



California Health Sciences University

COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of the CHSU-COM Leave of Absence Policy is to describe the procedure for students to request a Leave of Absence (LOA) and identify the topics to be considered by CHSU-COM in evaluating requests for an LOA.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all students enrolled at CHSU-COM.

DEFINITIONS

Leave of Absence - A leave of absence is a temporary interruption in a student's program of study for a period of time greater than seven (7) consecutive days. Except in instances of an Academic LOA, LOA's may not last longer than 180 calendar day

Academic Leave of Absence – An Academic LOA is a unique situation, usually of a one-year duration, which allows students to pursue a separate opportunity, such as a research opportunity or complete a one-year post-secondary degree.

POLICY STATEMENT

All Leaves of Absences are granted by the Dean. LOAs require pre-approval, and students must follow CHS-COM application process. Acceptable reasons for an LOA include, but are not limited to, academic, personal, medical, military service, etc.

An LOA should be requested by the student in writing, addressed to the Dean but delivered to the Asst/Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment, who will then provide it to the Dean. The LOA request must also include an anticipated date of return. The LOA Request Form is available on the CHSU-COM website or from the University Registrar. If extenuating



California Health Sciences University

circumstances prevent a student from providing a prior written request, the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment may make exceptions to this process. Whenever possible, students should submit their written requests for a LOA at least thirty (30) calendar days in advance of the start of the upcoming semester or thirty (30) calendar days before the end of the current semester. Non-attendance in classes does not constitute notification of intent to apply for a leave of absence.

A student requesting an LOA will be expected to first meet with the Asst/Associate Dean of Student Affairs. During this meeting the student should be informed of their ability to graduate within the requirements outlined in the COM Graduation Policy. Additionally, the student should meet with the Financial Aid and Business Office to understand the financial implications of the LOA in relation to tuition, account balances and private federal loans. Due to the nature of the clinical curriculum, students seeking to take LOA during year 3 or 4 must also consult with the Office of Community Clinical Education before taking an LOA. The Dean will evaluate and make the final determination on whether to approve the LOA request.

Students who take a LOA that, at a minimum, extends through the end of the semester shall be considered withdrawn from courses, for the purposes of grading and tuition refund only, but not withdrawn from the University. The student's final grades will be processed as outlined in the Student Catalog.

An LOA must meet the criteria described below to be considered an approved LOA for Title I

- The school must have a formal written LOA policy that requires all LOA requests to be submitted in writing; and the student must include the reason for their LOA request.
- The student must request, and the school must approve, the LOA in accordance with the school's policy.
- There must be a reasonable expectation that the student will return from the LOA.



California Health Sciences University

- The school may not assess the student any additional institutional charges, the student's need may not increase, and, therefore, the student is not eligible for any additional Title IV aid.
- The LOA, together with any additional leaves of absence, must not exceed a total of 180 days in a 12 month period.
- If the student has a Title IV loan, the school must explain to them, **PRIOR** to granting the LOA, the effects that their failure to return from an LOA may have on the loan repayment terms, including the expiration of the grace period.

An LOA not meeting these criteria will be considered a withdrawal for Title IV purposes and reported as such to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).

Academic Leave of Absence

An Academic Leave of Absence is a unique situation, usually of a one-year duration, which allows students to pursue a separate opportunity, such as a research opportunity or complete a one-year post-secondary degree. Upon completion of this additional educational, experiential activity or scholarly pursuit, the student must submit a complete Petition of Readmission form, Background Check, and Controlled Substance Screen within a timeframe designated by CHSU-COM. A student requesting an Academic Leave of Absence must be in good academic standing. If the LOA request is made after the failure of a course and prior to a meeting of the SPC, the LOA will not be approved by the Dean.

Personal Leave of Absence

A Personal Leave of Absence, granted by the Dean, may not last longer than 180 calendar days. A Personal Leave of Absence is available to address situations such as a death of a spouse, child, or such other circumstance that would interrupt a student's education. A Personal Leave of Absence lasting longer than 180 days automatically becomes a Withdrawal.



California Health Sciences University

Medical Leave of Absence (Absence Less than 180 Calendar Days)

A Medical Leave of Absence may be granted to students who provide acceptable supporting documentation indicating a valid medical reason requiring a leave of less than 180 calendar days and an anticipated date of return. Decisions regarding the granting of a medical leave are determined by the Dean. A Medical Leave of Absence may last no longer than 180 calendar days; if the leave extends beyond 180 calendar days it will automatically become a Withdrawal. In order to return from an approved medical leave, the student must provide the Dean with documentation from a healthcare provider approving/releasing the student to return as a full-time student in the curriculum. Any LOA in this category will likely extend that graduation date secondary to the timing and availability of the cohort's courses/rotations.

