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The University of Chicago  
The Colleges of Arts, Literature, and Science

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

February 13, 1924

President E. D. Burton  
Harper Library

Dear President Burton:.

*General Standard*

In reply to your inquiry of January 10 with regard to the procedure in dismissal cases, I beg to report as follows.

The regulations governing dismissal are as follows:

- . A student whose average in courses other than Physical Culture is below D may be dismissed at the end of his first or second quarter.
- . A student who has taken 9 majors, exclusive of Physical Culture, whether he has received credit for them or not, and whose grade points in those majors are ten below the standard, 2 per major taken, is dismissed at the end of his third or any subsequent quarter.
- . A student who has been on probation three quarters without making satisfactory reduction of his deficiency in grade points is subject to dismissal by action of the proper faculty or board even though the deficiency does not amount to ten.

When a student is put on probation, disciplined, or dismissed, the parent or guardian is informed of the facts by the Dean.

These regulations are printed in the Undergraduate Course Book, for knowledge of whose contents <sup>as written</sup> the undergraduate is held responsible.

You will note that when a student is put on probation, the parent or guardian is informed of that fact.

I do not think that, under present circumstances, dismissal can possibly occur without previous probation (except in the case of a student who fails in his first quarter of residence).

The safeguard against mechanical application of the regulations lies in the knowledge of individual students by their dean which has been made possible this year for the first time, and which of course will increase quarter by quarter since each student is to retain throughout his course the dean to whom he is first assigned.



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Whenever a student reaches a condition specified in the first three regulations quoted above, his case is brought to the attention of his dean who studies the case to see whether there is any reason why the regulation should not be enforced. If he is in doubt as to the proper course to follow, he consults with me. Cases in which a dean reaches a conclusion, before or after consultation with me, are placed upon the docket of the Board of the Colleges under an appropriate heading, and are voted upon without discussion unless some member of the Board desires to reopen any particular case. Cases in which the individual dean and I fail to reach a conclusion are fully discussed by the Board.

If dismissal is voted, letters such as those of which I inclose copies are sent to the student and to the parent or guardian.

I believe this procedure, safeguarded always by the dean's knowledge of the individual student, is as wise and as just as is humanly possible to make it.

The necessity of dismissal is of course an unhappy one, but it remains an absolute necessity, and I am satisfied that our standards have been too lenient rather than too strict, both from the point of view of the welfare of the student body as a whole and from the point of view of the welfare of the student concerned. The retention in college of a man who is not of collegiate intellectual caliber is injurious both to himself and to his comrades; and men of such low caliber are precisely the ones who exhaust the time and energy of the deans and instructors, which should go by preference to the most promising rather than to the least promising students.

The great mass of dismissal cases comes up inevitably and with great pressure in the period between the end of one quarter and the beginning of the next. Dismissal ensues upon knowledge of low grades made in the quarter just closed; yet it must be made known to the student before the next quarter opens - in order that he may not return, register, pay tuition, take up a room, etc. here; and in order that he may, if he so desires, make arrangements to go elsewhere. This makes it overwhelmingly desirable, as you will see, that grades be reported promptly by all instructors - and shows incidentally the intolerable negligence of the one member of the faculty who regularly sends in his report two or three weeks late. About fifty dismissal cases came up and were handled by the Board of the Colleges on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Christmas week. In spite of the pressure they were studied as faithfully as possible, and, so far as I could or can see, the decision was absolutely just in every case.

There have been and I suppose there always will be protests in some cases, either by the students or by the parents: for there always are, and I suppose there always will be, students who cannot believe the awarding of low grades to them is just, and parents who refuse to admit the possibility of their children doing low grade work. Each protestant has been or will be courteously received by his dean or myself, and the case reopened if there is any valid reason for doing so, - but the number of protests will surely diminish as the dean's knowledge of the individual students increases. There were less protests this Winter, Miss Gordon tells me, than heretofore;



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and I am confident that conditions in this respect will steadily improve.

Very truly yours,

*Ernest H. Wilkins*

EHW.B

Dean of the Colleges

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Very truly yours,

*Ernest H. Wilkins*

EHW.B

Dean of the Colleges



FORM FOR DEAN'S LETTER TO STUDENT DISMISSED

(To be written in each case as an individual letter,  
not multigraphed.)

I regret to inform you that the Board of the  
Colleges of Arts, Literature, and Science has voted to  
dismiss you, without dishonor, from the University, in  
consequence of the unsatisfactory quality of your work.

This action is in accordance with the rule of the  
University which provides that (here quote the appropri-  
ate rule).

We regret very much indeed that you have failed  
to meet the conditions which must prevail here, and we  
extend to you our best wishes for your success in such  
other work as you may undertake.

Very truly yours,

Dean of the Colleges



FORM FOR DEAN'S LETTER TO STUDENT DISMISSED  
(To be written in each case as an individual letter,  
not mimeographed.)

I regret to inform you that the Board of the  
College of Arts, Literature, and Science has voted to  
dismiss you, without honor, from the University, in  
consequence of the unsatisfactory quality of your work.  
This action is in accordance with the rule of the  
University which provides that (and quote the appropriate  
rule).

We regret very much indeed that you have failed  
to meet the conditions which must prevail here, and we  
extend to you our best wishes for your success in some  
other work as you may undertake.

Very truly yours,

Dean of the College

FORM FOR DEAN'S LETTER TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF  
STUDENT DISMISSED

(To be written in each case as an individual letter,  
not multigraphed.)

I regret to inform you that the Board of  
the Colleges of Arts, Literature and Science has  
voted to dismiss your son, without dishonor, from the  
University, in consequence of the unsatisfactory  
quality of his work.

We regret very much indeed that he has  
failed to meet the conditions which must prevail here,  
and we extend to him our best wishes for his success  
in such other work as he may undertake.

Very truly yours,

Dean of the Colleges

