To: Academic Policy Committee  
From: Academic Affairs  
Date: 4/8/2022  
Re: Second Start Proposal

Justification

The current forgiveness approach, Option 2, provides students with the opportunity to restart their GPA but also requires that they eliminate earned credits. Option 2 works well for students who have not achieved a significant number of credits, but it does not work well for students who have stopped out later in their academic career and wish to return.

Second Start, however, assists those students who started their degrees at UTEP, accumulated a significant number of hours, but did not maintain a 2.0 GPA. The current policy differentially disadvantages native UTEP students, when compared to transfer students, as transfer students do not bring their prior GPA with them and transfer only the courses they passed. As a consequence, many former UTEP students choose to transfer their UTEP credits to another institution to complete their degree. Second Start will encourage stop-out students to return to UTEP and complete their degree at UTEP in a timely and cost-effective manner.

We propose replacing Option 2 with Second Start.

Guidelines

Eligible students will have been out of UTEP for at least two years and must elect the Second Start option prior to beginning their first semester of return.

Second Start includes a probationary period during which students must complete at least 12 hours and achieve a GPA of 2.5. Upon meeting the conditions of Second Start, including the probationary period, all courses where a grade of D or F earned for UTEP coursework prior to the student’s absence will be disregarded in the student’s cumulative GPA and excluded from credits earned. However, courses in which a C or better was earned will fulfill degree requirements and will count toward the student’s
cumulative GPA. Second Start may only be requested one time and may not be requested by a student who has already earned any bachelor’s degree.

Failing to meet the probationary requirements of hours earned or a 2.5 GPA, excludes students from the Second Start option. It may only be requested one time and cannot be revoked once processed.

The University of Arizona adopted this program with significant success. 
https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/uannounce/second-start-readmission-policy
Proposed Revision to Undergraduate Catalog

We propose replacing the text "Reinstatement of Students..." section at the bottom of this catalog page: http://catalog.utep.edu/policies-regulations/attendance-grading/#undergraduatetext

…with the text below

Reinstatement of Students After Extended Absence

At the time of reinstatement to the University after an absence of at least two academic years, a student has the options of:

1. **Continuing Student.** Continuing with the academic record and GPA as they stand, and completing all remaining requirements for graduation; or

2. **Second Start.** Maintaining UTEP credit hours with grades of C and above, while excluding previously-earned courses in which grades of D or F were earned. To qualify for Second Start, students must complete at least 12 credit hours with a minimum 2.5 GPA after reenrollment, after which Second Start will be applied and academic standing will be re-calculated. Students will have up to two semesters of enrollment with a 12-month period to meet this obligation (all courses taken after reenrollment up through the semester in which the 12th credit is earned will be included in the GPA calculation).

   Second Start may be elected only once and may not be revoked once processed. Students who have earned a degree in which the courses from UTEP were accepted as part of the degree are ineligible to qualify for this option.

   If the student was not eligible to re-enroll at the end of the last period of enrollment at the University, submission of a Petition for Reinstatement with the academic dean of either the previous or intended major is required at the time of reinstatement (as described above). The petition will specify which of the two aforementioned options has been chosen.

   In each case, all courses taken and grades earned will remain on the official academic record. Pursuit of the degree under each option does not exempt the student from the provisions of the "seven-year rule" http://catalog.utep.edu/policies-regulations/degree-plans/

   Notes: Please contact UTEP’s Financial Aid Office or the Military Student Success Center to understand how your academic record will impact your eligibility for federal financial aid and/or military benefits. Any student transferring to another institution should check with that institution to determine how credits earned prior to Second Start will be evaluated.

[end catalog text]
**Process Recommendation**

Students apply for Second Start prior to readmission and up until the first day of classes of the first term of readmission.

1. The recalculation of the GPA won’t occur until after the student completes 12 graded units with a 2.5 GPA within the first 12 months.

2. If the student satisfies the conditions for Second Start, the Office of the Registrar will annotate the student’s permanent record to indicate that the program was enacted.

3. Once enacted, grades of D or F from all course work completed prior to the extended absence will be designated as not contributing to the GPA (credits for D courses will also be excluded).

4. Courses with a C or better will count toward degree requirements.

5. Once Second Start is granted, a readmitted student must meet all requirements for the degree program and UTEP. Including major, minor and university credit requirements.

6. Second Start may be granted only once in a student’s academic career.

7. Second Start is not available to students who have completed requirements for a bachelor’s degree.

8. Once Second Start is enacted, it is permanent.

9. Although Second Start allows previously-earned grades of D or F to be excluded from the GPA, grades from the previous courses will continue to display on the student’s academic record for an accurate academic history.