

POLICY NAME	LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY				
POLICY NO.	PAA-026-25	VERSION NO.	01	EFFECTIVE DATE	February 12, 2025

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INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE

Ana G. Méndez University (“AGMU” or “University”) understands that a student may face unexpected challenges that could necessitate a temporary suspension of their program of study. A student who meets this policy's eligibility and procedural requirements may be granted an approved leave of absence (“LOA”) in compliance with licensing, accrediting, and federal requirements.

SCOPE

This policy applies to students currently enrolled at AGMU campuses and/or locations.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

AGMU offers a currently enrolled student the opportunity to request an LOA as long as documented, legitimate extenuating circumstances require the student to interrupt their education.

Examples of extenuating circumstances (i.e., LOA reasons) and supporting documentation include but are not limited to:

- Medical reasons (official letter from his/her physician)
- Military service requirements (copy of the military orders, which include the period he/she is required to serve and the location to which he/she was assigned.)
- Jury Duty (jury summons)

Conditions and Eligibility Requirements

- The student must formally request an LOA in writing and provide detailed information (i.e., the reason for the LOA) justifying the request.
- The student must complete, sign, and date the LOA request in advance. The request must include:
 - documentation to support the LOA reason;
 - the start and end dates of the LOA; and

- the expected (scheduled) return date from the LOA.
- The total number of calendar days on LOA(s) must not exceed 180 calendar days during any 12-month period.
- Students enrolled in a term-based credit-hour program should request an LOA to begin on the start date of the next session/term. Such students must have completed the most recent session/term and received academic grades (A-F) for that session/term. Students enrolled only in an externship course may request an LOA at any time during the externship if no other Semester Credit Hour course(s) are being attempted in the same term (payment period).
- The LOA request must be submitted and approved before the start date of the LOA.
- Students are responsible for understanding and being aware of the implications of an LOA on their financial aid and academic progress toward their degree completion.
 - A student who fails to return from an LOA on the scheduled return date indicated in the written request will be withdrawn from the University. Federal statutes and regulations require that the University report the student's LOA start date as the withdrawal date. The withdrawal date is also used to determine the amount of Title IV funds earned and make any refunds required under federal, state, or institutional policy. The determination date of withdrawal will be the date the student was required to return and did not. Additionally, for a student who has received federal student loans, failure to return from an approved LOA (depending on the length of the LOA) may adversely affect the student's loan repayment schedules. Federal loan programs provide students with a "grace period" that delays the student's obligation to begin repaying his/her loan debt for six months (180 days) from the withdrawal date. If a student takes a lengthy LOA and fails to return to the University after the conclusion, some or all of the grace periods may be exhausted – forcing the student borrower to begin making loan repayments immediately.
 - Students who are contemplating an LOA should be aware that one or more factors may affect their eligibility to graduate within the maximum program completion time:
 - Students returning from an LOA are not guaranteed that the course(s) required to resume their education will be available at the time of re-entry.
 - Students may have to wait for the appropriate session/term when the course(s) is offered.
 - Students may be required to repeat the entire course(s) for which they elected to withdraw before receiving a final grade.
- A student granted an approved LOA will retain their academic standing, be exempt from the University's continuous enrollment (registration or attendance) requirement, and not be considered withdrawn from the University.
- During the student's approved LOA period, federal student loan funds will not be disbursed; however, the University may disburse grant funds intended for current or prior terms (payment periods).
- A student returning from an approved LOA must resume training at the same point in the academic program that they began the LOA.
- Upon return from leave, a student enrolled in a term-based credit-hour program will be expected to continue and enroll in the course(s) offered in the normal sequence of the educational program. A student enrolled only in an externship course(s) will be required to re-enroll and continue in the same course(s) from which the student interrupted studies before the LOA and receive final grades for the course(s). The University will not assess any additional institutional charges for completing the externship course(s) from which the student took leave.

The University does not grant an LOA retroactively.

PROCEDURE

1. The student must be officially enrolled at the time the request is made.
2. To apply for an LOA, the student must submit a completed, signed, dated Leave of Absence Request Form and supporting documentation to the Registrar's Office.
3. The Registrar's Office, in coordination with the Financial Aid Office, will evaluate the student's LOA request based on the documentation submitted and the student's academic status and render a decision before the start date of the LOA.
4. The student will be responsible for meeting with the Academic Division Associate Dean to address academic affairs.
5. Upon return from leave, the student continues to earn the *Title IV* aid previously awarded for the payment period, and the student will be integrated into the course(s) on the scheduled return date indicated in the request. The student must comply with the material discussed and work assigned by the course professor.
6. If the student fails to return from leave on the scheduled return date, the student will be considered and processed as an Official Total Withdrawal (W). The student's enrollment status will be updated from "A" (approved leave of absence) to "W" (withdrawn) on NSLDS, which may require federal student loan borrowers to enter repayment of his/her student loan immediately.
7. The student's financing office will guide the student on the impact of the LOA on his/her financial aid, repayment, and academic goals.

ENFORCEMENT

Further disregard and/or non-compliance in these areas, or with company policy in general, will result in further corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

VALIDITY

This Policy will come into effect from the date of its publication and will be reviewed every three (3) years or when deemed necessary, whichever comes first.

Disclaimer: To protect the identity of the signatures of our officials, the executive orders and policies published by the electronic form exclude them. Therefore, such executive orders and policies published electronically should be considered approved and signed for all applicable purposes. If you have any questions related to this matter, you should refer them to the human resources personnel.

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