



California Health Sciences University

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY (COP)

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE POLICY

I. PURPOSE

Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions, all clinical and anatomical teaching sessions, all clinical/experiential sessions, and complete all exams and assessments as scheduled (together defined as “coursework”). Missed coursework has the potential to disrupt individual and team learning. However, occasionally an absence from coursework will be unavoidable. This policy outlines requirements for students to attend, or be excused from, classes and rotations. Further, occasionally students decide to take an extended period of time off away from their studies at California Health Sciences University (“University”) College of Pharmacy (COP). Students may take either an Extended Excused Absence (EEA) or a Leave of Absence (LOA) for many reasons including but not limited to work, recovering from illness, attending to personal business, military service, to find their true academic direction etc. Because a leave affects a student’s status with the University, as well as the student’s access to various student services, this policy provides information on what students need to know to ensure they are following the official leave process for each type.

II. DEFINITIONS

Excused Absence is an absence from a single class or a single day that is approved by COP Office of Academic Affairs up to a maximum of three (3) total days per course, per semester. Excused absences are *only* granted for high-stakes circumstances such as examinations, OSCEs, and lab days, and other curricular course requirements as identified by the course director.

Unexcused Absence is an absence from one (1) to three (3) consecutive classes/days that is not approved by the COP Office of Academic Affairs. Unexcused absences include absences of any type that do not involve missing examinations, OSCEs, and lab days. For unexcused absences, students should notify their course director.

Extended Excused Absence (EEA) is a temporary absence during the didactic portion of the curriculum when a student will exceed the three (3) consecutive days excused absences per course, per semester, as defined in the Duration of Absence Policy in the Student Catalog and Handbook. Students are allowed to take a standard EEA of up to two (2) weeks off during the didactic curriculum with approval once in a twelve- (12-) month cycle. Generally, any additional leaves during the twelve- (12-) month time period from the date the initial EEA began will be treated as a LOA, as discussed below. Due to the nature of the experiential/clinical curriculum students seeking to take an EEA during any rotation



California Health Sciences University

are required to consult with the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Experiential Education, prior to taking the leave.

Leave of Absence is an extended absence during the didactic curriculum lasting longer than two (2) weeks. Because courses in the College of Pharmacy curriculum are only offered one time per year and build on content from previous courses, LOAs generally require students to restart the following year at the beginning of the semester they left from. Due to the nature of the experiential/clinical curriculum students seeking to take a LOA during any rotation are required to consult with the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Experiential Education, prior to taking the leave. Students will be required to complete a LOA form, and the document will need to be approved and signed by the Dean, the Registrar, and the highest-level administrator in the Office of Financial Aid.

Unapproved Leave of Absence: Any student absence exceeding the three (3) day excused absences per course, per semester, as defined in the Duration of Absence Policy in the Student Catalog and Handbook, without appropriate approval for a EEA or LOA as defined under this policy.

III. REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO ALL ABSENCES

Students are required to provide reasonable advanced written notice of the need for an excused absence, EEA or LOA. All requests must be submitted through the appropriate online portal (e.g., Brightspace) or in-person with the Office of Academic Affairs (for excused absences), the Office of the Dean for (EEA or LOA). The office may require the student to provide documentation before taking leave and/or upon return from leave, including but not limited to doctor's notes or other documentation evidencing the need for an absence. If required, an explanation of the type of documentation required will be given to the student and a reasonable time to provide the requested documentation will be given before approving or denying a request.

Out of professional courtesy, students should notify their teammates of their absence prior to class when possible (a reason need not be provided).

Abuse of the absence or leave request process is unprofessional and violates the University's student conduct policy. Abuse of such process includes but is not limited to: (1) dishonesty regarding the need for or use of leave; and (2) submission of fraudulent documentation supporting the need for leave.



California Health Sciences University

IV. ATTENDANCE

A student may request an excused absence for personal, emergency, professional, or health-related reasons, as listed below. Consideration of the nature of an absence not defined in the list below is at the discretion of the Dean of the COP.

A. Duration of Absence

In general, a student may receive up to three academic days of excused absences per course per semester. In total, a combination of absences shall not exceed five (5) calendar days per course per semester. Absences exceeding five (5) calendar days may require a student to take an EEA, LOA, or withdrawal. The Student Affairs and Academic Affairs offices for the student's program can provide additional information on the impact of excused and unexcused absences on progression and grading.

B. Makeup Expectations

Students are responsible for contacting their team for arranging review of missed materials or coursework. Students who do not follow this policy and the Course Directors instructions for makeup assignments will receive a zero for the missed coursework. If the absence is determined to be unexcused by the Office of Academic Affairs, the student will receive a zero for the missed coursework.

C. Excused Absence Request Procedure

To request an excused absence be approved, a student must submit the excused absence request form online via BrightSpace or CHSU.EDU (or the form may be requested from the Academic Affairs office). Following receipt of the form, Academic Affairs office shall review the form and either approve or deny the request and communicate the decision to the student and course director(s) of the missed course(s). In all cases, students must submit an excused absence request with as much notice as possible.

