

Military Leave of Absence Policy

Southeastern University recognizes that students who serve in the U.S. armed forces may encounter situations in which military obligations require them to withdraw from a course of study, often with little notice. This policy applies to all branches of military service and is intended to recognize and make appropriate allowances for students who find themselves in such situations.

Specific inquiries regarding the Military Leave of Absence process should be directed to the Office of Retention and students should reach out to Student Financial Services for questions about the impact to their student account.

Military Leave and Refund Procedures

A. Definition

For purposes of this policy, a “military service leave” is a university-approved withdrawal from all in-progress University classes that is necessitated by a call to service, whether voluntary or involuntary, in the United States Armed Forces. This includes service by a member of the National Guard or Reserve, active duty, active duty for training, or full-time National Guard duty under Federal authority, for a period of more than 30 consecutive days under a call or order to active duty of more than 30 consecutive days.

B. Student Responsibilities

A student who is called to active duty or active service in a branch of the United States Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, Space Force, National Guard, or Reserve) and wishes to take a military service leave must:

Provide the University with advanced notice of such service and the intention to take a leave of absence. As soon as possible, after receiving military orders that require withdrawal from a program or course of study, a student must contact the Retention Office to request a formal leave of absence and attach a copy of the military orders or other appropriate documentation to the request. This notice can be made by the student or may be made by an appropriate officer of the U.S. Armed Forces or an official of the U.S. Department of Defense to the University Registrar. It is optional to include a statement of an intention to return to the University. If military necessity renders it impossible to provide advance notice to the advisor, the student may

initiate a military service leave by providing notice at the first reasonable opportunity, in writing, personally signed, and with a copy of the military orders attached.

C. University Procedures

Upon receiving notice of a student's request to withdraw from the University or a program or drop all enrolled courses because of military obligations, the Retention office shall work with the student, providing them with a military leave of absence checklist and university withdrawal form. Once complete, this office will notify the appropriate offices such as Student Financial Services, Accounts Receivable as well as the School Certifying Official. The office of Student Financial Services will review the student's eligibility for financial aid funds received before the time of withdrawal and inform the student about the status of his or her financial aid and actions required to defer loan repayments based on military obligations. Students granted a military service leave will receive a 100% refund of tuition and fees charged for the semester or academic term in which they withdraw. If living on campus, the student will be refunded for any housing and meals payments made to the student account. The student will be assigned "W" grades which will not affect their overall GPA. If the University determines that it is appropriate to award academic credit for work completed in the semester or academic term in which a student takes military service leave, the student shall not receive a refund for the portion of the course of study for which academic credit is awarded. No refund will be provided until the University receives a copy of the military orders necessitating the withdrawal.

If a student decides to finish the courses currently enrolled the student will be given an (I) incomplete grade and allowed additional time to finish the course. This should be communicated to professors to work with the student to complete the course. No refunds will be issued if a student remains enrolled in courses.

Students who are granted a military service leave may be on leave for up to five academic years, after which an extension may be granted with the Registrar's approval. To apply for an extension, students must contact the office of the Registrar. Students who do not request an extension will be withdrawn from the University and at a later date may choose to seek readmission. To seek readmission at a later date, students must contact the Office of Enrollment.

Military Re-Enrollment Procedures

A. Definition

For purposes of this policy, a “military re-enrollment” is a university-approved re-enrollment after a military service leave.

B. Student Responsibilities

A student who has taken military service leave from the University or has had studies interrupted because of active duty or active service in a branch of the United States Armed Forces and wishes to re-enroll must follow these steps:

A student must notify the Registrar’s Office of the intent to return to resume a course of study upon conclusion of duty or service and present appropriate documentation prior to the semester in which the student is requesting re-enrollment. To qualify for military re-enrollment, a student must notify the University of the intention to re-enroll within two years of the time he or she is discharged from military service or is placed on inactive duty. Notices should be provided in writing to the Registrar’s Office and include an official certificate of release or discharge, a copy of duty orders, or other appropriate documentation to confirm (verify), that the student’s withdrawal was related to service in the armed services and that the student is able to resume studies.

1. Military re-enrollment guarantees a student who meets these requirements access to the same course of study he/she was in at the time of withdrawal without incurring a reapplication fee unless a student receives a dishonorable or bad conduct discharge or has been sentenced in a court-martial.
2. Any student who, because of military necessity, did not give written or oral notice of service to the office of Retention prior to withdrawal, may, at the time the student seeks readmission, submit documentation that the student served in a branch of the U.S. Armed Services that necessitated the student’s absence from the University.

C. University Procedures

A student who meets the notice requirements set forth herein will be granted military re-enrollment in the semester following the notice of intent to return, or, if the student chooses, at the beginning of the next full academic year. Upon returning to the University, the student will resume his or her course of study without repeating completed coursework and will have the same enrollment status and academic standing as before the military leave. For the first academic year after

military leave, the student will be charged the same tuition and fee charges as when the servicemember left, unless military benefits will pay the increase, but never more than the institution is charging other students; and for subsequent academic years or for a different program, by assessing tuition and fee charges that are no more than the institution is charging other students.

If, in the judgment of the University, a student is not academically prepared to resume a course of study in which he or she was previously enrolled, or is unprepared to complete a program, the University will determine whether reasonable means are available to help the student become prepared. The University may deny the student re-enrollment if it determines that reasonable efforts are not available, or that such efforts have failed to prepare the student to resume the course of study or complete the program.

A student who has been away from the University on military service for more than five years (including all previous absences for military service obligations after initial enrollment but including the only time the student spends actually performing service in the uniformed services) will not be guaranteed military re-enrollment, but may petition for consideration of military re-enrollment. A student who chooses at the conclusion of military service to enroll in a different course of study than the one the student was in at the time of military withdrawal must complete the regular admission and enrollment process for that course of study.

Notes

1. The University shall determine the adequacy of documentation with reference to 34. C.F.R. Sec. 668.18(g).

2. The appropriate point in a course or program for a student to resume studies, the timing of re-enrollment, and the determination of the "same course of study" will be determined by the University, taking into account the unique characteristics and requirements of that course or program and the modes in which it is offered (e.g., non-degree vs. degree, evening vs. day program, special program vs. standard program). If the program in which the student was enrolled has been discontinued or is no longer offered, the University will enroll the student in the program that it determines to be most similar to that program or in a different program for which the student is qualified. If the student is admitted to a different program, and for subsequent academic years for a student admitted to the same program, the University shall assess tuition and fee charges that are no greater than other students in the program are assessed for that academic year.

3. The appropriate tuition and fee amounts will be reflected on the bill that the student receives.

4. As defined in section 480(c) of the HEA.

5. This cumulative leave of absence restriction shall be interpreted and applied with reference to 34 C.F.R. Sec. 668.18(c) and (e), which set forth rules for calculating cumulative absence due to military service.

Reference: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/guid/readmission.html>