

University Policy 2.02.12

Military Leave

Policy Revision Approval Date: May 8, 2015

Policy Revision Effective Date: July 1, 2015

Procedure Approval Date: August 11, 2016

Procedure Effective Date: September 1, 2016

POLICY STATEMENT

Capella University learners may request a planned leave from their academic program when active military service or active military service of a spouse prevents their active registration and engagement in their course(s).

Learners with loan obligations are advised to contact their lender(s) to discuss their circumstances and loan repayment status during their leave.

RATIONALE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the parameters, based on sound principles within the spirit of the HEROES Act of 2003, for the accommodation of military service members and their spouses when military services prevents courseroom access.

DEFINITIONS

Military Leave

A military leave is a period of time during which a military learner is excused from their academic program due to active military service or national emergency. Learners receiving a military leave are granted a leave for an indefinite amount of time, as supported by the documentation on file.

Military Spouse Leave (MSL)

A military spouse leave is a period of time during which the spouse of an active duty servicemember who is deployed due to active military service or national emergency is excused from their program. Based on Department of Education guidelines, learners can be approved for an MSL for up to two terms in a 12 month period.

PROCEDURES

I. Military Leave

- A. Members of the United States military, including selected reserve forces, may be eligible for a military leave. This policy follows the guidelines established in the HEROES Act of 2003 in determining appropriate accommodations for military servicemembers who are responding to a war, national emergency, or natural disaster.
- B. In order to qualify for a military leave, the learner's service obligations must prevent courseroom access. Capella University reserves the right to require documentation establishing the impact of the learner's service on courseroom access. Qualifying service

may include but is not limited to deployment, assignment to a sequestered training environment, and the prohibition of voluntary education by the learner's command.

C. In accordance with the HEROES Act, Capella University provides the following accommodations to learners who experience a disruption in their program due to active military service:

1. Learners who are granted a military leave will be given the option of withdrawing from all their courses, resulting in a grade of Military Withdrawal ("MW") for each course, or requesting an Incomplete ("I") grade for any courses in which they were registered when granted the leave. Learners who withdraw from their courses as a result of an approved leave will be given the option of a tuition credit or appropriate refund for the courses they were unable to complete. Learners who request an "I" grade must get approval from all their course instructors and be able to complete the required assignments independently, outside of the courseroom. Learners who request an "I" grade are not issued a tuition credit.
 - a. Learners who are granted a military leave are not required to meet financial obligations to Capella while on leave.
 - b. Time spent on a military leave does not count toward the learner's maximum time to degree completion.
 - c. Capella will provide flexibility and accommodations for administrative deadlines for learners on a military leave.
 - d. "MW" grades do not impact a learner's GPA or course completion ratio.
 - e. Courses assigned an incomplete grade through the military leave process may be converted to "MW" grades at the request of the learner upon return from leave.
2. Learners must coordinate the military leave process through Military Support.

D. Requesting a Military Leave

1. To request a formal military leave, learners must complete and submit the Military Leave Request Form located on Campus and the required documentation prior to the start of their military leave. Learners must indicate the beginning date of the leave and the anticipated date of return. Learners can also request a military leave by calling Military Support.
2. Learners must also submit one of the following pieces of documentation to Military Support at their earliest convenience:
 - a. Deployment or mobilization orders, including dates the learner will be unable to access the courseroom.
 - b. An official letter from a commanding supervisor within the learner's military unit, including dates the learner will be unable to access the courseroom.
 - c. Additional documentation detailing the impact of the learner's service obligations on courseroom access.
3. Upon receipt of the request, Military Support will review the request, issue a decision, and notify the learner via email.

E. Returning from a Military Leave

1. Military Support will track learners' anticipated dates of return and contact them before they resume their program.
 - a. Anticipated return dates are determined following an evaluation of the supporting documentation.

