

# Attendance Policy

## University Attendance Policy

*Note: Students receiving military education benefits should also see the VA Attendance Policy below.*

South University maintains an institutional attendance policy to support the academic achievement of its students. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class, laboratory, and examination periods each week. Students, whether present or absent from class, are responsible for knowing all that is announced, discussed, and/or lectured upon in class or laboratory, as well as for mastering all assigned reading. In addition, students are responsible for submitting on time all assignments and examinations as required in the class.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled activities that are part of the class, including those activities scheduled during class time and those scheduled outside of class time. An individual campus-based or online clinical programs may have specific policies (which in some cases may be more stringent than the general attendance requirements) as to the effect of attendance on class meetings, course assignments, off-campus activities, internships/externships, clinical and practicum activities, and other program requirements.

If the student misses 14 consecutive calendar days, the student will be withdrawn from the institution, unless the student provides official communication (communication directly from the student (letter or email) and the student provides supporting documentation for review) regarding extenuating circumstances (as outlined below) prior to violating the 14 consecutive days. The student must also provide the date the student will return into the current course. If the student fails to return on the scheduled return date the student will be withdrawn from the institution.

Extenuating circumstances include the death of an immediate family member, hospitalization of an immediate family member, declared natural disaster in the city/state where the student resides, or in some extenuating circumstances additional matters affecting the student or immediate family member.

Exemption: if the student successfully completes 49 percent or more of the number of days in the term or successfully completes at least half-time coursework for the term, a Return of Title IV calculation will not be required. Successfully completed is defined as receiving a passing grade in the course.

Students who are absent due to a medical condition (including pregnancy or any related conditions) should review the emergency withdrawal policy section of the catalog to determine if the student is eligible. (Note: see the Leave of Absence Policy below for Students at South University, Richmond and South University, Virginia Beach.)

*Note: Zero credits courses in the graduate Nursing programs and the Doctor of Business Administration are exempt from online attendance requirements. Online medical assisting externship/practicum courses are exempt from online classroom attendance requirements; however, students will be required to meet the course and university attendance policies as evidenced by activities logged using clinical tracking software.*

## Course Attendance Policy

South University maintains a course attendance policy to support the academic achievement of its students. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class, laboratory, and examination periods each week. Students,

whether present or absent from class, are responsible for knowing all that is announced, discussed, and/or lectured upon in class or laboratory, as well as for mastering all assigned reading. In addition, students are responsible for submitting on time all assignments and examinations as required in the class.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled activities that are part of the class, including those activities scheduled during class time and those scheduled outside of class time. An individual campus-based or online clinical programs may have specific policies (which in some cases may be more stringent than the general attendance requirements) as to the effect of attendance on class meetings, course assignments, off-campus activities, internships/externships, clinical and practicum activities, and other program requirements.

If the student misses 14 consecutive calendar days in a course, the student will be withdrawn from the course, unless the student provides official communication (communication directly from the student (letter or email) and the student provides supporting documentation for review) regarding extenuating circumstances (as outlined below) prior to violating the 14 consecutive days. The student must also provide the date the student will return into the current course. If the student fails to return on the scheduled return date the student will be withdrawn from the institution.

**Note:** Attendance policies for courses involving experiential learning, such as clinical fieldwork, rotations, practicum/ internship and externship, are published in the programmatic handbooks (AA, CMHC, PA, Pharm, and PTA programs) and course syllabi.

## Veterans Affairs Attendance Policy

Students who receive Veteran Affairs (VA) educational benefits must understand VA benefits, including tuition and fees, the monthly housing allowance, book stipend, and Yellow Ribbon benefits are based in whole or in part on the number of credit hours certified. The school is required to monitor and report enrollment status to the VA. Adjustments in enrollment will likely affect payment of VA benefits. The school will report enrollment as follows:

- VA Students who officially withdraw, the actual last date of attendance (LDA) must be determined and reported for each course to the VA.
- VA students who are administratively withdrawn or stops attending without officially withdrawing, the actual last date of attendance (LDA) must be determined and reported for each course to the VA.
- VA students who complete a course and receive a “NCF” grade, the school will determine and report the actual last date of attendance for each course to the VA.

## Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Attendance

Students in our DBA program are made aware of the requirement of attending those residencies upon admission into the doctoral program.

Attendance is required in order to progress in the program. Should an emergency arise that prevents the student from attending the virtual residency, the student must immediately contact the DBA Program Director to receive instructions on how to proceed.

