



NORTHWESTERN HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

**University Catalog Addendum
2024-2025 Summer Term**

May 7, 2025

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Absence Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines expectations and resources to support communication between student and faculty when unavoidable and unanticipated absences occur.

This policy is not intended to replace the established academic accommodations process for documented disabilities. Students who wish to establish accommodations through the Disability Services Office should follow the steps outlined on the [Disability Services for Current Students webpage](#)

Scope

This policy applies to all students in all programs.

Policy

Scheduled courses allow students to avoid conflicts and reflect the University's expectation that students will regularly and meaningfully engage in and complete instructor-required class meetings, online learning activities, labs, clinic hours, and other activities assigned as outlined in the course syllabus. The University recognizes that in some circumstances, conflicts with class/laboratory or clinic are unavoidable, or unexpected, and it is ultimately the student's responsibility to communicate with their faculty when they must miss a required academic activity. It is within the purview of the course instructor to determine options for missing class, labs, and other scheduled learning activities, and for completing missed course requirements.

The policy does not, in any way, release students from the responsibility of satisfying all requirements necessary for the successful completion of any course. The number of allowed absences varies per course based on the nature of the course and is clarified by the syllabus. Extended absences, or absences which result in the student missing critical learning activities that are central to the course, or meeting the course requirements, may prompt the University to recommend or require withdrawal from that course. In some circumstances, an incomplete may be appropriate, and students may request that option in accordance with the Academic Evaluation and Grade Policy.

Effective: May 1, 2022/May 7, 2025

Procedure

1. Instructors are expected to establish, and clearly communicate in the course syllabus, attendance policies relevant to individual courses. Additionally, instructors must clearly and explicitly state, in their course syllabus, the number of allowed absences and procedures in which assignments and assessments can be made up. Course attendance policies must be consistent with university policy. Clinic Departments may establish more specific criteria for notifying instructors/clinic supervisors and completing clinic hours. (See Clinic Handbook for each program)

2. When conflicts or absences can be anticipated, such as University sponsored activities or religious observances, the student should inform the instructor of the situation as far in advance as possible. Instructors should be notified as soon as possible in the event of an unanticipated absence such as illness or bereavement.
3. Faculty should make arrangements for students to complete assessments of student learning (exams, proficiencies, assignments, etc.).

Compassionate Withdrawal Policy

Purpose

To extend compassion to students who must drop courses past the last date to withdraw when they are experiencing severe adversity.

Scope

This policy applies to all students in all programs.

Policy

Students who must withdraw from in-progress courses past the withdrawal deadline due to severe adversity may appeal to the Registrar's Office for a compassionate withdrawal grade of W instead of WF.

Effective: May 7, 2025

Procedure

Definitions

Severe Adversity

Student is experiencing a documented and unexpected or emergent situation including, but not limited to:

- Extreme medical hardship
- Natural disaster
- Family crisis

To qualify for a compassionate withdrawal, a student must send a request in writing to the Registrar specifying the courses for which they are requesting a compassionate withdrawal, an explanation of the adverse situation, and documentation of the hardship within 14 calendar days of the extenuating circumstance occurring. The appeal will be reviewed by the Registrar and a decision rendered within 10 calendar days.

The compassionate withdrawal, if approved, will be considered effective the date of the request, inclusive of appropriate documentation, and will not be backdated to the time the hardship began. A W grade will be assigned to those classes specified in the request and there will be no changes to tuition for those courses. Any courses for which a compassionate withdrawal has been approved will not negatively impact a student's academic standing for the term.

There is no escalation process for denied appeals although a note will be added to the student's academic record.

Please note: The Program Time Limit Policy supersedes any previous time frames outlined in the 2024-2025 catalog.

Program Time Limits Policy

Purpose

To define the maximum time limit by which a student must complete their program of study as specified by accreditation requirements for time to completion.

Scope

All students enrolled in programs with accreditation requirements for time limits.

Policy

Some accreditation bodies specify a maximum timeframe for successful completion of degrees in programs covered by that accreditation. Failure to obtain the degree within the stated maximum timeframe will result in the withdrawal of the student from that program.

Effective: May 7, 2025

Procedure

Definitions

College of Chiropractic program time limits

Chiropractic students are required to obtain their degree no later than five calendar years from the date of their first term of studies in that program.

College of Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine program time limits

Students are required to obtain their degree within no more than 200% of the stated program length. Doctoral students are required to complete their degree within 20 terms or 6-2/3 years and Masters students are required to complete their degree within 16 terms or 5-1/3 years from the first term of studies in that program.

Failure to obtain the degree within this time frame will require that the student be withdrawn from that program. Students do have the option to request an extension to the program time limit. The student will be notified once it is apparent that they will not be able to complete the program within the specified time limit. The student will then have the opportunity to appeal to the Dean of the College. The appeal form may be submitted no earlier than 2 terms before the maximum time for degree completion and must explain the circumstances that contributed to the extended timeframe; relevant supporting documentation; evidence of academic progress, which should include successful completion of a significant portion of the program coursework and relevant achievements such as passing national board exams; a detailed plan for completion that outlines how the student intends to complete the

remaining requirements; and demonstration of readiness to continue the program, complete the remaining requirements, and shows that the issues causing the delay have been resolved or managed effectively. There is no guarantee that the request will be approved, and all other academic policies such as academic standing and financial aid satisfactory academic progress requirements apply.