D. High Stakes Excused Absence Categories and Criteria

Following the submission of the High Stakes Absence Request Form to via the online portal, it will be determined if an absence will be excused or unexcused for the course based upon the categories and criteria below. High Stakes absences should only be utilized for extenuating circumstances and thus students are generally limited to a maximum of two High Stakes Absence



California Health Sciences University

requests per semester (absences exceeding a total of five [5] days should be routed through the Office of Student Affairs and an EEA request should be completed).

May Request	May Not Request
Medical (self or immediate family)	Car breakdown (please call for alternative transportation if urgent)
Military duty	Work scheduling
Professional leave (requires 14-day advanced notice)	Professional leave without required 14-day notification.
Immigration & Naturalization	
Jury duty (Students are required to immediately report if summoned to Jury Duty to the Office of Student Affairs)	
Legal	
Bereavement (up to five [5] days for parent, spouse/partner, or child; up to three [3] days for all other others at the discretion of College)	
Traffic Accident (law enforcement report required)	

Regarding weddings or similar significant events, students are encouraged to consult with the student affair’s office and the academic calendar before planning such events.

V. **EXTENDED EXCUSED ABSENCE PROCESS**

Students may begin the EEA process by speaking with the Office of Student Affairs and complete a EEA form. Part of this meeting with the Office of Student Affairs will include discussion of the student’s ability to graduate within the requirements outlined in the COP Graduation Policy.

The EEA Request Form is available to students by visiting the online portal and website. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from providing a prior written request, before the leave begins, the Dean may, but is not required to, make exceptions to this



California Health Sciences University

process on a case by case basis. Non-attendance in classes does not constitute notification of intent to apply for a leave of absence.

Students must then obtain all required signatures and submit the form to the Office of Student Affairs. Generally, a letter will be emailed and mailed to the student within five (5) calendar days after the Office of Student Affairs's receipt of the request to state whether the leave is approved and to provide information regarding the student's leave and subsequent return to the University. CHSU reserves the right to impose conditions upon the student's return that will be communicated either in this initial letter or in subsequent correspondence to the student approving the leave to the student.

Students needing to take a leave longer than an approved EEA must seek such approval from their college Dean. These will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and students may be required to instead take a LOA and/or withdrawal from the University.

VI. LEAVE OF ABSENCE PROCESS

A LOA may be granted for a maximum of one (1) year from the date the LOA is approved. A LOA may be granted for military, jury duty, unforeseen emergency, family obligations (e.g., parenting), medical, outside employment, or for personal or health-related issues and financial hardship. Poor academic performance is not considered a rationale for an approved LOA.

A student seeking to take a LOA will first meet with the Office of Student Affairs. During this meeting students should discuss their ability to graduate within the requirements outlined in the COP Graduation Policy. All LOAs should be requested in writing – the LOA Request Form is available to students by visiting the website or by reaching out to the University Registrar. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from providing a prior written request, their college Dean may, but is not required, make exceptions to this process. Whenever practical, a student should submit their written request 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.

Students who take a LOA that, at a minimum, extends through the end of the semester shall be considered withdrawn 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 Withdrawal Policy. Students must restart from the beginning any coursework that they have not successfully passed. Because courses in the College of Pharmacy curriculum are only offered one time per year and build on content from previous courses,



California Health Sciences University

generally, LOAs require students to restart the following year at the beginning of the semester they left from. As LOAs have a significant impact on a student's student loans and scholarships, as well as the total cost of the student's attendance at the COP, students are required to contact the Financial Aid Office about the implications related to their LOA. Student should also refer to the CHSU Tuition Refund Policy regarding the student's potential eligibility for a tuition refund.

Students will receive a letter via email and mail once a decision has been made regarding the LOA generally within five (5) calendar days. CHSU reserves the right to impose conditions upon the student's return that will be communicated either in the initial letter to the student approving the leave or in subsequent correspondence to the student. For example, students granted a LOA for health-related purposes may be required to have a health care professional certify in writing that they are approved to return to the University prior to the student's anticipated return date.

The completed Leave of Absence form must be signed by the Dean and the highest-level of Administrator in the Office of Financial Aid and submitted to the Office of the Registrar before the leave of absence is granted. The date of leave of absence status is the date that the Registrar receives the signed Leave of Absence form, except in case of extenuating circumstances.

Students taking a LOA will need to complete an Alternative Progression Plan (APP) with the Office of Academic Affairs before returning back to the program.

Should a student wish to take a leave longer than initial LOA granted to the student must re-apply for an additional new LOA following the same LOA process.

VII. UNAPPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

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

VIII. RETURNING FROM A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students approved for a leave of absence can return to their college and to classes without reapplying to the University 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 University students are required to comply with all conditions for the student's return as stated in correspondence to the student by the University. A student granted a LOA with conditions may be required to meet with a student affairs staff member before returning to the University. For LOA, students must



California Health Sciences University

submit their intent to return in writing to the University Registrar within ninety (90) calendar days of the anticipated return to the didactic portion of the curriculum and thirty (30) calendar days for the experiential/clinical curriculum, for leaves that are longer than ninety (90) calendar days and thirty (30) calendar days, respectively. While CHSU will make efforts to stay connected with the student on their return, it is the student's ultimate responsibility to duly inform the administration of any delays to their return or needs for further extensions.

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

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- Policy Owner: Dean of COP
 - Effective Date: 4/30/2020
 - Approval by Provost Date: 5/05/2020