

CASS Q&A Series

The CASS Q&A Series is an ongoing segment where questions will be put out twice a month and will answer student concerns that are timely. Questions are created by CASS Communications staff, with the hope that students will be able to contribute content in the future. The intention of the Q&A series is for students to have timely questions answered before they have to seek resources, which takes away staff time and effort. The Q&A will be featured on the CASS main page, digital signage around Buchanan and IBLC, and through Arts' social media channels. At the end of this document is a sample first-term calendar of when the questions will be launched. Questions and responses are below:

***Q:** I heard my grades will drop 15% in my first year. Is that true? – ideal release date is in early October after students receive their first midterm grades back*

The shift from high school to university is quite large. For instance, there will be more people in your lectures; the assigned coursework will be more challenging; general expectations are higher. As a result, students far overestimate how they will perform in their first year (ie. thinking that you will be able to easily obtain 90% in first-year English or Math).

To do well, you should keep up with all readings and assignments, be engaged in class, and ask for clarification if you are unsure about anything. Visit office hours and make use of the free tutoring services both from the AMS and Learning Commons to ensure you succeed academically.

Lastly, remember that not everyone can statistically be above average. This is not to say achieving high grades is impossible, but that it will take more effort and more hard work than in high school.

***Q:** What does a W mean on your transcript? – ideal release date is around drop deadline times*

A “W” (withdraw) on your transcript means you dropped a particular course after the deadline. The credits from that course are not calculated in to the credits you need for graduation; as well, any marks/grades from that course are not factored into your overall GPA or term average.

For the 2011-12 year, if you withdraw from a course before September 20 (term 1 only) or September 23 (a two-term course), you will not get a W on your transcript.

For the 2011-12 year, if you withdraw from a course before October 14 (term 1 only) or November 25 (a two-term course), you will get a W on your transcript.

If you want to withdraw from a course after October 14 or November 25, you will need to contact Arts Academic Advising and explain your situation.

Be careful about the decision of withdrawing from a course or not, as it may affect your application into grad school. If you are concerned about your application to other schools, contact the prospective grad school's admissions board for information on their policy towards "W" on a transcript.

When you drop a course, you also get your course fees back. However, this depends on when you drop the course. The dates can all be found here:

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=14,266,774,0>

Q: *Why should I bother going to office hours? – ideal release date is in late September when students are writing exams and papers are being assigned*

Office hours, generally run by professors or Teaching Assistants, is one way for students to clarify material taught in class. Whether you simply don't understand course material or want to ask more detailed questions, office hours are a great place to start.

Making connections with professors and Teaching Assistants (TAs) earlier on in the term can be very beneficial. After building that initial rapport, it is much easier to ask questions later on in the term, especially if the course material is becoming more difficult. Professors and TAs are also great sources of information on potential research and job opportunities.

2011-12 term 1 calendar:

Sept 19 – withdrawing from a course – *What does a W mean on your transcript?*

Oct 3 – office hours – *Why should I bother going to office hours?*

Oct 17 – 15% grades – *I heard my grades will drop 15% in my first year. Is that true?*

Oct 31 – academic resources – *Where can I go for study tips and academic support?*

Nov 14 – procrastinating on assignments/time management – *I'm putting off a lot of work right now. How do I fight my procrastination habits?*

Nov 28 – exam prep tools – *How should I study for my finals?*

Dec 12 – health and stress management – *I'm feeling really stressed out right now. What should I do?*