>

A second choice you might be wrestling with is your path forward.

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You may be absolutely on the right path even if you struggled this semester. Many students find once they understand the amount of work needed, how to ask questions, and that understanding is more effective than just trying to remember everything, they do quite well when they re-take chemistry (or other courses)! Nobody gets through college *without* struggling.

Other students decide to change their path. I recently emailed back and forth with a student who decided to withdraw from CHEM1230. They wrote:

"....I have tried to understand the concepts, but some things just haven't seemed to click. The last thing I want is an F on my transcript and in saying this, I feel it would be best that I withdraw from the class. I hate that I have to do this, but I am trying to make the best decision for my future. I plan to switch majors and go into sonography.....it took a lot out of me to make this decision because I am an overachiever at heart, and I have always done really well in school, but I have come to terms with this being what is best for me."

You came to UToledo on a path. Is that still the right one for you? There are so many choices out there and a lot of ways to find out more. Search for "careers in medicine" or "careers in the electric car industry" or "careers that help people" or..... See what comes up!

I went to college as a biology major because my dad said I couldn't go if I was "undecided". I followed a pre-med path all through college until low scores on the MCATs (tests to get into med school) led to a choice between going back and preparing again, or changing my path. I couldn't be happier that the result of that choice, and several after it, finally led to a career I love: teaching college students!

Please reach out to me, your success coach, and/or your advisor (see links above) to talk about your choices.