



When a student wishes to take a leave of absence or to withdraw from the University of Western States, it is the student's responsibility to complete the appropriate form/s and obtain the necessary clearances within a timely manner. Any student who stops attending during a term and does not submit the appropriate documentation to process a leave of absence or withdrawal within five days from his/her last date of attendance will be administratively withdrawn and any applicable financial aid funds will be returned. Pursuant to Policy 3025 – Student Financial Responsibility, students are responsible for financial obligations to the university resulting from the return of financial aid funds. If a student fails to properly complete and submit the necessary form/s and does not register for and attend classes by the close of the non-penalty drop/add period (first five calendar days of the term), s/he will be administratively withdrawn from the university and any financial aid will be returned to the lender.

### Leave of Absence

A leave of absence may be approved for a student who has completed at least one academic term and is in good standing. Good standing includes making satisfactory academic progress (in accordance with Policy – 1233 Academic Standing and Policy 3804 – Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Eligibility) and the absence of any behavioral/disciplinary infractions. Such students are entitled to return to the university and continue their program at the conclusion of the approved leave. A student returning from a leave of absence does so at the same status held prior to the leave.

**A leave of absence may last no longer than four academic terms (up to one calendar year).** A student returning from a leave of absence, suspension or other separation from the university, must complete a minimum of one term at the university following his/her return to be eligible for another leave of absence. Any student who does not return to the university as agreed, and who has not received an approved extension of the leave of absence, will be recoded as a withdrawal. Should s/he wish to return to the university, s/he must re-apply for admission and meet the requirements as outlined in Policy 2006 - Readmission. Requests for extension of a leave of absence must be submitted in writing to the registrar and must be approved by the program dean.

Any student who desires a leave of absence must:

1. Be in good standing in the current academic term. A leave of absence will not be granted as a means to avoid course failure, academic probation, or academic dismissal as outlined in Policy 1233 – Academic Standing.
2. Obtain a leave of absence form from the registrar.
3. Complete the appropriate sections of the form, including forwarding address.
4. Obtain the required signatures in person.
5. Return the completed form to the registrar.

A student may be granted a leave of absence even though s/he may have an outstanding balance due in the business office. However, the outstanding balance must be paid prior to registering for courses upon return from the leave of absence.

### Maintaining federal financial aid eligibility following leave of absence

When a student goes on an approved leave of absence, his/her financial aid is suspended and the six- to nine-month grace period for loan repayment begins. When the student returns to the university on at least a half-time or greater load, his/her loans return to “in-school deferment” status.

### Policy 1239 – Leave of Absence and Withdrawal

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### Withdrawal

Withdrawal is a permanent action that officially terminates a student's enrollment at the university. A student who withdraws and later wishes to resume his/her program of study must apply for readmission and meet the requirements as outlined in Policy 2006 - Readmission. Withdrawal may not occur after the final examinations (lab or lecture) have begun in any course for which the student has been registered.

A student who is not eligible for a leave of absence must withdraw from the university. A student who has not successfully completed a full term at the university following a previous leave or separation will be required to withdraw rather than take a leave of absence. A student who has not made satisfactory progress (must be in good standing at the time of the leave) will be required to withdraw rather than take a leave of absence.

Students wishing to withdraw from the university must obtain a withdrawal form from the registrar and complete steps 3-5 above. A student will not be officially withdrawn until such time as all outstanding accounts are cleared. Any student who leaves the university without officially withdrawing will receive a grade of WF for all incomplete courses in which s/he is enrolled. WF grades can only be removed through successful appeal to the program dean.

**Related Policies:**

- Policy 1215 – Drop/Add
- Policy 1221 – Incomplete (I) Grade and Required Coursework
- Policy 1233 – Academic Standing
- Policy 2006 – Readmission
- Policy 3025 – Student Financial Responsibility
- Policy 3201 – Tuition and Fee Refunds
- Policy 3804 – Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Eligibility

**Key Words:** leave of absence, readmission, withdrawal