

# LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

## Policy Scope

The following policy applies to all UNMC students.

## Policy Statement

The purpose of the Leave of Absence Policy is to specify what constitutes a leave of absence from the university.

A leave of absence (LOA) may be requested by the student or required by the program administration. An LOA is a period of time away from university enrollment that does not indicate withdrawal from the university. Leave may or may not include grades of incomplete, withdrawal from current courses and/or term(s) without enrollment depending on timing of the request. Permission to take a leave of absence shall be solely within the discretion of the program administration, based upon the circumstances, and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. An LOA halts progression within the curriculum clock but does not excuse the student from any current course requirements. For more information see the Drop/Add and Withdrawal policies. **A leave of absence is not a replacement for a deferred admission.**

Reasons for the LOA may include, but are not limited to, excessive delays in completion of coursework or inability to continue with coursework due to health, personal, financial or family circumstances.

An LOA is considered an attendance withdrawal for students receiving federal student financial aid. Students are not considered enrolled during the LOA, thus an LOA can affect a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress for financial aid. Repayment of federal student aid may be required before an LOA can be granted in the middle of a term. Students receiving federal student grants or loans **are required** to visit the Financial Aid Office prior to finalizing an LOA.

In most circumstances students will be allowed to retain access to academic resources such as their ID card, email, network computer drives, student information system, library, and mailboxes for up to one year while on LOA. At the end of one year, access to these resources will be terminated. Continued after-hours access to college buildings during the LOA will be determined by the college academic dean (or designee).

Active duty military personnel will be granted a leave of absence in accordance with federal guidelines adhered to by the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Military personnel who are required to use an LOA must communicate these orders to their faculty advisor and appropriate program administration prior to taking leave. This includes long-term or short-term leave. Failure to communicate this leave may result in administrative action. Military deployment time does not count against the time limit to complete the program.

An LOA will not be granted more than 30 days after the date the LOA was to start. Exceptions may be granted in exceptional circumstances with permission of a college academic dean (or designee).

## Procedure

1. A student or an academic program staff member must complete a Change of Status form before an LOA will be approved.
2. Students receiving federal student grants or loans **are required** to consult with the Financial Aid Office prior to finalizing an LOA.
  - a. The student will be required to complete an exit interview/ counseling and are placed on HOLD until the counseling is

complete. This exit process is not considered to be an exit/ withdrawal from the program; it is a federal compliance process for students receiving federal student aid who will not be enrolled for an extended period of time.

- b. The Office of Financial Aid will determine if current federal student aid must be repaid.
  - c. Student loan lenders and the Department of Education are notified of the student's non-enrollment and date they last attended classes.
  - d. Student loans are placed in their six-month grace period during the LOA status.
  - e. Students remain responsible for any unpaid balance on their UNMC account. Failure to meet their financial responsibility may result in administrative withdrawal from the program.
3. Students who are on an LOA are responsible for notifying the college academic dean (or designee) by email, of their intention to return to classes no later than the date specified on the LOA form. Return to the program is predicated on space in the program and administrative approval. Failure to return to the program on the date specified on the LOA form may result in administrative withdrawal from the program. In the case of administrative withdrawal, re-entry into the program would require reapplication through the usual admissions process, with no guarantee of re-admission.
  4. Upon resumption of the program, a student may be required to meet additional conditions (e.g., documentation of remedial academic work, compliance training) prior to resuming enrollment in the program.
  5. Upon re-enrollment following an LOA, the student will be subject to all policies and curriculum requirements which pertain to the class he or she is joining.
  6. The student may normally be granted a maximum of twelve months of LOA during their enrollment in the program. The twelve-month maximum is cumulative if a student takes multiple LOAs during their enrollment in the program. In extenuating circumstances, the Dean (or designee) may extend the LOA beyond twelve months. LOA time will not be counted against the time limit to complete the program.

**Effective Date:** 12/5/1995

**Revised Date:** 03/20/2023

**Policy Process Applied:** Standard

**Policy Review Cycle:** Three Years

**Responsible University Administrator(s):** Dr. Philip Covington, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success

**Responsible University Office(s):** Office of Academic Records, Financial Aid Office

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