

# SMC ETHICS

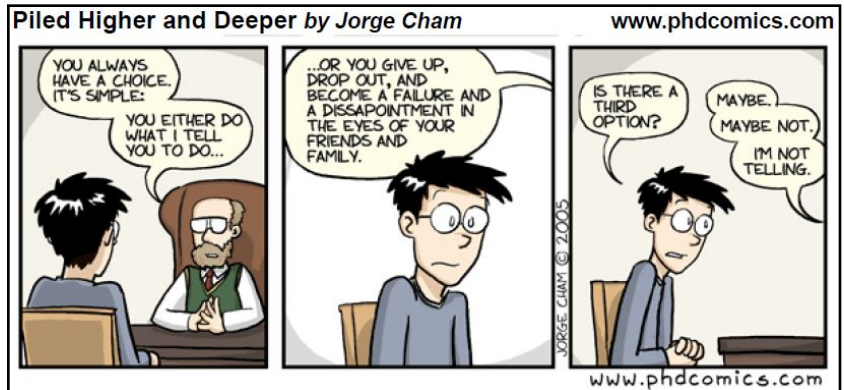
## Continuing a Dialogue on What We Do and How We Do It

### Navigating Student Success Using GPS

Recognizing that our students' ability to achieve their academic goals is undoubtedly impacted by their personal lives, it is important that we continue to assist them in the ways we can. It is equally as important that we recognize that it is impossible for non-counseling faculty to offer individual guidance tailored to the unique needs of each and every one of our students. One way to begin is by utilizing the help of the GPS (Gateway to Persistence and Success) team.

GPS is an online platform accessible via Canvas and the SMC website with the intention to support student success and retention. With a variety of features to choose from to reach out to our students, getting them the assistance that they might need has never been easier. From sending Kudos, letting them know that they are doing well in our class, to raising flags for the students that appear to be struggling to encourage them to have a conversation with us about any issues they might be having, GPS simplifies the way in which we reach every one of our students.

GPS has several features to choose from. The referral feature



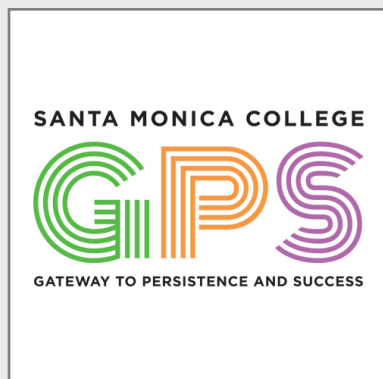
## Supporting Student Success in the Long Term

The definition of student success might seem obvious. Students need to meet those dreaded SLOs, master the content/skills of the course, get a passing grade, and complete the course (and ideally earn an excellent grade and submit high quality work!). Most of us do all we can to make sure we get as many of our students to achieve these goals, and of course we should continue to do so. But one thing the pandemic and the years since have taught us is that students' personal lives—their physical and mental health, their jobs and careers, and their family responsibilities—cannot be ignored, especially since they often can prevent students from reaching our traditional ideas of student success.

While it is unfortunate that a student might have to withdraw from our classes in such a situation, we need to keep in mind not only their personal well-being but also the long view of student success. What will keep students optimistic and engaged in completing their college studies in the future? What will allow the student to return to their studies and

is one not to overlook. Via GPS, faculty can now make referrals to Math Tutoring, English Tutoring, and Academic Counseling with no difficulties. Once the referral is made, the GPS team takes over and handles the process of directly contacting each student a referral was made for. Students are contacted by GPS ambassadors via email and phone to further assess their needs and help them get the assistance that they need to succeed in class. The best part about this feature is that faculty making referrals are kept in the loop and given updates as to what course of action the student decides to take.

GPS is available throughout the entirety of each course. Referrals, along with the other features, can be utilized when you feel your students need it the most. To get started, view the [Instructional Faculty Guide](#) to get more in-depth information about the platform and set up a profile that best represents you as an instructor. Utilizing this platform is not required, yet it can make a significant difference in retaining our students and/or assisting them to achieve their academic goals.



continue with the best transcript to enable them to meet their goal? From that longer view of student success, instructors might want to make sure they are completely informed about the current options for student withdrawals and how and when to counsel students to use them so that they ultimately can reach their goals in the long term, even if they may not complete our class in the short term.

As soon as we observe a student struggling to effectively participate or complete coursework by due dates, that is a prime time for an intervention. Ideally, instructors would refer students to academic counselors for expert assistance tailored to their specific situation (see the sidebar on GPS for one way to do so). Also, it is helpful for instructors to be informed of the various drop options such as an Excused Withdrawal (EW), and how each option might impact the student and their future success.

If a student does need to withdraw from your course, timing matters. For example, when a student experiences a setback at the beginning of the semester, they can drop the class and receive a refund if they drop before the second Sunday of the semester (or by the 10% point of a short-term course). Faculty might be surprised to learn that, even after the refund deadline passes, students still have the option to drop a class and avoid a “W” until the fourth Sunday after classes begin in a 16-week course (or by the 30% point of the length of a short-term course), which means that the class won’t show up on their transcript or affect their academic status. When “late-start” sections of the same class are available, a student could enroll in that section in order to avoid significant disruptions toward their academic goals. By the way, students can view these deadlines in Corsair Connect, and faculty can view them in mProfessor by expanding the “Class Roster Dates and Deadlines” tab.

When the student needs to drop later on in the course, they may be eligible to receive an EW (excused withdrawal) instead of a W. Students can currently receive an EW by dropping a course in Corsair Connect and indicating that they’re dropping due to an extraordinary or extenuating circumstance that

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**PERC website****Email**

prevented them from completing the class, such as health/ COVID, financial/family obligations, loss of job/job transfer, or immigration action. An EW will not count against the permitted number of withdrawals or enrollment attempts in a given course. As a result, students with an EW may repeat the course(s) from which they have withdrawn.

Instructors are uniquely positioned to motivate and support students toward future success even if such success is not achieved in the present semester. No matter how complicated our students' lives can be, we want them to feel seen, heard, and supported in a way that will best ensure they resume and complete their studies.