- b. Learners who do not formally request to return from military leave prior to their anticipated return dates may have their leave canceled by the university.
2. Upon returning from a military leave, learners are responsible for completing and submitting the [Returning from a Military Leave Form](#) located on Campus. Learners can also request their return from a military leave by calling Military Support.
3. Military Support will work with learners to determine the next steps for resuming their program.
4. Learners returning from a military leave may resume courses the quarter after their leave has ended.
5. Learners will have one term from their return date to complete any previously awarded incomplete grades.

II. Military Spouse Leave

A. Criteria

1. Spouses of members of the United States military, including reserve forces, may be eligible for a military spouse leave. To qualify for a military spouse leave, a learner must be legally married to the military servicemember.
2. Capella University provides the following accommodations to learners who experience a disruption in their program due to active military service of a spouse:
 - a. Learners who are granted a military spouse leave will be given the option of withdrawing from all their courses, resulting in a grade of Withdrawn (“W”) for each course, or requesting an Incomplete (“I”) grade for all courses in which they were registered when granted the leave. Learners who withdraw from their courses as a result of a military spouse leave will be given the option of a tuition credit or appropriate refund for the courses they were unable to complete. Learners who request an “I” grade must get approval from their course instructor and be able to complete the required assignments independently, outside of the courseroom. Learners who request an “I” grade are not issued a tuition credit.
 - b. Learners who are granted a military spouse leave are not required to meet financial obligations to Capella while on leave.
 - c. Time spent during a military spouse leave does not count toward the learner’s maximum time to degree completion.
3. Learners must coordinate the military spouse leave process through Military Support.

B. Requesting a Military Spouse Leave

1. To request a military spouse leave, learners must complete and submit the [Military Spouse Leave Request Form](#) located on Campus. Learners must indicate the reason for their request, the beginning date of the leave, and the anticipated date of return. Learners may also submit the request by calling Military Support.
2. Learners must also submit one of the following pieces of documentation to Military Support at their earliest convenience:
 - a. Deployment or mobilization orders for the servicemember, including dates the learner will be affected.
 - b. An official letter from the servicemember’s commanding officer, including dates the learner will be affected.
 - c. Documentation confirming legal marriage to the servicemember.
 - d. Additional documentation upon request.

3. Upon receipt of the request, Military Support will review the request, issue a decision, and notify the learner via email.
 4. If the learner is granted a military spouse leave, Capella will report their leave status to the National Student Clearinghouse.
 5. Learners may not request a military spouse leave for more than two consecutive quarters in any 12-month period.
- C. Returning from a Military Spouse Leave
1. Military Support will track learners' anticipated dates of return and contact them before they resume their program.
 - a. Anticipated return dates are determined through an evaluation of the supporting documentation.
 - b. Learners who do not formally request to return from military spouse leave prior to their anticipated return dates may have their leaves canceled by the university.
 2. Upon returning from a military spouse leave, learners are responsible for completing and submitting the [Returning from a Military Spouse Leave Form](#) located on Campus. Learners can also request their return by contacting Military Support.
 3. Military Support will work with learners to determine the next steps for resuming their program.
 4. Learners returning from a military spouse leave may resume courses only at the beginning of a quarter.
 5. Learners will have one term from their return date to complete any previously awarded incomplete grades.

III. All procedures in this policy apply to learners in credit-based (GuidedPath) and FlexPath programs.

POLICY OWNERS

Academic Owner: Chief Academic Officer

Operations Owner: Military Support

RELATED DOCUMENTS

University policy 2.02.02 Course Registration

University policy 2.02.08 Leave of Absence

University policy 3.01.04 Academic Standing

University policy 3.01.05 Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress

University policy 3.04.05 Attendance at Residencies

University policy 3.04.07 Grading

University policy 3.04.08 Incomplete Grades

University policy 4.03.01 Tuition and Fees

University policy 4.03.02 Tuition and Fee Refunds

REVISION HISTORY

Original Policy Approval Date: 5-8-15

Revision Dates: 8-11-16; 12-14-16
Administrative edits as result of ongoing review: