**Leave of Absence, Withdrawal, and Readmission Policy**

When a student’s course of study is interrupted, the interruption is categorized either as a leave of absence or a withdrawal. In general, a leave of absence is intended for a student who is in good standing, who needs to suspend his or her enrollment for a short period of time (for example, due to a medical condition), and who intends to return to the School of Medicine immediately following a leave of absence of a specific timeframe. A withdrawal generally is intended for other situations, such as when a student needs to suspend his or her enrollment for a longer period of time or does not intend to return to the School of Medicine. The process for return following a leave of absence is less demanding than readmission following a withdrawal. Regardless of the time of the absence or withdrawal, the graduation requirements for the MD degree only *must* be completed within six years of matriculation. For students in the MD/PhD and MD/JD dual degree programs, graduation requirements must be completed within eight years; graduation requirements for students in other dual degree programs must be completed within seven years.

1) Leave of Absence

a) *Description and Conditions*

The Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs has the authority to grant or deny a request for a leave of absence (LOA). A student who is in good standing may submit a written petition requesting a LOA to the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs. The petition should provide an explanation of the reasons for the requested leave and the expected length of the leave. If the LOA is not granted, the student may instead withdraw from the School of Medicine.

A student may be granted only one LOA, and any further absence will be considered a withdrawal. A LOA normally is granted for no more than one year; under no circumstance will a LOA be granted for more than two years.

If a student is granted a LOA from the School of Medicine, interrupting a course or clerkship, a grade of W (withdrawal) will be entered on the transcript, designating uncompleted coursework. If/when the student is then re-enrolled, the Academic Standards and Achievement Committee (ASAC) will determine how much of the course or clerkship graded with a W will need to be repeated. If the student is re-enrolled in the course, the final grade will appear in the term in which the coursework is completed. The grade of W remains on the transcript along with any grade subsequently achieved.

Any student requesting a LOA also must meet with the Director of Financial Aid as a condition of approval from the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs. The meeting may be held in person, by interactive video-conference or by telephone, but not by email or other electronic means. Any student on a LOA must continue to abide by the University’s student conduct requirements. The Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs may impose additional conditions upon which the leave is granted.

b) *Return from LOA*

A student who has satisfied all of the conditions of his or her leave of absence may request a return to the School of Medicine by submitting a request to the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs and the School of Medicine Registrar (email: som-registrar@virginia.edu) at least sixty (60) days prior to the return date requested. The student must meet any additional conditions that are deemed warranted by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admission upon return to registration.
A student granted a LOA for medical reasons will require subsequent medical clearance from the Student Health Center as a condition for returning. All students returning from LOA must re-attest to their ability to meet the Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodation.

A student who has failed to comply with any conditions of his or her LOA, or who does not return to the School of Medicine within the length of time granted, will be deemed to have withdrawn voluntarily, and any request for readmission, as long as the six year time limit still can be met, must be determined by a vote of ASAC.

2) Withdrawals

a) Description and Conditions

There are four types of withdrawals from the School of Medicine—medical, academic, administrative or voluntary. University policy dictates that a grade of W will be entered for each course or clerkship the student attempted but did not complete. The grade of W will remain on the transcript.

- Medical Withdrawal—only approved with recommendation of a physician. Applications for withdrawal for medical reasons must be made in writing to and approved by the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs. Subsequent medical clearance from the Student Health Service is required for readmission.
- Academic Withdrawal—by action of the ASAC in accordance with the Policy on Academic and Professional Advancement, the Criteria for Graduation Policy, and the Policy on Technical Standards Required for Matriculation, Progression and Graduation. These withdrawals may be for academic or professionalism deficiencies, or for dismissal.
- Administrative Withdrawal—by action of the School of Medicine Office of Student Affairs and/or the University Dean of Students. On rare occasions an emergency may arise in which the health of a student, faculty member, patient, or other member of the community is placed at risk by the presence of a student. In such an unusual situation, the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, in consultation with the University Dean of Students, may suspend a student provisionally pending formal consideration of the relevant issues by the appropriate committee, e.g., ASAC, University Judiciary Committee, at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Voluntary Withdrawal—an action taken when a student voluntarily leaves the School of Medicine. Applications for withdrawal must be made to the Office of Student Affairs and must be approved by the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs. Students who withdraw voluntarily from the University will have the notation “Withdrawn: DATE” recorded on their permanent academic record and their official transcript. Any courses that have not begun will be dropped from the student’s record. A grade of W will be entered for each course or clerkship in progress at the time of withdrawal. The grade of W will remain on the transcript.

b) Readmission

- Unless dismissed by the University or the School of Medicine, a student who has withdrawn may seek readmission by submitting a request to the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs and the School of Medicine Registrar (email: som-registrar@virginia.edu) at least sixty (60) days prior to the return date requested.
- A longer period of notification might be necessary if scheduling of clerkships or electives is involved. Acceptance for readmission will depend on availability of positions in the clerkships/electives. Applications for readmission will be kept on file and will be considered in the order received, as positions become available. Students who withdraw before taking Step 1
and the Transition Course (Introduction to the Clerkships) can re-apply for the spring semester in the next academic year. Once enrolled the student can take Step 1 and the Transition Course (only offered once per year). Clerkship assignment will be based on current availability and any assignments made prior to the withdrawal will not be reserved.

- All students returning from a withdrawal must receive clearance from the University’s Dean of Students to return. This will be coordinated by the School of Medicine’s Registrar.
- A student granted a withdrawal for medical reasons will require subsequent medical clearance from the Department of Student Health as a condition for readmission.
- A student withdrawn for academic, professionalism or administrative reasons or a student who has academic or professionalism deficiencies at the time of withdrawal must be reviewed and approved to return by ASAC. Students whose request for readmission is denied by ASAC will have the right of appeal, per the Policy on Academic and Professional Advancement.
- All students returning from a withdrawal must re-attest to their ability to meet the Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodation.
- If granted readmission, the student will be required to adhere to any changes in policy or curriculum that occurred during the absence.
- Students who have been dismissed will not be offered readmission.
- Repeated courses: Students approved for readmission will be re-enrolled in any courses that were graded W or F at the time of withdrawal. Both of these grades remain on the transcript, along with subsequent grades. The ASAC will determine how much of the course or clerkship will need to be repeated to satisfy requirements. They will make this decision with consideration of the recommendation of the Course/Clerkship Director and based upon the Policy on Academic and Professional Advancement. The chair of ASAC will notify the student in writing of the committee’s decision. Failed courses will be repeated in their entirety.
- Students whose period of withdrawal is greater than two years must reapply to the School of Medicine through the Office of Admissions.
- The School of Medicine reserves the right to impose any additional conditions upon a student seeking readmission after a withdrawal, and to refuse consideration based on the relevant time limit on matriculation to graduation. (see paragraph one of this document)
- All students must graduate from the School of Medicine within six years after matriculation – time spent withdrawn counts in the six year time limit. For students in the MD/PhD and MD JD dual degree programs, graduation requirements must be completed within eight years; graduation requirements for students in other dual degree programs must be completed within seven years.

Policy approved by curriculum committee 6/22/16