

# INVOLUNTARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

## Introduction

The University is committed to fostering a learning environment that enables students to thrive and participate fully in academic life. There are, however, occasions when a student's health interferes with their ability to take part in the academic community, and at such times the School provides the opportunity for the student to initiate a leave of absence. For instance, a student's mental or emotional health, medical condition, or inappropriate behavior or communication may necessitate a leave of absence or placement of conditions on continuing enrollment. The guidelines and procedures described herein are not intended to address such instances. Rather, these guidelines and procedures shall apply in those extraordinary circumstances when a student has not or cannot voluntarily address the issues of concern.

## Guidelines for Use Involuntary Leave of Absence

In situations when a leave of absence is indicated, the Associate Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) or designee will encourage the student to initiate a voluntary leave of absence. If the student declines to do so, the Associate Dean of EMSA or designee may require an involuntary leave of absence. This step will be taken when necessary to protect the safety of the student or other individuals or to preserve the integrity of the learning environment. Such a decision may be based on behavior and/or communication that:

- Harms or threatens harm to the health or safety of the student or others;
- Causes or threatens to cause significant damage to property or resources;
- Evidences chronic and/or serious drug or alcohol abuse;
- Significantly disrupts the functioning of the community; and/or
- Reflects disorganized or altered thinking incompatible with successful participation in the academic program.

## Condition of Enrollment (COE)

When circumstances indicate that a leave of absence is not appropriate, the Associate Dean of EMSA or designee may nevertheless impose certain conditions as a requirement of continued enrollment. This step will be taken only after consultation with those responsible for oversight of the student's program of study.

## Procedure

When the Associate Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) or designee becomes aware, by whatever means, of the potential need for action, the following procedures will be initiated:

1. The Associate Dean of EMSA or designee will contact the student and describe the issues of concern. If this discussion alleviates all concerns, no further action is needed. Alternatively, procedures outlined below may also be initiated.
2. The Associate Dean of EMSA or designee may mandate a mental health or physical evaluation of the student. The Associate Dean of EMSA or designee may also specify conditions under which the student is allowed to remain at the University. Such conditions will be

developed in consultation with others charged with oversight of the student's academic program, University Health Services, University Mental Health and the Student Assistance Program. The Associate Dean of EMSA or designee will provide written notice to the student when such conditions are mandated.

3. If a leave of absence is indicated, and if the student so agrees, procedures governing voluntary leaves of absence shall apply.
4. When a leave of absence is indicated and the student declines to accept a voluntary leave, the Associate Dean of EMSA or designee will discuss the implications of an involuntary leave of absence. If the student continues to decline, the Associate Dean of EMSA or designee will initiate an involuntary leave of absence after consultation with those charged with oversight of the student's academic program, University Health Services, University Mental Health, and the Student Assistance Program. In urgent situations, the Associate Dean of EMSA or designee may initiate an involuntary leave of absence immediately.

Under these circumstances, such consultation will be undertaken promptly thereafter. When an involuntary leave is imposed, the Associate Dean of EMSA or designee will provide the student with written notification to this effect. Students may take one leave of any kind during the course of their program.

This notification will outline the steps required for re-entry into the academic program and also note other pertinent information regarding the student's status while on leave.

## Re-Entry

A student seeking re-entry to the curriculum after a voluntary or involuntary leave as described under this policy will undergo a "fitness for return" evaluation by the Student Assistance Program or University Mental Health and/or the appropriate health service (University or Occupational Health Services). Upon re-entry, the Associate Dean of EMSA or designee may impose conditions under which the student will be allowed to remain at the School. The Associate Dean of EMSA or designee will provide written notice to the student when such conditions are instituted.

## Confidentiality

All records related to student leaves of absence and conditions placed on continuing enrollment will be maintained in accordance with applicable law and policy in the Associate Dean of EMSA's Office.