

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Leaves of Absence

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- A. To inform faculty, staff, and students of the student leave of absence requirements, processes, and procedures at UH College of Medicine
- B. To ensure the UH College of Medicine complies with the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) standards for the medical education program, including LCME Standards 11.1 and 12.2.

II. BACKGROUND

Students are expected to proceed through the University of Houston College of Medicine's curriculum to graduation in a continuous, uninterrupted fashion. However, a student may temporarily separate from the curriculum via an approved Leave of Absence for academic, personal, military, or other reasons. The University of Houston College of Medicine Student Promotion and Advancement policy requires that a student complete the medical education program curriculum within a six-year time frame, which includes any leaves of absence.

III. POLICY

A. Leaves of Absence

1. Personal Leave of Absence

- a. Leaves of absence for periods not to exceed one academic year may be granted for reasons to include, but not limited to, academic, financial distress, or an educational endeavor at another institution of higher education.

2. Medical Leave of Absence

- a. Medical leaves of absence may be granted for up to one academic year.
- b. A request for a medical leave must include a written statement from a physician that such a leave is indicated in the best interest of the student.

3. Because of time restrictions for earning an MD degree, any student who needs a leave of absence beyond one year or requests an extension of an approved leave beyond one year will be withdrawn from the curriculum. They may appeal that decision (See: Appeal for Denial of Leave, Extension or Re-entry). Once withdrawn from the curriculum They may begin the application process for medical school through TMDSAS and participate in the regular process for consideration of medical school applicants.

B. Procedures for Students in Good Academic Standing

- 1. A medical student in good academic standing is one who is not on internal academic watch/warning or had good standing removed (see Academic Standing Policy), will submit a written request (and physician statement for medical leave of absence) for a leave of absence to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Admission, and Outreach (ADSAAO).
- 2. The ADSAAO will set and specify the conditions for return upon termination of the leave in a written letter that will be signed by the student and a copy placed in the student's file.
- 3. Student Affairs will inform the appropriate departments of such leave.

4. At least 90 days prior to scheduled return date, he/she will submit a letter of intent to the ADSAAO addressing conditions for return. In the case of a medical leave, a written report from the student's physician and/or an independent assessment of the student's condition by another physician may be required.

C. Procedures for Students Who Require SPAC Review

1. A medical student who is not in good academic standing which means on internal academic watch/warning or had good standing removed (see Academic Standing policy), will submit a written request (and physician statement for medical leave of absence) for a leave of absence to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Admission, and Outreach (ADSAAO) who will forward it to the Student Promotions and Advancement Committee (SPAC) for consideration and disposition.
2. If the need for the decision is urgent, the ADSAAO and Chair and Chair-elect of the SPAC may make a consensus decision regarding granting or denying of the leave, duration of the leave, and conditions for re-entry that will be furnished in writing to the student. The written letter will be signed by the student and a copy kept in the student's file. The SPAC will be informed of the action at the next scheduled meeting.
3. Student Affairs will inform the appropriate departments of such leave if granted.
4. At least 90 days prior to scheduled return date, he/she will submit a letter of intent to the ADSAAO to be presented to SPAC. In the case of a medical leave, a written report from the student's physician and/or an independent assessment of the student's condition by another physician may be required.
5. SPAC will determine whether the criteria for re-entry have been met. Students may continue to be on academic watch or warning upon return.
6. If a student who is not in good academic standing requests a second medical leave of absence within two years of the first leave, all above procedures will be followed; however, granting of a second leave will not guarantee that a student may return to the medical curriculum. The SPAC will base this decision on a review of the entire academic record, history of medical leaves, and documentation of progress in treatment. If a student is allowed to re-enter, the conditions for re-entry will be specified at that time.

D. Appeal for Denial of Leave, Extension or Re-entry

1. In the event a student's request for leave, extension or re-entry is denied, the student may submit a written appeal to the Dean of the UH College of Medicine or designee within five business days of notification of denial.
2. The Dean or designee will respond to the appeal within 10 business days.
3. The Dean's (or designee's) decision will be final.

IV. MONITORING OF THIS POLICY

- A. The Office of Student Affairs will oversee and monitor student leaves of absence.

Approval History		
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