Maternity Leave of Absence

A Maternity Leave of Absence may be granted to students who provide acceptable supporting documentation indicating a need to take a leave of absence because of their pregnancy. The required period of leave may include time before the delivery, after delivery, or both. This documentation must include an estimated date of delivery or, if a leave must be continued beyond delivery, the date delivery occurred. A Student Maternity Leave of Absence extending more than 180 calendar days will require the student to file a request for a Withdrawal. Any LOA in this category will likely extend that graduation date secondary to the timing and availability of the cohort's courses/rotations.

Parental Leave of Absence

CHSU-COM may grant leave for students who become parents (whether by childbirth or adoption) while enrolled in the curriculum. A Parental Leave of Absence may be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students requesting a parental leave of absence must provide appropriate documentation. Additionally, students requesting a Parental Leave of Absence must meet with the Office of Student Affairs at the earliest available time to discuss the anticipated Parental Leave. A Parental Leave of Absence may be up to four (4) weeks for nonbirth parents following the birth, or adoption, of a child. Following the birth or adoption, the student will provide the



California Health Sciences University

Office of Student Affairs with an anticipated return-to-school date, not to exceed 4-weeks from the beginning of the leave. Students unable to return from a Parental Leave of Absence within four (4) weeks following the birth, or adoption, of a child will be required to request a Personal Leave of Absence, which may last up to a total of 180 days. A Personal Leave of Absence extending more than 180 calendar days will require the student to file a request for a Withdrawal. Any LOA in this category will likely extend that graduation date secondary to the timing and availability of the cohort's courses/rotations.

1. Unapproved Leave of Absence

Any student in violation of this policy is deemed to be on an Unapproved Leave of Absence and may result in consequences for the student, up to and including dismissal from the University.

2. Returning From a Leave of Absence

Students approved for a leave of absence may return to the CHSU-COM and to classes without reapplying to the College of Osteopathic Medicine or the MSBS program, if the return is within the approved time frame as recorded in the Leave of Absence Approval letter and any relevant University approved extensions of such leave. Prior to returning to the CHSU students are required to comply with all conditions for the student's return as stated in correspondence to the student by the University and ensure any prior outstanding balances are paid and student accounts are current. A student granted a LOA with conditions may be required to meet with the Office of Student Affairs before returning to CHSU-COM. For LOA, students must submit written notification to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment and the Registrar of their intent to return to the University Registrar within thirty (30) calendar days of the anticipated return to the pre-clinical portion of the curriculum and thirty (30) calendar days for the clinical curriculum, It is the student's responsibility to duly inform the administration of any delays to their return or needs for further extensions.

The student doctors also must request and complete the readmission form. CHSU-COM reserves the right to impose additional conditions upon a student doctor seeking readmission after a leave



California Health Sciences University

of absence, and/or to refuse consideration based on the relevant time limit on Matriculation to graduation. The request and final decision on readmission will be made by the Dean.

Students failing to return to the CHSU following the approved timeframe for the LOA will be considered to be on an Unapproved Leave of Absence and may be dismissed from the CHSU-COM.

Abuse of the absence or leave request process is unprofessional and violates the University's Student Conduct and Professionalism policy. Abuse of such process includes but is not limited to: (1) dishonesty regarding the need for or use of leave; submission of fraudulent documentation supporting the need for leave. Abuse of this policy may result in an appearance before the Student Progress Committee and ultimately dismissal from the University.

Students who return from a leave of absence will be required to complete all the required elements for graduation in order to graduate and be granted the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine.

Students who are enrolled in a modified curriculum as directed by the Office of Academic Affairs following an LOA or who are directed to repeat one or more courses but not the academic year will be charged a per credit hour tuition rate.



California Health Sciences University

RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy is the responsibility of the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Enrollment and Accreditation, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Assessments who have been delegated responsibility for the standards within the policy by the Dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

HISTORY (R*)

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08/01/2024, 03/27/2024, 12/11/2023, 09/11/2023

RACI

R: Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Assessment, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Enrollment and Accreditation, Office of Financial Aid

A: Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Assessment, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Enrollment and Accreditation

C: Director of Student Affairs, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, COM Dean, Office of Academic Affairs and Assessment, Office of Financial Aid, Business Office & Registrar

I: All CHSU Students, Office of Academic Affairs and Assessment, Director of Student Services