

University Policy 2.02.12

Military Leave

Policy Approval Date: May 8, 2015

Policy Effective Date: July 1, 2015

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Revised Procedure Effective Date: September 1, 2016

POLICY STATEMENT

Capella University students 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).

Students 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 student is excused from their academic program due to active military service or national emergency. Students 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 service member who is deployed due to active military service or national emergency is excused from their program. Based on Department of Education guidelines, students 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 service members who are responding to a war, national emergency, or natural disaster.
- B. In order to qualify for a military leave, the student's service obligations must prevent courseroom access. Capella University reserves the right to require documentation establishing the impact of the student'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 student's command.

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

1. Students 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. Students 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. Students who request an "I" grade must get approval from all their course faculty and be able to complete the required assignments independently, outside of the classroom. Students who request an "I" grade are not issued a tuition credit.
 - a. Students 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 student's maximum time to degree completion.
 - c. Capella will provide flexibility and accommodations for administrative deadlines for students on a military leave.
 - d. "MW" grades do not impact a student'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 student upon return from leave.
2. Students must coordinate the military leave process through Military Support.

D. Requesting a Military Leave

1. To request a formal military leave, students must complete and submit the Military Leave Request Form located on Campus and the required documentation prior to the start of their military leave. Students must indicate the beginning date of the leave and the anticipated date of return. Students can also request a military leave by calling Military Support.
2. Students 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 student will be unable to access the classroom.
 - b. An official letter from a commanding supervisor within the student's military unit, including dates the student will be unable to access the classroom.
 - c. Additional documentation detailing the impact of the student's service obligations on classroom access.
3. Upon receipt of the request, Military Support will review the request, issue a decision, and notify the student via email.

E. Returning from a Military Leave

1. Military Support will track students' 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. Students 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, students are responsible for completing and submitting the [Returning from a Military Leave Form](#) located on Campus. Students can also request their return from a military leave by calling Military Support.
3. Military Support will work with students to determine the next steps for resuming their program.
4. Students returning from a military leave may resume courses the quarter after their leave has ended.
5. Students 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 student must be legally married to the military service member.
2. Capella University provides the following accommodations to students who experience a disruption in their program due to active military service of a spouse:
 - a. Students 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. Students 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. Students who request an “I” grade must get approval from their course faculty and be able to complete the required assignments independently, outside of the classroom. Students who request an “I” grade are not issued a tuition credit.
 - b. Students 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 student’s maximum time to degree completion.
3. Students must coordinate the military spouse leave process through Military Support.

B. Requesting a Military Spouse Leave

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

3. Upon receipt of the request, Military Support will review the request, issue a decision, and notify the student via email.
 4. If the student is granted a military spouse leave, Capella will report their leave status to the National Student Clearinghouse.
 5. Students 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 students' 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. Students 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, students are responsible for completing and submitting the [Returning from a Military Spouse Leave Form](#) located on Campus. Students can also request their return by contacting Military Support.
 3. Military Support will work with students to determine the next steps for resuming their program.
 4. Students returning from a military spouse leave may resume courses only at the beginning of a quarter.
 5. Students will have one term from their return date to complete any previously awarded incomplete grades.

III. All procedures in this policy apply to students in programs in GuidedPath and FlexPath formats.

POLICY OWNERS

Academic Owner: Provost

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: May 8, 2015

Revision Dates: 8-11-16; 12-14-16

Administrative edits as result of ongoing review: 4-1-18; 5-23-19; 7-1-23; 7-1-24; 4-1-25