

## **Leave of Absence, Withdrawal, and Dismissal Processes and Procedures**

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### **I. PURPOSE**

This consolidated policy harmonizes the Leave of Absence (LOA), Withdrawal (WD), and Dismissal notification and form utilization procedures across the LMU SMS-DMS program as well as the LMU SMS-Harrogate, Knoxville, Tampa, Chattanooga PA Programs, in alignment with LMU University-wide policy. It ensures consistency, compliance with federal regulations, and clarity for all DMS and PA students and faculty within the LMU School of Medical Sciences (SMS).

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is a temporary, student-initiated break from enrollment, during which a student maintains eligibility to return. Importantly, the SMS definition of LOA (SMS-LOA) and the University definition of LOA (U-LOA) differ slightly; therefore, the following clarification is provided.

**University Leave of Absence (U-LOA):** this is when a student starts a semester, takes a break, and then completes the semester at the scheduled semester completion date.

**University Withdrawal (U-WD):** refers to a student withdrawing from a University Course (not withdrawing from an entire program)

**SMS Leave of Absence (SMS-LOA):** Student may extend LOA up to 12 months, however, the entire program must be completed within the allotted time-frame (Harrogate and Knoxville: 54 months; Chattanooga, Tampa and DMS: 48 months)

**SMS Program Withdrawal (SMS-WD):** when a student withdraws from an entire program of study (an SMS-PA program, DMS program).

**SMS Student Dismissal:** when a student is dismissed from an SMS-DMS or SMS-PA program

### **III. AUDIENCE**

This policy applies to all SMS-DMS and SMS-PA students and faculty across LMU campuses. Medical Laboratory Science students and faculty will abide by established university policy.

### **IV. COMPLIANCE**

Potential consequences or penalties for failing to comply with the policy may affect SMS and University compliance with federal regulations and regional and programmatic accreditors.

### **V. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The SMS Policy Committee will:
  - a. Review and revise changes to this policy to address changes in LMU University requirements and promote effective practice.
  - b. Submit revised policy to the Dean's Council for approval.
2. The Dean's Council will:
  - a. Review and approve revised policy submitted by the SMS Policy Committee prior to final review by the LMU Office of General Counsel.
  - b. Coordinate adoption of this policy by each program.

## **VI. PROCEDURES**

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

#### **Eligibility:**

Only students in good academic standing may request a University or SMS LOA. Students who are not passing their current coursework will not be eligible.

#### **Valid Reasons for LOA:**

- Medical emergencies (personal or family)
- Medical leave\*
- Military service
- Jury duty
- Financial hardship
- Other serious personal matters

*\*Students requesting an LOA due to pregnancy are encouraged to contact Rebekah Webb, Title IX Coordinator at [rebekah.webb@lmu.net](mailto:rebekah.webb@lmu.net) from the LMU Office of Institutional Compliance for additional assistance.*

#### **Request Process:**

- The student must submit a written request to the Program Director via their LMU-issued email of their intent to take a Leave of Absence.
- A formal meeting must be held with the Program Director to discuss the circumstances and complete the appropriate documentation forms.
- The Program Director forwards the request to the SMS Dean (or designee) for final approval.
- The SMS Dean (or designee) will send documentation to the registrar and financial aid.

**Additional Documentation:**

- Medical LOAs require documentation from a licensed health care provider confirming inability to continue and eventual readiness to return.
- Military LOAs require official documentation of service.
- Financial LOAs require proof of financial recovery before return.

**Duration:**

- Maximum SMS-LOA period is 12 months.
- Maximum University-LOA period is 180 days. *\*see additional stipulations if the LOA spans different semesters\**
- The start date is based on the date of written request submission.

**Re-enrollment Requirements:**

- Written notification of intent to return must be provided at least 1 month before return.
- Clearance from Student Progress Committee may be required to ensure retention of previously completed coursework.
- Students may be asked to complete remedial or assessment activities prior to return.
- Students must complete the program within the specified time from initial matriculation:
  - PA-Harrogate and PA-Knoxville: 54 months
  - PA-Tampa and PA-Chattanooga: 48 months

-SMS-DMS: 48 months

**Transcript and Financial Responsibility:**

- LOA will not erase completed coursework or grades prior to approval.
- Grades may be marked as “WD” or “IP” depending on timing and course progression.

**Form Utilization:**

The University LOA form should be utilized in the following circumstances:

- *For SMS-DMS students at any point in curriculum and SMS-PA students during clinical phase-* only if the student is going to return during the semester in which they started (For example- the student must miss one Summer rotation, however, they will return during the Summer semester to complete the subsequent rotations)
  - If the LOA spans different semesters, the University Withdrawal form and SMS-LOA form must be completed for extended leave.

*\*\*Note: Completion of a University Withdrawal form does not withdraw the student from the program, just from the University Course(s)\*\**
- *During the didactic phase of the SMS-PA curriculum,* students requesting/needig an extended leave will utilize the SMS-LOA form. If the student is taking an LOA once the semester is complete, they do not need to register for classes the next term and only need to complete the SMS LOA form. If the student has already registered for classes for the next semester, they will need to complete the SMS LOA form and the University WD form. Associated transcript

notations and timelines listed in the withdrawal section below will apply.

### **Withdrawal**

***\*\*\*Filling out the university WD form does not withdraw the student from the SMS-DMS or SMS-PA programs.\*\*\****

The student must complete the University Withdrawal form (U-WD) and notify the program director of the desire to withdraw from the course(s). The program director must send the U-WD form to the SMS Dean for signature and approval. The Dean will then route the form to the appropriate departments. If a student withdraws from coursework, the program director is responsible for ensuring completion of the SMS-LOA form if the student intends to return in the future. Otherwise, the program director will notify the Dean if the student does not intend to resume the program.

In the event of an administrative withdrawal (student is forced to withdraw), the program director can complete the University WD form for the student. If the student is voluntarily withdrawing, the student must complete the University WD form.

**When a student withdraws from the university course *with three weeks or more remaining in the semester*, their transcript will reflect a combination of the following:**

- The grade earned for all completed courses
- WD for any course not yet started or in progress

**When a student withdraws from the university course *with less than three weeks remaining in the semester*, their transcript will reflect a combination of the following:**

- The grade earned for all completed courses
- F for any course in progress

Any completed student withdrawal will be reviewed for the official withdrawal date, set forth by the Registrar ([Academic Calendar](#))

The same transcript notations apply when students decide to withdraw from the SMS-DMS or SMS-PA programs.

### **STUDENT DISMISSAL**

If a student is dismissed from an SMS program for any reason, the program director must complete the SMS Dismissal form. Completing this form ensures that the Dean, Registrar, and Financial Aid are notified of the student dismissal.

### **VII. APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, STATUTES, AND RELATED POLICIES**

None

### **VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION**

For questions regarding this policy, faculty should contact the SMS Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

### **IX. DOCUMENT HISTORY**

Policy was voted on and approved by Dean's Council on 10-23-2025.

### **X. FORMS**

[\*\*University Leave of Absence \(U-LOA\) Form\*\*](#)

[\*\*University Withdrawal \(U-WD\) Form\*\*](#)



**SMS Policy SMS 13**

Date Effective: October 23, 2025

**SMS Leave of Absence (SMS-LOA) Form**

**SMS Student Dismissal Form**