

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to document the procedures for any student to withdraw from all their courses or take a medical leave of absence at Sam Houston State University (SHSU).

2. DEFINITIONS

Student Withdrawal: when a student withdraws from all courses in which they are currently enrolled at the University.

Medical Leave of Absence: student leave from the University for a period of time (no less than one term but no more than one academic year) to pursue treatment or attend to a physical or mental health condition.

Medical Withdrawal Insurance: an insurance benefit that helps reimburse financial losses if a student must withdraw from the University for a covered medical reason, such as a serious illness, injury, or mental health condition that prevents them from completing the academic term.

3. GUIDELINES FOR WITHDRAWAL

3.01 If a student withdraws on or before the official census date (see Academic Calendar), no record of the withdrawal will appear on the student's academic record.

3.02 If a student withdraws after the census date and prior to the final examination, the student will receive a mark of "W" for each course on the student's transcript for the term of withdrawal. Withdrawal from a given term will not be permitted if the student has taken any final exam in that term. Unless a student is granted permission to submit a withdrawal request after the deadline (per section 4 of this policy), a withdrawal will not be permitted if any final course grade has been entered in that term.

3.03 To officially withdraw from the University for any given term, a student must complete the electronic online withdrawal form (found on the Office of the Registrar's website).

3.04 The withdrawal will be processed using the date the withdrawal form was submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The withdrawal date will be used to determine any eligible tuition credit.

- 3.05 A tuition credit is not guaranteed. Texas Education Code, Section 54.006, governs the Refund Policy of the University.
 - 3.06 If a student does not establish attendance for a term in which they are registered, the student may, at the University's discretion, be eligible for a backdated withdrawal.
 - 3.07 A student has established attendance or participated in a course if they have attended a class meeting, submitted an assignment or quiz, taken an exam, attended a study group, participated in online course discussion, or initiated contact with a faculty member regarding course material. This applies to all course modalities (i.e., face-to-face, online, hybrid).
 - 3.08 Medical withdrawal insurance may be purchased prior to the semester of enrollment to provide coverage in the event of a medical emergency. Students with interest in purchasing medical withdrawal insurance should contact the Community Advocacy, Resources, and Engagement (CARE) Network for more information.
4. REQUEST TO WITHDRAW AFTER THE DEADLINE BASED ON EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES
- 4.01 A withdrawal request after the Withdrawal Deadline, as published by the Office of the Registrar, may be considered when, in the University's judgment, the student has demonstrated extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances may include incapacity due to a significant personal injury and/or illness (physical or mental) requiring an extensive period of recuperation, a significant personal emergency, inability to contact the University by the deadline because of a medical or personal emergency, or other circumstances the University determines to be extenuating.
 - 4.02 To initiate a withdrawal request after the Withdrawal Deadline based on extenuating circumstances, the student must contact the Office of the Registrar. The Office of the Registrar will assist the student in identifying and gathering all necessary verification documentation. Requests will not be considered after ninety (90) calendar days have passed since the end of the semester from which the student wishes to withdraw.
 - 4.03 Written verification of the emergency with redacted private medical information must be provided by a health care facility. Death in the immediate family may be verified by an obituary notice, memorial folder, or other appropriate documentation as determined by the University. The student may be asked to provide consent for the University to verify the authenticity of submitted medical documentation with the

health care facility, while respecting student privacy. Students are not required to provide detailed medical information.

- 4.04 The Office of the Registrar will submit the completed form and verification documentation on behalf of the student to the student's academic dean for review. The dean shall review the student's request within ten (10) working days.
- 4.05 The student will be notified by the Office of the Registrar of the dean's decision. The decision of the dean is final.

5. MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- 5.01 The University recognizes that students may experience physical or mental health issues that significantly disrupt their ability to succeed academically while at SHSU. In those situations, students may seek to withdraw from the University under a Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA). This is intended to allow the student to take a break from their studies to access treatment and/or accommodations to support their return to SHSU to complete their academic program at a later date (no sooner than the next consecutive term but no later than one academic year).
- 5.02 To initiate the MLOA process, the student is encouraged to contact the CARE Network, or a referral can be made. The CARE Network may connect the student with appropriate resources and provide important information prior to the MLOA.
- 5.03 The student must have established attendance at the University under an SHSU degree plan to be eligible for an MLOA withdrawal. An MLOA for a given term will not be permitted if the student has taken any final exam in the term. Unless a student is granted permission to submit an MLOA request after the deadline (see section 4 of this policy), an MLOA will not be permitted if any final course grade has been entered in that term.
- 5.04 A student is not permitted to return from an MLOA within the semester that the leave was taken.
- 5.05 An MLOA is considered a withdrawal for Title IV purposes. Information regarding student financial aid can be found in the Return of Title IV Funds Policy. Students are encouraged to contact the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office or the CARE Network prior to submitting an MLOA request.

