



Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Policy

Policy Number:	AA 03-016
Policy Administrator:	Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs
Policy Initiator:	Office of the Registrar
Authority:	CSU Executive Order 1037 –Grading Symbols, Minimum Standards Governing the Assignment of Grades, Policies on the Repetition of Courses, Polices on Academic Renewal, and Grade Appeals.
Effective Date:	March 6, 2000
Revised Date:	January 12, 2023
Approved:	President Thomas A. Cropper
Approval Signature:	/s/

Purpose:

This policy provides guidance regarding leave of absences and withdrawals from California State University Maritime Academy (Cal Maritime). This policy is meant to align with policy AA 03-015 Withdrawal from a Course.

Scope:

This policy applies to undergraduate students currently enrolled at Cal Maritime.

Accountability:

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for administering this policy and ensuring compliance.

Policy:

It is the policy of Cal Maritime to allow students to withdraw or take a leave of absence within the procedures outlined below.

Definition of terms:

A. Withdrawal

Resignation from University.

B. Leave of Absence (LOA)

Student intends to retain their academic catalog rights and will return within one calendar year of their term of leave.

C. Serious and Compelling

1. For the purposes of withdrawal, Cal Maritime defines “serious and compelling” as follows: Situations, such as illness, accident, or events, clearly beyond the student’s control. The following situations are typical of those for which “serious and compelling” is appropriate

justification for withdrawal:

- a. Significant medical and/or mental health conditions
 - An example of approved documentation includes a letter from your health care provider or the Student Health Center stating that your medical and/or mental health conditions require you to take a reduced workload.
 - b. Called to military service
 - Documentation confirming military service is required
 - c. Death of a close family member
 - A close family member can be biological, adopted, foster, or chosen. A memorial service program, newspaper obituary posting, or death certificate is required.
 - d. Environmental or Social factors
 - An example of documentation for environmental or social factors could be verification of a residential address within an area impacted by a natural disaster affecting the student's living situation or a documented family emergency.
 - e. Other catastrophic reasons to be considered on their own merit
 - Documentation must reflect a catastrophic circumstance clearly beyond the student's control and where the assignment of an incomplete grade is not practicable. This could include but is not limited to housing insecurity, court order, etc. and must be verified with credible supporting documentation.
2. The following situations **DO NOT** fall under the intent of “serious and compelling”:
- a. Grade anticipated in class is not sufficiently high, or student is doing failing work (including situations where the student has been penalized with a failing grade for academic dishonesty);
 - b. Failure to attend class, complete assignments, or take a test;
 - c. Dissatisfaction with the course material, instructional method, or instructor;
 - d. Class is harder than expected;
 - e. Pressure of other classes, employment, and/or participation in extracurricular activities;
 - f. A change of major;
 - g. Lack of awareness of the withdrawal process or procedures.

D. Supporting Documentation (dated within 60 days of submission and relevant to petition to withdraw or take an LOA)

Examples Include: letter of support issued by the Student Health Center or a health care provider, memorial service program, military letter.

E. Exemption: Exemption means that the withdrawn units will be exempted from the 18-unit maximum. Exemption of W units will only be approved if the “serious and compelling reasons” are recent events or circumstances that could not have been addressed earlier and are accompanied by supporting documentation as discussed in section D.

Procedure:

- The student is responsible for initiating an LOA or withdrawal request by submitting an LOA absence or withdrawal form (see [Student Forms and Resources](#)). It is encouraged that a student consult Accessibility and Disability Services, Student Health Services, and/or University Advising about possible accommodations and/or need for a leave or a withdrawal.
- Once a withdrawal or LOA is processed, the leave is final and cannot be revoked.
- Students should contact Financial Aid and/or Financial Services for questions regarding tuition and refunds.
- For international students, taking an LOA or withdrawal may have implications for the student’s visa status. International students should contact the Office of the Registrar (registrar@sum.edu)

to discuss enrollment status.

- Academic Affairs is responsible for approving or denying an LOA or withdrawal and will take supporting documentation into consideration. If an LOA or withdrawal is denied, a student may resubmit their request once with additional documentation.
- The student's academic school or the university reserves the right to change a voluntary LOA or withdrawal to a required leave or withdrawal if an academic or disciplinary review determines it appropriate.
- A student on an LOA or withdrawal is not enrolled with the university and therefore is not eligible for privileges afforded to enrolled students, including residing in university housing and accessing university resources. An LOA or withdrawal does not terminate in-progress academic and non-academic student conduct proceedings.
- License-track students who have lapsed in their academy program enrollment will have USCG recency requirements re-evaluated by the Licensing Coordinator to ensure training will be completed within the required time period.

