Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Smart Start Before Census and After Census W Drops

About Smart Start
Q: What is a Smart Start drop?
A: We want students to get off to a smart start for the semester. Beginning in Fall 2014, students must attend the first class meeting or contact you. Online students are expected to complete the attendance activity (which you define) on or before the 3rd day of the first week. Drop students who neither attend nor contact you.

Smart Start Deadline
Q: I missed the Smart Start drop window. What do I do?
A: Student will need to be dropped after census. Use the first date of class as the last date of attendance.

Q: Ok, it’s after census. What do I do?
A: Go to ACES, Faculty tab, Web Services link, Faculty link, Final Grades link. Select the term and CRN. Then select W from the drop down list and enter the Last Date of Attendance (LDA), in MM/DD/YYYY format, and then submit.

Q: I did that, and now it says I have errors.
A: Scroll down the page. An error message will appear to the right of the problematic student’s record. Address the error and then submit.

When Do I Drop A Student
Q: How soon after the first class should I drop the student?
A: Recommendation is to allow a reasonable amount of time for the student to contact you. Faculty may contact students who do not attend the first class. Smart Start drop functionality is available thru census.

How Do I Drop A Student
Q: How do I Smart Start drop someone?
A: In ACES, Faculty tab, Web Services, Faculty. Then select the Smart Start link. You will also need to select the term and the CRN. When you have your class roster up, change the status to Drop Before Census and submit.

Q: There’s no Drop Before Census in the dropdown.
A: Smart Start is only available thru 11:59pm of Census Date (which is listed on the Smart Start drop page for you). You can also find the date on Important Semester Info for the term, emailed to you and also available in ACES, Faculty tab, Faculty Resources box.
**Communication To Students**

Q: How do students know about this requirement?

A: There are a variety of communications: group advising, website banners, targeted messages, etc. It is also in the eCatalog.

Q: Should I tell the student I’m dropping them?

A: Yes, it is highly recommended and at the discretion of the faculty member. An email can be sent directly from the Smart Start page prior to processing the drop.

Q: Do any automated messages get sent to the student?

A: Yes, a very generic email is sent when the student is smart-start dropped. It is a “one size fits all” that does not include specific information about the course or instructor.

**Last Attend Date**

Q: It says I have to enter the last attend date for a student I did not drop.

A: If a student drops via Admissions & Records (A&R), enter the LDA. A&R does not know that information.

**Last Date to Drop**

Q: When is the Last Date to Drop?

A: Last date to drop is dependent on how many weeks long the class is. See Important Semester Info for the term, emailed to all faculty prior to the start of the term. The document can also find this document in ACES, Faculty tab, Faculty Resources box.

Q: I’m teaching an open learning class, so it’s not on your list of dates. How do I know what the last date to drop is?

A: It’s 75% of calendar days for the length of class. Contact your department for a handy spreadsheet that will calculate calendar dates for the course.

**W is Not an Option**

Q: W is not an option on the Final Grades page for a student I need to drop. Why?

A: Either that student has exceeded their 6 allowed drops, or it is after the last date to drop.

Q: So what do I do?

A: Assign the grade the student earns (likely an F). If it’s an F, the Last Date of Attendance will also need to be posted.

**Correcting Mistakes**

Q: Oops! I dropped the wrong person!

A: Use the existing Reinstatement Process (add slip, attendance verification, signatures, Admission & Records).

Q: But I don’t know who I dropped, and now they’re gone!

A: Email Christa Emig (cemig@alamo.edu) the CRN of your course. Christa will identify the student for you. Then proceed with the existing Reinstatement Process to have the student reinstated.
6-Drop, 3-Peat and 27-Hour Rule

Q: 6-drop, 3-peat, 27-hour rule – what are these things?

A: 6-drop: The legislature has determined that students can drop a total of 6 courses in their undergraduate career. This is why we display the 6-drop counter for each student on the Final Grades roster in ACES. There are exceptions (for example, if the student withdraws from the institution). Direct students to Admissions & Records for more information on exceptions.

3-peat: We receive funding from the State in the form of contact hour reimbursement. The state will provide funding for a student to take a class up to two times. On the 3rd or subsequent time, we do not receive funding and the student is charged 3-peat tuition to make up the difference. Some classes are exempt from 3-peat charges (e.g., developmental courses, courses that can be repeated for credit)

27-hour rule: We receive funding from the State for up to 27 contact hours of developmental education for each student. Once a student has exceeded 27 hours, they are charged a higher tuition rate to make up the difference.

For more information on these policies, please refer to your college’s eCatalog, in the Registration section, Adds, Drops, and Withdrawals link. The student’s status for each policy and an alert when they come close to the danger level are also viewable in Alamo GPS.

6-Drop Count

Q: The drop-count is blank. What does that mean?
A: The student’s 6-drop count record is corrupt. Email Christa Emig (cemig@alamo.edu) the Banner ID and CRN. If it’s close to the last date to drop, you may want to submit a paper drop slip, in case the issue isn’t resolved in time.

Q: The drop-count says XMPT. What does that mean?
A: The student was FTIC (First Time in College) prior to Fall 2007 and is not subject to the 6-drop rule.

Q: Do I have to enter “Attend Hours”?
A: No.

Q: I did all that, and I got a message that there are errors.
A: Scroll down the page. An error message will appear to the right of the problematic student’s record. Address the error and then submit.

Q: Oh! I entered the date in the wrong format. I fixed it and I still have errors.
A: You may have multiple students with an error, look down the right side of the page again. If a student was dropped by Admissions & Records, you will need to enter the LDA.

Students Still on Roster

Q: I dropped a student a month ago and they show as Not Gradable. A student I just dropped shows as registered, with a grade of W.
A: The drop process is a two-step process. First, faculty posts the final grade of W. CSI changes the registration status to Dropped. This is what makes the student Not Gradable. Please allow 2-3 business days for this to be completed. If after a reasonable period of time, the student is still
showing as registered, email Christa Emig (cemig@alamo.edu) with the Banner ID and CRN to research.

Q: I dropped a student, CSI has completed the drop process, and the student is still in my Canvas class.
A: Email dst-acol@alamo.edu with the Banner ID and CRN to research.

**Withdrawal Types**

Q: I dropped a student, and now they have a WS next to them. What does that mean?
A: There are several different types of withdrawals:

- **W** (withdrawal). This is the grade a student receives if they are exempt from the 6-drop ruling (FTIC – First Time in College – prior to Fall 2007)

- **WS** (withdrawal, SB 1231). This is one of the student’s 6-allowed drops

- **WX** (withdrawal exemption, SB 1231). This does not count toward 6-drop

- **WM** (military withdrawal). For students who are deployed or TDY.