

Medical and/or Mental Health Withdrawal from the University

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Students who encounter a significant, unforeseeable and/or highly unusual challenge related to medical or mental health issues, which makes the student unable to effectively participate in their educational program, may withdraw from classes (or in extremely rare circumstances, reduce their course loads) at the University without excessive or unnecessary financial and/or academic penalty. A Medical or Mental Health (M/MH) Withdrawal from the University should be used only when no other options are available to the student. Such withdrawals can be granted only for the current semester or the semester immediately preceding the current semester; no other "retroactive" withdrawals are allowed.

Students should refer to the Academic Calendar for the established withdrawal and drop dates. Students affected by the six-drop limit policy who find it necessary to drop some of their courses but not withdraw entirely from the University may petition to have the dropped courses exempted from the six-drop limit (see section "Six-Drop Policy" in this chapter). A student granted a M/MH Withdrawal or course load reduction will be assigned grades of "W" in the affected courses, unless the effective date of the withdrawal or course load reduction is on or before Census Date, in which case no record of the courses appears on the student's transcript.

This option should be used only when there is a significant medical or mental health issue which requires the student's withdrawal. Students will normally be limited to one M/MH Withdrawal during their academic career at UTSA, unless given special approval by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies (if an undergraduate student) or the Dean of the Graduate School (if a graduate student). Furthermore, any challenges a student may face as a result of their issues will be identified by the appropriate Service Director (Director of Student Health Services for a medical health issue or Director of Counseling Services for a mental health issue or their respective designees) during the withdrawal process and recommendations will be provided to the student in an effort to ensure the student is able to continue their academic pursuits without further interference once they decide and are permitted to return to UTSA.

Medical/Mental Health Withdrawal Request Procedures

Requests for M/MH Withdrawals must be submitted in writing to the appropriate service office (medical withdrawals should be submitted to Student Health Services; mental health withdrawals should be submitted to Counseling Services). Such requests must be accompanied by supporting documentation from a licensed doctor, physician, medical professional or mental health professional who has recently evaluated the student, or preferably, provided long-term care to the student. Documentation from a recent hospitalization, if relevant, should also be provided to the appropriate Service Director (or their designee) for review. All documents and any other requests made by the Service Director (or their designee) must be provided or completed within one month of the initial request. If the request is not completed within one month, the file will be closed and no further action will be taken regarding the request.

The appropriate Service Director or their respective designee will review the request and the supporting documentation to determine whether the medical or mental health issue adversely affected the student's ability to function regarding their academic endeavors so as to warrant the student's withdrawal under this policy. Upon that review, the appropriate Service Director or their respective designee will provide a written recommendation to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies (for undergraduate students) or the Dean of the Graduate School (for graduate students) reflecting that determination. The appropriate Dean will have one month to complete their decision. The student will be notified of the decision in writing in a manner consistent with the policies and procedures established by the Deans' offices.

The Dean makes the final determination regarding the request for a withdrawal and any grade changes that may result. Any refund of tuition and fees will follow the University's Refund Policy for Withdrawal or Dropped Courses (see Chapter 3 of this bulletin) at the time of the effective date of the withdrawal. The effective date of the withdrawal will be determined by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of the Graduate School. When necessary, the Financial Services and University Bursar office will determine whether and to what extent a refund will be granted.

Students may appeal the denial of a M/MH Withdrawal by submitting the appeal in writing to the Executive Director of Student Health and Counseling Services. All appeals will go back to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of the Graduate School for review. The Dean's decision will be final.

Request to Return following a Medical/Mental Health Withdrawal

Students who are granted a M/MH Withdrawal and wish to return to UTSA must submit their request for re-enrollment in writing to the appropriate Service Director or their respective designee. Such requests must be supported by a current release of information form from a licensed doctor, physician, medical or mental health professional who has recently evaluated the student, or preferably, provided long-term care to the student. The respective Service Director or their designee has the authority to require a current and comprehensive assessment of the student. The respective Service Director or their designee will evaluate the information provided by the primary provider to ensure that it supports the student's re-enrollment, and will forward a written recommendation to the appropriate Dean. The Dean will inform the student, in writing, of his or her decision as to whether the student's return is appropriate. In addition, before being allowed to re-enroll, students must correspond with the Director of the respective service and/or the Director of Disability Services in order to best address any possible needs the returning student may have and to facilitate and potentially maximize the student's chances of a successful return.

Confidentiality of Medical/Mental Health Withdrawal Requests

The student's written request for the withdrawal as well as the Service Director's recommendation will remain the responsibility of the respective service involved to maintain, while only the Dean's decision will become part of the Student's Education Record. Generally, medical and mental health background information is not shared with the respective Deans unless a special request has been made by the Dean. Deans will keep all shared medical and mental health related information confidential. Any supporting medical or mental health documentation will be considered confidential and treated with the same confidentiality offered other clients of Student Health Services and Counseling Services.