A. LOA or Withdrawal from School:

- 1. Prior to the start of a semester to the end of add/drop:**
 - a. A matriculated student may file an LOA or withdrawal for any reason from the university.
- 2. After add/drop and prior to census (see Academic Calendar):**
 - a. Students may file an LOA or withdrawal for any reason.
 - b. Students who file during this period shall receive a grade of "W". The symbol of "W" indicates that a student was permitted to withdraw from a course and carries no connotation of quality of student performance and is not used in calculating grade point average or progress points.
 - c. Students filing for an LOA or withdrawal for "serious and compelling" reasons may petition for exclusion of the "W" units from the 18-unit maximum.
- 3. From census to end of term:**
 - a. Students may petition for an LOA or withdrawal from the university only for "serious and compelling" reasons. Supporting documentation shall be provided.
 - b. If a student's LOA or withdrawal for "serious and compelling" reasons is approved a grade of "W" will be assigned for each course.
 - c. The student's Petition to Withdraw from the course (or courses), and the subsequent Petition for Exemption of the "W" units are considered as individual considerations.
 - d. If a student's petition for an LOA or withdrawal is denied the student shall remain enrolled and final grades for the courses will be posted.
- 4. Retroactive Withdrawal:**
 - a. After the semester has ended, students may petition to retroactively withdraw from an entire semester **only** if there are "serious and compelling" reasons for such a withdrawal, and if such reasons prevented the student from submitting the appropriate forms for a withdrawal during the term of enrollment. Supporting documentation is required.
 - b. Students departing from the university for "serious and compelling" reasons may request an exemption of the "W" units. The Academic Dean of the school will determine if the petition for exemption meets the criteria for serious and compelling reasons.

B. Additional Conditions for an LOA:

1. Incoming students who have attended classes in their first two weeks and wish to take an LOA before the end of add/drop must submit a request for an LOA.
2. Students who take an LOA retain their academic catalog rights, provided they return within one calendar year of their term of leave.
3. A student is not eligible for an LOA unless currently matriculated.

C. Suspension:

1. If a student is suspended before the end of add/drop, courses will be dropped, and no symbol or grade will be recorded on the student's academic transcript.
2. If a student is suspended after add/drop, courses will receive a grade of "W".
3. Such withdrawals will count against the 18-unit maximum.

F. Readmission

1. All students wishing to return to Cal Maritime following a withdrawal, an LOA, or suspension must reapply by the readmission deadlines posted on the Readmission website. Readmission is not guaranteed.
 2. If a student applies for readmission after the deadline (whether on an LOA, suspension, resignation, etc.), their application may be denied.
 3. Returning students may have one or more holds placed on their record. The student must contact the relevant department for each hold:
 - a. Financial: Financial Aid (finaid@csum.edu)
 - b. Advisor: Faculty Advisor or Chair
 - c. Records: Office of the Registrar (registrar@csum.edu)
 - d. Title IX: Title IX (titleIX@csum.edu)
 - e. Housing: Residence Life (housing@csum.edu)
 - f. Accounting: Financial Services (cashier@csum.edu)
 - g. Health Center: Health Center (healthcenter@csum.edu): A student seeking readmission after leaving the university due to health reasons must submit documentation to the Student Health Center indicating fitness to resume their education at Cal Maritime. Documentation must include a licensed health care provider's treatment summary and recommendations, and may include one or more of the following:
 - Personal statement
 - Medical records
 - Accommodation recommendations
- Student Health Services may request additional information or documentation. The student is encouraged to consult with Accessibility and Disability Services, Student Health Services, and/or other health care providers before applying for readmission. The Director of Student Health Services will review the health documentation and determine if a student has met the health requirements to return to Cal Maritime.
- h. Community Standards: Cleared through Community Standards
 - i. If a student is suspended, they must have completed all assigned sanctions before the hold will be removed.
4. Upon readmission, all students who have taken a withdrawal, LOA, or were suspended may be required to meet with the following offices to develop a success plan depending on their type of leave:
 - a. Returning on Academic Probation: University Advising
 - b. Medical Leave/Withdrawal: Dean of Cadets/ VP of Cadet Leadership and Development
 - c. Suspension: Student Conduct Office/ VP of Cadet Leadership and Development
 - d. Licensed Programs: USCG Coordinator
 - e. Other departments may be required based on the circumstances.

Additional Resources:

1. [Academic Calendar](#)
2. [Academic Standing Policy](#)
3. [Student Forms](#)
4. [Readmission](#)