

**BURRELL COLLEGE
OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
POLICY MANUAL**

SECTION: Student Administration

BCOM Policy 3113

TOPIC: Leave of Absence

Approval Date: 8/3/17

Effective Date: 8/3/17

Approved: *Signature on File*

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PURPOSE

Leaves of absence are intended to accommodate a student who experiences life situations, medical conditions and/or psychological conditions that significantly impair his or her ability to function successfully or safely as a student. In these instances, time away from the College will allow the student to recover to a level that will enable him or her to fully participate in academic coursework.

SCOPE

All BCOM Students

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL(S):

The Dean/CAO, Associate Dean of Students, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

DEFINITIONS

A **voluntary leave of absence** is a temporary interruption in a student's program of study for a period of time greater than fifteen (15) consecutive didactic class days or greater than twenty-one (21) clinic days due to significant reasons that are out of the student's control.

A **temporary Withdrawal** is a Leave of Absence that extends beyond the 180 day LOA limit set by Financial Aid regulations (Title IV).

POLICY

Leave of Absence Policy

A student is experiencing significant life, medical or behavioral/psychological situations or conditions that is significantly affecting his or her ability to function successfully may request a leave of absence (LOA). A LOA may be granted based on one of the following reasons:

1. Medical emergency;
2. Financial emergency;
3. Maternity;
4. A call to active military service;
5. Pursuit of an academic endeavor other than the regular classroom work, either on campus or at another recognized teaching facility;
6. Other exceptional situations may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

General provisions

- LOAs are only granted on very rare occasions for students that are experiencing a significant life situation(s) and/or severe medical and/or mental health situations or conditions that significantly affect his or her ability to function successfully as a student. The stress involved in meeting the academic, curricular and all other requirements in the pursuit of a degree in Osteopathic Medicine is not a valid reason for being granted an LOA.
- A student who requests an LOA from BCOM is responsible for all academic work scheduled until the LOA request is approved by the Dean. The student is also responsible for all academic requirements up to the official start date for the LOA.
- Before requesting an LOA the student must meet personally with the Office of Financial Aid to discuss the implications of the LOA on his or her student loans and future financial aid eligibility. **For financial aid purposes only**, a leave of absence in excess of 180 days in any 12-month period will be considered as a temporary withdrawal as defined by the U.S. Department of Education in its Code of Federal Regulations.
- Students considering an LOA must first meet in person with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to discuss the reasons for the leave of absence and the ramifications of the decision. If the student decides to proceed with the request, he or she must follow the established procedures to request a leave of absence.
- An LOA is generally granted for no more than one year. A student may petition the Dean, through the Office of Student Affairs, to extend the leave of absence. Extensions of no more than one additional year will be considered.
- No request for LOA will be considered within the last two (2) weeks of any semester in the OMS 1 and OMS 2 years. The Dean/CAO may, if extenuating circumstances are demonstrated (such as a sudden unexpected medical condition, or traumatic injury), grant an exception to this policy.
- The LOA records, and the date of each determination, will be placed in the student permanent record.
- Generally, leaves of absence do not count against the maximum allotted time for degree completion (six years).
- All LOA and request to Return from LOA must be approved by the Dean/CAO.
- All students on LOA must complete the checkout procedure as specified in the Student Handbook.

Voluntary Leave of Absence

“In good academic standing”

A student requesting an LOA in good academic standing is one who meets the definitions of “in good academic standing” as defined in the Academic Standing and Academic Risk Policy. In such case, the student will receive a letter from the Dean outlining the necessary steps the student must fulfill to be eligible to resume their curricular activities. A student returning from an LOA in good academic standing will be eligible for re-instatement as a full-time student once they have completed the LOA reinstatement process as detailed in the Student Handbook.

“Not in good academic standing”

A student “not in good academic standing” is one who meets the definitions of Student at Academic Risk as defined in the Academic Standing and Academic Risk Policy. Such a student may be granted a leave of absence to allow him/her time to deal with the issue(s) that created their academic difficulty (e.g. personal serious medical issue, parent with a chronic mortal medical condition).

A student not in good academic standing who requests a leave of absence ***must meet with the Offices of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs***, who will review the request and provide a recommendation to the Dean for consideration. Any requirements which the student must complete before they can be considered for reinstatement at the end of the LOA will be included in the recommendation to the Dean.

Before returning from the LOA, the student must complete the “Return from Leave of Absence” procedure as outlined in the Student Handbook. A student “not in good academic standing” returning from a leave of absence must have completed all of the academic conditions, including courses with a grade of incomplete or “I”, before he/she can be re-instated as a full-time student and proceed in the course of study.

The student will be considered “at academic risk” during the first semester following reinstatement from a voluntary leave of absence not in good academic standing. If the student meets all requirements of a student in good academic standing throughout the semester, the “at academic risk” status will be removed.