

Student Leave Policy

Title/Subject: STUDENT LEAVE POLICY

Applies to: ☐ Faculty ☐ Staff ☒ Students ☐ Student Employees ☐ Visitors ☐ Contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: August 1, 2026

Policy Owner: VP University Engagement & Student Affairs (UESA); VP Student Recruitment & Retention;
Registrar's Office (oversee procedural tools and workflows)

Purpose

This policy is to provide guidance to CMU faculty, staff and students concerning how a limited Student Leave of Absence is requested, granted and monitored.

Policy

The university understands students may face many challenges during their academic journey, some of which may require them to temporarily suspend their studies. CMU is committed to providing students with the time, applicable resources, and assistance in returning to the university without having to reapply, when applicable, to the university or their declared program of study at the time of the leave's approval.

Procedure

To qualify for a leave of absence (LOA), a student must be degree or credential seeking at either the undergraduate or graduate level. Note, teacher education students, students in select health programs and graduate students may have to meet additional criteria for an approved LOA. These students must consult their program/graduate handbook and undergraduate program or graduate advisor for details. A student must be registered **for at least one academic** course in the academic year in which their application for an LOA is submitted. Undergraduate students must be in one of the following categories for consideration:

- Good academic standing
- Academic probation
- Academic suspension

Graduate students must be in one of the following categories for consideration:

- Good academic standing
- Academic probation

All Leave of Absence requests will be reviewed by the Office of Student Conduct and the Office of Civil Rights and Institutional Equity (OCRIE). This review may inform the final decision to approve, deny, or modify duration of the leave, as well as services to be made available to the student during their LOA. These offices will provide a response on the request within 10 business days from receipt of the request.

Students seeking an LOA are not limited to medical circumstances. Students seeking an LOA are highly encouraged to discuss their situation with a university professional, such as an academic advisor or an employee of CMU CAREA, OneCentral, Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, Ombudsperson, and/or the Registrar's Office. International students are also encouraged to discuss their circumstances with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services. After, consultation, if an LOA is determined to be the best course of action, the university professional will help the student with initiating the application process. In some instances, supporting documentation may be required.

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In mitigating circumstances, an LOA may be approved for students who are no longer enrolled who were unaware of the option for requesting an LOA.

Students seeking an LOA, LOA extension, or a Request to Return are to complete the applicable forms found on the Registrar's Office website under "Student Leave Policy."

If an LOA is approved and commences in the semester in which it is applied for, the student will be assigned withdrawals ("W") if the LOA begins after the published Add/Drop dates. No student can withdraw after the published withdrawal due date. Students in such circumstances may wish to, or be advised to, submit a Drop/Withdrawal Appeal. The Drop/Withdrawal Appeal policy, procedure and application can be found on the Registrar's Office website. A student may be approved for one or both policies if applicable.

Approved LOAs are granted for a period of up to two (2) academic years from the first semester of the LOA being approved. An extension of one (1) additional year may be granted under extenuating circumstances. N LOA will exceed three (3) academic years. For students who receive Title IV Financial Aid; it is important to note that the maximum time permitted for an LOA under the federal regulations is a maximum of 180-days in any 12-month period. Failure to return from a leave of absence within that timeframe may affect the student's loan repayment terms, including the exhaustion of some, or all, of the student's grace period. Students with loans are strongly encouraged to consult with the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid to understand federal policy before finalizing their leave application.

During an approved LOA, a student is not considered enrolled. It is the student's responsibility to review the implications of their for items such as student loan deferment, insurance rates or other benefits they may receive due to being an enrolled student. Graduate students awarded Graduate Assistantships are not guaranteed a continuation of their assistantship at time of reenrollment after an approved LOA.

During an LOA, students will have access to the following CMU services:

- Their CMU issued email address, through which all official university business is conducted.
- Course Search and Registration.
- Retain academic Bulletin governing academic requirements. Governing academic requirements include items such as total credits to earn a degree, general education requirements among others. Graduate students automatically have a three (3) year grace period regardless of if an LOA is approved or not. Note, licensure of accreditation requirements may require a student to change their Bulletin year to meet the new program requirements.
- Undergraduate students may be eligible to retain any grants or scholarships funded and awarded by CMU, such as merit based scholarships. Students must meet award retention criteria at the time of approved LOA.
- Graduate students will maintain access to library resources, collaboration platforms and data storage provided by the university. Microsoft Teams and their U drive.

If a student does not seek an approved LOA, they will not automatically have access to the above services.

A student must submit a request to return with the Registrar's Office at least thirty (30) days prior to the start date for the first semester of their intended return. This step is necessary, as it provides access to important information systems, including the ability to register for classes. Requests to return will be reviewed to assess if the student's circumstances provide the best possibility for success with applicable CMU resources and support. The request to return form can be found on the Registrar's Office website. Please note, failure to notify, or late notification, may

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impact course availability, in addition to the processing of financial aid or other services needed. Students may attend another institution during an LOA and any transfer credits will be evaluated under current transfer credit guidelines.

Central Michigan University reserves the right to make exceptions to modify or eliminate this policy and or its content. This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures or guidelines related to this subject.

Related Policies and Laws (Add Number & Name of Significantly Related Policy(ies))	
Appendices (Optional)	
Approval Authority	Neil J. MacKinnon, President
History of Review	New
Last Reviewed Date	
Anticipated Review Date	
Change/No Change	
Keywords	Leave of Absence; LOA; Extenuating Circumstances