

...DRAFT...

Policy Title: Military Absence Policy for Students (MAPS)

PURPOSE

The university provides a consistent procedure for members of the Armed Forces who are attending Western Oregon University and traveling for military reasons.

AUDIENCE:

Students, faculty, and staff

DEFINITIONS:

- A. **Faculty/Staff:** Those individuals employed by the University in a faculty or staff position (excludes student employees) on a full- or part-time basis.
- B. **Military Orders:** A document from the state's Military Department, Department of Defense, or any other Armed Forces entity outlining the activation of a service member into active duty for any period of time.
- C. **Travel Day:** A day or days in which a military member must travel to a specific location stated in their military orders to report for duty.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Western Oregon University recognizes that those who are actively serving in the Reserves or National Guard of the United States are required by their military contract to attend mandatory training. The institution recognizes the important, and often demanding, role military members play in our community and is committed to providing these students with equal opportunity to succeed during their time at the university.

Military students shall not be penalized for mandatory military training, will be given the opportunity to earn equivalent credit, and demonstrate evidence of meeting the learning outcomes for missed assignments or assessments in the event of a schedule or class conflict due to mandatory military training. Students should expect that absences from heavier course loads will be more difficult to recover from than absences from lighter course loads.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

A. Notification

It is the responsibility of the student to notify their instructor(s) of any absences due to military-ordered obligations as soon as possible, preferably at the beginning of the term. Students are required to notify and provide documentation to the assistant director of student success or whomever is responsible for the Student Absence Notification System (SANS). See the "Procedure" section for more information.

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITY

A. Alternative Arrangement Statement

Faculty shall make alternative arrangements for military students who will be absent or away from technology necessary to complete assignments or exams.

B. Alternative Arrangement Parameters

Alternative arrangements for on-campus, online, or hybrid coursework shall include, but are not limited to, alternative or extended time on assignments or exams and alternative date/time for presentation assignments.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

A. Preliminary Notification

A student may provide verbal information about the leave to the SANS administrator and an unverified preliminary (non-MAPS) notice shall be sent to instructors for planning purposes only. A MAPS notification will only be sent to instructors when the student provides the appropriate documentation outlined in the “Military Documents” section of this policy.

B. Verified Notification

When proper documentation is provided to the SANS administrator, the student’s faculty shall be notified via email.

MILITARY DOCUMENTS

A. Appropriate Documentation

Students are required to provide a copy of their military orders outlining the dates of their deployment. If orders are not available, a verifiable letter signed by the student’s supervisor, on unit letterhead, with information outlining the dates in which the student will be on active duty shall suffice.

B. Securing Documents

Military orders contain sensitive information, including social security numbers. As a result, copies shall be kept in a secure cabinet and locked when not accessed. Copies shall be kept for a period of three terms after the term in which the absence occurred. After such time, the documents shall be shredded.

C. Classified Deployments

The location of deployments can sometimes be classified by the Department of Defense. When this occurs, a verifiable letter signed by the student’s supervisor with information outlining the dates in which the student will be on active duty shall suffice.

EXCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

A. Length of Absence

Students are eligible for no more than ten (10) consecutive academic weekdays in a given term, after which faculty are no longer compelled to provide alternative arrangements beyond the tenth day. However, if the structure of the course permits such high level of absence, the faculty are encouraged to continue to work with the service member.

B. Safety Concerns

The safety and security of students is one of Western's top priorities. Some courses require students to be present for class in which important safety information and procedures are explained. If a student is absent for such a class and a make-up class is not offered or available, the student is strongly encouraged to drop the course. An example would be certain lab science classes (Biology, Earth Science, or Chemistry) in which students would be engaging with sensitive or potentially dangerous materials or equipment. Faculty shall not be compelled to allow the student to remain in the course or provide a makeup class for a service member in this situation.

First Draft: Poole, Holbert, Dukes, Scheck (July 2016)