



POLICY TITLE

Student Leave of Absence Policy

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To establish the conditions and student responsibilities associated with leaves of absence, including specifications for different types of leaves of absence.

ARC-PA STANDARD ADDRESSED

A3.02 The program must define, publish, make readily available and consistently apply its policies and practices to all students.

A3.10 The program must define, publish, make readily available and consistently apply written procedures that provide for timely access and/or referral of students to services addressing personal issues which may impact their progress in the PA program

RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed in even-numbered years as needed by the Academic Excellence Committee, elevating any policy amendments to the Program Director for approval.

DEFINITIONS

N/A

POLICY

General information on Leave of Absence

A leave of absence (LOA) from the UNC-CH Physician Assistant Studies program is defined as a student requiring more than 3 consecutive calendar days of absence from the program for reasons including but not limited to:

- personal reasons
 - death/illness in the family
 - military training/deployments
- administrative reasons
 - Administrative LOA can be initiated by the UNC-CH PA Program Director and/or University for the following reasons:
 - Failure to meet the UNC SOM's published deadlines for paying tuition and fees
 - Failure to file a request by the University registrar's published deadlines for deferring payment of tuition and fees if financial aid is not yet available
 - Failure to meet the University's listed health requirements, or any other University requirement, by the stated deadline.
 - Failure to meet the UNC-CH PA program's listed health requirements by the stated deadlines

- A student may be placed on an Administrative LOA for up to 30 days which will result in a delay of graduation
 - Failure to repay an outstanding debt owed to the University (e.g. emergency loan)
- medical reasons
 - mental or physical wellness and/or impairments
 - illness
 - pregnancy

Enrollment: An LOA does not change the student's enrollment status with the program. UNC-CH PA program students have continuous enrollment until they graduate, withdraw, die, or are dismissed from the program.

University ONYEN: Students who are not registered at UNC for one semester or longer will need to be reinstated and reactivate their ONYEN.

Policies: Students will be expected to comply with University and program policies in effect at the time of their return to the curriculum.

Registration (including tuition & fees): Students granted a leave of absence may be required to withdrawal from registered courses depending on the terms and conditions as defined within the LOA letter. Students may review the refund of tuition and fees information as outlined by the University (<https://cashier.unc.edu/tuition-fees/important-dates/>). Note: The UNC-CH PA program bills tuition each semester at a flat rate regardless of the number of credit hours registered. Students may require additional semesters beyond the standard 6 semester terms required to complete the program. Students will be responsible for all tuition and fees for additional semesters required to complete all program coursework and requirements at the semester flat rate regardless of the number of credit hours registered.

Graduation Requirements: Students will be expected to comply with the graduation requirements in effect when they return to the curriculum.

Failure to Comply: A student who fails to comply with the provisions stated in the LOA letter will be withdrawn from the UNC-CH PA Studies program or reviewed by the Academic Excellence Committee for withdrawal or dismissal depending on the terms stated in the LOA letter.

PROCEDURES

Student Responsibilities

A student may request a leave of absence from the UNC-CH PA Studies program for a definite, stated period of time, not to exceed the 36 months from first enrollment to graduation, during which the student does not plan to make academic progress. The student must complete and submit a [Leave of Absence Request Form](#) to the UNC-CH PA Studies Program Director.

The Program Director in coordination with the Director of Pre-Clinical or Clinical Education, Program Coordinator and Academic Advisor (as applicable), will discuss and document with the student the terms of the LOA letter, including but not limited to:

- type of leave
- length of leave
- start and end dates
- deadline for notifying the Program Coordinator for return from leave
- conditions and/or required documentation for return from leave
- procedure for requesting an extension, and
- consequences of student's failure to contact with the Program Coordinator prior to expiration of leave

The LOA letter will be documented in the student's electronic student file in Microsoft Teams.

In extreme circumstances, if it is not feasible for the student to provide a request for leave of absence prior, the student, or their designate, must contact their academic advisor and/or the Program Director by phone to report the circumstances for their intended absences. The Program Director in coordination with the Director of Pre-Clinical or Clinical Education, Program Coordinator and Academic Advisor will develop the LOA terms and submit in writing to the student's official school of medicine email address and documented in the student's electronic student file in Microsoft Teams.

PUBLISHED

- UNC PA Program Policies and Procedures web page: <https://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/unc-pa/students/policies-proceedures/>
- UNC PA Program Student Handbook

HISTORY OF APPROVAL AND UPDATES

Initially approved by Program Director, June 17, 2021