



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council (March 11, 2021)
Faculty Council (April 6, 2021)

From: Professor Daniel Posen
Chair, Standing Committee on Examinations

Date: February 26, 2021

Re: Undergraduate Leave of Absence Policy for International Students

REPORT CLASSIFICATION

This is a routine or minor policy matter that will be considered by the Executive Committee for approving and forwarding to Faculty Council for information.

BACKGROUND

The Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering (FASE) has received several requests from international students seeking a voluntary temporary leave of absence, usually for reasons that align with immigration policy. The Faculty does not currently have a policy to enable international students to apply for an approved and documented leave of absence. Such policies exist in other Faculties, including [Arts & Science](#) and [UTM](#). Granting international students an authorized and documented period of leave can be important for maintaining their legal status in Canada and meeting the requirements of a post-study work permit.

PROPOSED POLICY

An approved leave of absence will be permitted for international undergraduate FASE students who have completed at least one academic term (e.g., Fall 2020 or Winter 2021) and whose current academic standing is in good standing or on academic probation. Students may request a leave for the Fall term, the Winter term, or the complete Fall/Winter session, for up to a maximum of two consecutive Fall/Winter sessions. Note that formal leave is generally not required for summer academic sessions. Students should contact the Centre for International Experience to request a leave of absence and to understand the impact of a Leave of Absence on their legal status in Canada for the period of the leave.

Newly admitted students are not eligible for a leave of absence and should instead, if relevant, request a deferral of admission.

Students may request a leave for the following reasons:

- Serious health, personal or family issues
- Issues related to childbirth or child care
- Military service

Students may extend an approved leave of absence for up to a maximum of two consecutive Fall/Winter sessions. An extension beyond two consecutive Fall/Winter sessions will not be approved; students may choose to continue a leave, but it will not be considered an approved leave of absence.

While on approved leave, students do not pay any tuition, incidental, or ancillary fees; are not permitted to enroll in courses or register in the Faculty; are not considered for scholarships or awards; and cannot normally access University services, participate in student internships, or undertake undergraduate research. A student who has been granted an approved leave of absence under this policy is not exempt from academic deadlines, financial responsibilities, current or future policies, curriculum changes, fees schedules, increases in annual fees, or the requirement to complete a full undergraduate program within nine calendar years of first registration (exclusive of mandatory absences from their program).

To initiate a return to studies, students should contact the Registrar's Office at least three months in advance of the term or session in which they plan to resume their studies.

PROCESS AND CONSULTATION

This policy was proposed by the Registrar's Office and approved by the Standing Committee on Examinations, and is effective April 7, 2021.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FACULTY COUNCIL

For information.