

MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

In accordance with the University's Mission, faculty and staff strive to maximize our students' potential to learn and grow. Toward that end, certain procedures are in place to ensure that students are offered every opportunity to achieve both in and out of the classroom. Consequently, those students in good academic or judicial standing who feel that medical or mental health issues are interfering with their academic success may request a meeting with the Dean of Students or designee in order to discuss a Medical Leave of Absence (Voluntary). In some cases, the University may require a student to take a Medical Leave of Absence (Involuntary) based upon information which may be received. All medical information as well as reports received shall remain confidential.

Requests to return from a Medical Leave of Absence must be made to the Dean of Students' Office as well. In both cases, consultation will take place with medical providers and University Health or Counseling Services before a determination is made regarding the student's status. For spring semester returns, students should submit their requests by December 1st; for fall semester returns, students should submit requests by July 1st.

During any Medical Leave of Absence, the same academic policies outlined in the Academic Catalog's Leave of Absence Policy remain in effect.

Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence

All requests for a Medical Leave of Absence must be made to the Dean of Students' Office. In consultation with the student's medical care provider(s) and/or University Health and/or Counseling Services, and/or licensed health care professionals, the Dean of Students or designee will meet with the student. If the Medical Leave of Absence is approved, the student must complete and submit a University Leave of Absence form, after which a course of action will be determined including, but not limited to, a Leave of Absence for medical or mental health reasons for that particular semester. Extensions of Medical Leaves of Absence are granted on a semester by semester basis by the Dean of Students or designee. As stated previously, requests to return from a Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence will be evaluated by the Dean of Students, again in consultation with Health or Counseling Services. Please see the following section "Procedures for Returning to Full-Time Student Status after a Medical Leave of Absence" for more details.

Involuntary Medical Leave of Absence

In order to protect any student or the University community, the University reserves the right to require a student's assessment by a licensed health care professional whose field of practice is relevant to the particular concerns. Students whose behavior fits the following categories and who do not request a Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence may be required to leave the University on an involuntary basis. The conditions for an Involuntary Medical Leave of Absence are:

1. A student is a danger to him/herself or others because of threats or actions that could cause harm to him/herself or others.
2. A student acts or threatens to act or has acted or threatened to act in a manner that would interfere with or disrupt the normal activities of the University or others.
3. A student refuses or is unable to cooperate with a recommended evaluation or treatment procedure and is thought to be in danger of significant physical or psychological deterioration, (e.g. substance abuse issues, disordered eating, etc.)
4. A student needs, or is thought to need, treatment services or other services which are beyond those normally available at the University, or there is danger of significant further physical or psychological impairment.
5. A student refuses to undergo a recommended evaluation or refuses to comply with a course of treatment including failure to attend or actively participate in medical appointments.
6. A student refuses to cooperate in the process, including referral to provide a medical release or the names of treating medical professionals.

Procedures for Returning to Full-Time Student Status After a Voluntary or Involuntary Medical Leave of Absence

1. Documentation will be sent to the student soon after his/her departure to specify the terms of the Medical Leave of Absence.
2. When the student requests a return to full-time student status, a medical check list must be completed by the student's medical provider whose practice is relevant to the student's concerns. Such checklist(s) and any other information submitted will be forwarded to the Dean of Students. Please note that the rendition of this document is a step in the assignation of the student's future status and may not be the only factor in the determination made.
3. With the request to return to full-time status, the student must provide a written medical release enabling the student's treatment providers to discuss the assessment and treatment plans with the Dean of Students or designee and University Health or Counseling Services and/or licensed health care professionals.
4. Upon receipt of the check list(s) and medical release, the Dean of Students or designee, in consultation with Health and/or Counseling Services and/or licensed health care professionals, will determine whether or not a student is eligible to return. An interview may be required by Health Services or Counseling Services staff, and/or licensed health care professionals. A condition of return will be cooperation with any recommended course of treatment and any requested on-going medical reports, updates, or evaluations.

When appropriate, students should consult with the Business and Financial Aid offices prior to applying for or returning from a Medical Leave of Absence. The University strongly encourages all students to consider purchasing tuition insurance.