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Policy Owner: VP for Academic Affairs
Policy Implementation: VP for Academic Affairs

Military Leave of Absence/Withdrawal Policy

I Policy Statement

Lander University is committed to supporting service men and women of the United States and the State of South Carolina. This policy outlines procedures for military students to apply for a late start or a Military Leave of Absence (MLOA) from the University if they are called to duty and must withdraw from the semester, leave prior to the end the term, attend training during the semester, or miss the beginning of the semester due to military orders.

II Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, a military student is any undergraduate or graduate student who is also an active duty member of any branch of the US Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserve Unit and who is involuntarily called to duty/training. The policy also applies to inactive veterans who are involuntarily recalled to active military duty. Spouses and dependents of military students are not subject to this policy, although they may apply for a withdrawal due to extenuating circumstances.

III Late Start

A military student who will be unable to attend classes at the beginning of the semester, but will be able to attend no later than the end of the third week due to a verifiable military assignment or required military training must contact the University Director of Military and Veterans Services as early as possible for processing and approval of a proposed late start.

The military student must provide a copy of the military orders to the Director of Military and Veterans Services and state, in writing, when she/he will be able to begin classes. This correspondence may be completed through the United States Postal Service or the official University email system.

The Director of Military and Veterans Services shall notify the appropriate college dean who shall, in turn, consult with faculty and make a determination about approval. If the request is approved, the following offices and individuals shall be notified:

- Registrar
- Student Affairs
- Financial Services/Student Accounts
- Financial Aid
- Student Housing
- Instructors for all classes in which the military student is currently enrolled.

If the dean approves a late start, the military student will not be dropped for non-attendance or non-payment during the approved late start period.

A hold will be placed on the student's account to ensure that she/he will meet with the Director of Military and Veterans Services upon her/his return and before attending any classes.

Faculty will make every effort to accommodate military students approved for a late start. Military students are responsible for completing all course requirements, including any assignments missed during the approved late start period on a schedule to be developed with each faculty member.

IV Military Leave of Absence

A. Required military training/exercise during a semester

A military student who receives military orders requiring him/her to miss classes for a short duration of time during a term may submit a request to the appropriate college dean to continue enrollment if all three of the following conditions are met:

1. The military student is currently passing the course
2. The military student is in good academic standing (LU overall GPA of at least 2.0)
3. The military student will be absent during no more than three calendar weeks of the semester

The military student must notify the Director of Military and Veterans Services and the instructor of each course in which she/he is enrolled prior to the absence. If the request to continue enrollment is approved by the dean following consultation with the instructor(s), the military student must ensure that all course requirements are completed by the end of the semester, including any and all assignments missed during the approved absence.

B. Deployment before the beginning of a term

A military student who receives verified military orders requiring him/her to completely withdraw from LU for the upcoming semester should submit the following documents to the Registrar's Office:

- Withdrawal Form – completed and signed
- Military Leave of Absence Notification Form – completed and signed
- Copy of the military orders indicating the date on which the student must report for active duty

A military student withdrawing prior to the first day of class due to military orders will receive a total refund of any preregistration payment made for the term. Any funds for tuition and/or fees received from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or the Department of Defense (DOD) will also be returned to the agency.

C. Deployment during, but prior to the last three weeks of, the term

A military student who receives verified military orders requiring him/her to completely withdraw from LU during a semester in progress should submit the following to the Registrar's Office:

- Withdrawal Form – completed and signed
- Military Leave of Absence Notification Form – completed and signed
- Copy of the military orders indicating the date on which the student must report for active duty

A military student withdrawing during the term due to military orders will receive a total refund of any payment made for the term. Any funds for tuition and/or fees received from the VA or DOD will also be returned to the agency. The student will receive a grade of 'W' for each course, and a notation of "Military Withdrawal" will be entered on the student's official transcript.

If a student member of the reserve forces or National Guard is activated during his/her enrollment for a short-term deployment, the University shall provide notification of the deployment to the student's course instructors through the University Registrar. During times of deployment, especially during national disasters, the University strongly encourages all faculty to work with the student being deployed regarding the period of absence. At the completion of the deployment, the service member must provide proof of deployment to the Director of Military and Veterans Services prior to the resumption of coursework. The Director of Military and Veterans Services shall then notify the Office of the Registrar of the student's return.

D. Deployment during the last three weeks of a fall or spring term or the last week of a summer term

A military student who receives verified military orders requiring him/her to leave LU during the last three weeks of a fall or spring semester or the last week of a summer term may seek approval from the appropriate college dean to either withdraw from the University for the semester or to complete course requirements.

If the military student seeks to complete course requirements, he/she should submit the following to the Registrar's Office:

- Military Leave of Absence Notification Form – completed and signed
- Copy of the military orders indicating the date on which the student must report for active duty

The military student seeking to complete course requirements should consult the instructor of each course in which she/he is enrolled regarding the following options for completing course requirements:

- Complete remaining requirements for the course before departure and receive a letter grade for the course, or

- Receive a grade of 'Incomplete.' LU policy stipulates that all incomplete work must be finished no later than the last day of the immediately following spring or fall semester. If a later completion date is approved, this permission must be forwarded by the instructor to the Registrar's Office.

If neither of these options is determined to be acceptable by the course instructor or the military student, the course instructor shall notify the Registrar's Office, and the military student will be withdrawn from the course.

If the military student seeks a complete withdrawal or if no course can be completed, the student should submit the following to the Registrar's Office:

- Withdrawal Form (only if seeking a total withdrawal from the University) – completed and signed
- Military Leave of Absence Notification Form – completed and signed
- Copy of the military orders indicating the date on which the student must report for active duty

A military student withdrawing due to military orders will receive a total refund of any payment made for the term. Any funds for tuition and/or fees received from the VA or DOD will also be returned to the agency. The student will receive a grade of 'W' for each course, and a notation of "Military Withdrawal" will be entered on the student's official transcript.

E. Immediate deployment at any time

In the case of immediate deployment without proper time for notification to the University, the Director of Military and Veterans Services shall be empowered to initiate the process for a military leave of absence or withdrawal on behalf of the military student.

F. Returning to the University

Returning military students must meet with the Director of Military and Veterans Services upon their return and prior to registering for classes at LU after any deployment or period of absence.

Military students returning from a deployment or period of absence of less than three (3) years will not be required to reapply for admission and will be allowed to preregister for classes during preregistration, along with currently enrolled students, for the semester following their return.

Military students returning from a deployment or period of absence of more than (3) years must apply for readmission through the Admissions Office. The military student must ensure that an official copy of any and all transcripts (including an updated military transcript) for any and all course work completed at another university during the absence be received by the University Registrar's Office.

The returning military student should then contact his/her major advisor or department chair to schedule an appointment for academic advising.

V Responsibility for this Operating Policy

A. Policy Owner

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the Lander University Board of Trustees, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs is the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews of and revisions to this policy must be made in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes. This policy shall be reviewed every three years or more frequently, as needed.

B. Responsibility for Policy Implementation

The President has assigned the responsibility for implementing this policy to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

VI History

- Approved by Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Enrollment and Access Management on 9/7/2017.