- 5.06 A student on an MLOA is not registered with the University and therefore is not eligible for privileges afforded to registered students, including, but not limited to, residing in University housing, accessing University resources, and/or receiving direct supervision by faculty members. Upon return, access to certain resources, such as University housing, is not guaranteed. An MLOA does not terminate in-progress academic and non-academic student conduct proceedings.
- 5.07 For international students, an MLOA may have implications for the student's visa status. International students are advised to consult with the Global Education Center regarding federal immigration requirements prior to submitting an MLOA request.
- 5.08 A student approved for an MLOA will receive a mark of "WQ" for each course on the student's transcript for the term of withdrawal. A mark of "WQ" does not count against a student's six Q-drop limit but may have consequences for financial aid eligibility (see section 5.05 above).

6. RE-ENROLLING AT THE UNIVERSITY

- 6.01 Any returning student should meet with their academic advisor to discuss their academic degree plan and resolve any registration holds prior to registering for courses.
- 6.02 If a student has been withdrawn for any part of three consecutive terms (fall, spring, summer) or longer, they must apply for readmission to the university. Readmission is not guaranteed.
- 6.03 Following an MLOA, students are encouraged to contact the CARE Network upon their reenrollment for reintegration support.

7. WITHDRAWALS AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE FOR OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL STUDENTS

- 7.01 Russell and Glenda Gordy College of Osteopathic Medicine students are subject to the withdrawal guidelines stated in sections 3 and 4 of this policy.
- 7.02 A Leave of Absence (LOA) is an approved leave from Gordy College of Osteopathic Medicine that postpones a student's course of academic and/or clerkship study. An LOA may not exceed one (1) year. A student granted an LOA must complete the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) degree not later than six (6) years following the student's

date of matriculation at Gordy College of Osteopathic Medicine (*Gordy College of Osteopathic Medicine Graduation Policy Statement*).

- 7.03 A voluntary (student-initiated) LOA is a request by a student to discontinue coursework or clerkship activity.
- a. A personal LOA may be requested to take time for research, clinical work at another site without academic credit, or other types of academic enrichment.
 - b. A medical LOA may be requested for medical reasons, which may require an appropriately licensed healthcare professional to certify in writing that the student is able to resume their studies prior to returning to classes.
 - c. A parental LOA may be requested to fulfill parental responsibilities. Students should refer to the SHSU Office of Title IX and Student Discrimination Resolution and SHSU PRE-31, *Pregnant & Parenting Students*.
 - d. A military LOA may be requested if a student is called to active duty. The Office of Medical Student Affairs must be contacted, and the student must promptly provide a copy of their orders. Students who take leave under these circumstances may receive special consideration regarding obligations and requirements.
- 7.04 A mandatory (administrative) LOA is imposed by the Dean due to an identified reason. During mandatory (administrative) leave, the student is required to follow the prescribed instructions and requirements associated with the leave and, if applicable, complete rehabilitation or treatment for the reason that precipitated the leave to be granted approval to return to classes or clerkships.

APPROVED: <signed>
Alisa White, Ph.D., President

DATE: 8/27/2026

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

This academic policy statement (APS) has been approved by the reviewer(s) listed below and represents SHSU's Division of Academic Affairs' policy from the date of this document until superseded.

Original: April 7, 1999

Review Cycle: Five years*

Reviewer(s): Academic Affairs Council

Review Date: Fall 2031

Approved: <signed>
Sumanth Yenduri, Ph.D.,
Provost and Sr. Vice President
for Academic Affairs

Date: 8/26/2026

*Effective January 2018, Academic Policy Statements will be reviewed on a rotating 5-year schedule. To transition to a distributed review load, some policies may be reviewed prior to the 5-year timeframe, with subsequent reviews transitioning to the 5-year schedule.