



# The University of Tennessee Health Science Center College of Graduate Health Sciences College Policies

Document Name: Absence  
Effective Date: January 22, 2013  
Document Status: Approved

## Purpose

Absences may affect a student's academic progress, financial aid status, and immigration status. Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to provide direction regarding short- or long-term absences.

## Policy Details

Students who are absent from class or research setting for reasons other than an anticipated annual leave must immediately notify their instructors and mentor (when applicable) to arrange an excused absence. An excused absence will not incur a grading penalty and may require make-up work; faculty may require documentation of illness or unavoidable event in order to grant an excused absence.

Students who need to leave the University for greater than four weeks must discuss their need with their advisor before making a written request for a leave of absence to their Program Chair. The Program Chair will forward the request, along with a recommendation, to the Dean. If the Dean does not grant the leave of absence, the student may appeal the decision as described by the "Academic Due Process" policy. Students who are absent from their academic responsibilities for more than four weeks without approval of the Dean will receive non-passing grades in all courses for which they are enrolled and be withdrawn from the College. To re-enter the University after withdrawal, students must formally reapply.

Students should consult with the appropriate University officials to assess the consequences of an absence.

**Involuntary Leave of Absence.** A student may be placed on an involuntary leave of absence if circumstances dictate that doing so is in the best interest of the student's well-being or the University community (e.g., behavioral concerns or disruptive behavior). A student facing the possibility of an involuntary leave of absence will first be given an option to take a voluntary leave of absence. A



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student who has faced the possibility of an involuntary leave of absence, whether the leave is given as voluntary or involuntary, must provide evidence of fitness to return to studies before being reinstated. Such evidence must be from qualified professionals both external to the University and from University Health Services. A student who does not provide evidence of fitness to return within one-year of being placed on leave will be withdrawn and must formally reapply. Reinstatement of a student is at the discretion of the Dean.

## Policy Scope

Applies to all enrolled students.

## Related Policies

Annual Leave  
Academic Due Process

## Definitions

Annual leave. The days allotted to each student each year for personal activities.  
Excused absence. An absence for which permission must be obtained from the instructor or mentor before or after the absence, usually to accommodate an unavoidable event such as illness.  
Program Director. The listed director of the student's academic program.

## Procedures

Students anticipating an absence of four or more weeks should:

1. Obtain information from appropriate University officials regarding potential consequences for academic progress, financial aid status, and immigration status.



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2. Make a written request to their Program Director for the leave, including reason for the leave (in general terms without revealing personal information), departure date, and anticipated return date. The Program Director will forward the request to the Dean with a recommendation.

The student will be notified by the Dean's office of the status of their request.

### Document History

Approved January 22, 2013 by Graduate Studies Council.

Administratively reviewed by Graduate Studies Council October 27, 2015.