

# REVISED Policy Governing Student Leaves of Absence

Approved and Adopted by Faculty Council June, 2009

Updated January 15, 2015

Students occasionally require leaves of absence for a number of reasons including: family emergencies, health issues, maternity leave, new parenting responsibilities. Students may also request leaves for academic enrichment purposes. Examples include: presentation of research at national meetings; student member attendance at meetings of national and state dental organizations (see below for the kinds of activities that do and do not qualify in the academic enrichment category). The purpose of these guidelines is to establish baseline criteria so that the Associate Dean for Education and Student Affairs can formulate a leave and reentry plan for you on a case-by-case basis.

Failure to adhere to these policies will be reported to the Dean's office as Unprofessional Conduct. Unprofessional conduct is taken seriously, as outlined in the Professionalism policies: <http://dentistry.ucsf.edu/students-faculty-staff/students/professionalism-as-a-core-competency>

## General guidelines

- Students who are absent for a few days, a week or more, must communicate directly with course directors and clinic directors to customize make-up activities. Short leaves of absence will only be approved for specified reasons as described below. The Associate Dean for Education and Student Affairs must sign off on any planned absence of one week or longer. In addition, the Associate Dean for Education and Student Affairs will determine, along with the course directors, when a planned absence is too lengthy for make-up activities and requires other planning.
- First year dental students who need to be absent for an extended period of time (for example several weeks, one quarter or more) may be asked to repeat the year or re-apply for admission the following year.
- Second year dental students who need to be absent for an extended period of time (several weeks, one quarter or more) and who are in good academic standing will be required to repeat the year. It is not possible to reenter the same class year as there is no provision to take missed course material in ensuing quarters and courses are not repeated during the academic year.
- Third or fourth year dental students (including international dental students) will be required to make up all missed clinic sessions irrespective of course progress or academic standing. Those who need to be absent for an extended period of time (several weeks, one quarter or more) will be asked to repeat all or part of the year, including both clinical and didactic courses. It may also be required for the student to extend the educational program into the months after the graduation ceremony in order to complete coursework and earn the DDS degree.
- As a general principle, all students returning from leave are required to attend classes and clinics on a full-time basis. The faculty have determined that part-time attendance does not conform to the programmatic requirements given the particular structure of the DDS curriculum
- Students who need to arrange extended leaves (several weeks or longer) must first contact the Student Services manager in Educational Services (Room D-4010; 476-1101) and meet with the Associate Dean for Education and Student Affairs to develop a plan for absence and reentry. When the

need for leave is anticipated, students should make this contact as far in advance as possible to allow adequate time for planning. If notification is not made in a timely manner, student conduct may be considered unprofessional in nature and subject to censure.

- Students are required to make up missed course work and clinic attendance resulting from extended absences. This may result in students having to remain in dental school past the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> year.
  - Upon re-entry, confirmation of competency in courses previously successfully completed may be required and, if necessary, additional exams and coursework may be required.
  - All extended leave requests are managed on a case-by-case basis.
- Planned leaves for Academic and other Enrichment Activities
    - Opportunities likely to be reviewed favorably include:
      - Leaves to present research at major research conferences, including, but not limited to AADR/IADR, ADEA.
      - Attendance at meetings of student groups related to organized dentistry, such as ASDA.
      - Participation in externship programs related to future postgraduate opportunities. However, every effort should be made to schedule these during quarter breaks.
      - UCSF-sponsored Global Health opportunities. This does not include trips that are not directly sponsored by UCSF Global Health programs.
      - Note that any clinic sessions that are missed due to the above approved activities will need to be made up.
    - Planned leaves that will NOT be approved if they occur during the academic year
      - International travel during academic year that is not associated with UCSF global health, regardless of worthiness.
      - Travel related to dental fraternity conventions or other social organization meetings.
      - Travel related to religious-affiliated dental organizations.
      - Non-emergency family events, such as weddings, including your own wedding.
  - Planned health-related leaves including maternity leaves
    - The faculty understand that health leaves arise at unpredictable times and may require extended absences from academic work. All general guidelines also apply to health and maternity leaves.
    - The student must first contact the student services manager in Educational Services and meet with the Associate Dean for Education and Student Affairs to develop a plan for absence and reentry and should do so as soon as possible upon learning of the need for leave.

It is the intent of the School of Dentistry that this leave of absence policy be administered in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. The School of Dentistry does not discriminate against any student on any protected basis and is committed to making reasonable accommodations for protected disabilities.