Special accommodations can be made for students who cannot attend a portion of the residency due to medical reasons, religious reasons, and active military deployment. Students who arrive late or fall ill during a residency should immediately contact the Program Director. Students who cannot attend a portion of the residency due to religious reasons, medical reasons, or active military deployment should contact the Program Director at least ten days in advance of the residency.

Other exceptions - There may be additional exceptions that are presented from time to time. How these exceptions will be handled is at the discretion of the DBA Program Director based upon the guidelines set forth in this document.

Documenting exceptions - The Program Director will notify the Academic Counselor regarding any student being granted an exception. Documentation of the exception will need to be placed in the student's academic. The Program Director will then notify the Academic Counselor of the result of each exception granted.

## OTA Attendance Policy

Students in the pre-professional phase of the program are held to the University Attendance Policy. Students accepted into and entering the professional phase will be required to meet the OTA Attendance Policy.

The OTA Program covers a lot of content in a relatively short time. To maximize learning, students are expected to attend all components of every course, including lectures, laboratories and fieldwork, for the entire session. Tardiness, early departure or other time away from class negatively impacts attendance. Academic success is predicated upon class attendance.

Students are expected to submit assignments, take exams and complete course requirements in a timely fashion. Regular attendance is crucial to meeting all deadlines.

If circumstances require that the student miss 25% or more of a course, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the course, since the opportunity for adequate teaching and learning is significantly compromised. The OTA Program Director, in collaboration with appropriate individuals, will determine whether additional sanctions will be made (e.g., academic warning or probation), depending on the reason the student is missing 25% or more of the course.

Students who officially withdraw or are administratively withdrawn from a course after the Drop/Add period and before 80% of the course duration will receive a W grade. Students who officially withdraw or are administratively withdrawn on or after 80% of the course duration will receive a WF grade. Students should consult with their Financial Aid Advisor to determine the implications of adding or dropping a course.

Students who withdraw or are administratively withdrawn from all courses in a quarter will be withdrawn from the University. Students who fail to register for a quarter will be withdrawn from the University.

Regardless of the reason for an absence, students are responsible for any and all information presented during each class period. Students are advised to contact a peer and get notes for that class period; students are also encouraged to talk with the instructor.

Students should refer to the OTA Level I and Level II Fieldwork Education Manual for attendance policies specific to fieldwork placements.

## Attendance Appeals for Administrative Withdrawals

Students who are administratively withdrawn due to attendance may appeal the decision. Students must complete the Attendance Appeal Request form and submit the form to their Academic Counselor within 4 calendar days of being administratively withdrawn from a course.

In order to be considered for an appeal the student must have one of the mitigating circumstances listed in the South University Satisfactory Academic Progression policy. Students may be required to submit supporting documentation with their appeal.

The Senior Academic Progress and Remediation Specialist will consider the appeal. The decision of the Senior Academic Progress and Remediation Specialist is considered final.

*NOTE: A student's life issues and the student's transition to college are not considered mitigating circumstances under this policy.*

## Attendance Week

For campus-based classes beginning on a Saturday, the attendance week is defined as beginning on Saturday at 12:00 A.M. in the campus' time zone to 11:59 P.M. in the campus' time zone the following Friday. For campus-based classes beginning on Tuesday, the attendance week is defined as beginning on Tuesday at 12:00 A.M. in the campus' time zone to 11:59 P.M. in the campus' time zone the following Monday.

For online classes beginning on a Tuesday, the attendance week is defined as beginning on Tuesday at 12:00 A.M. Mountain Time (MT) to 11:59 P.M. MT the following Monday.

## Leave of Absence Policies

South University does not have a University level Leave of Absence Policy. The College of Nursing and Public Health and the College of Business have Leave policies associated with specific programs as noted below. South University also has a Leave of Absence policy for any student who attends either the Richmond or Virginia Beach campus.

Please note that any international student seeking a break in their enrollment or a leave of absence should consult the international student disclosure for admissions found in the International Student Admissions policy. In part it states, "International students attending South University locations under F-1 visas (Form I-20) are required to maintain a "full course of study" during each academic term of their programs of study...". The international student should also contact the international student advisor or the Dean of Student Affairs on their campus with additional questions.

*Note: South University's administrative leave of absence is not an approved leave of absence per the U.S. Department of Education (ED) requirements under Title IV regulations as outlined in the federal regulations (34 CRF 668.22 (d)). As such, South University must consider the student as a "withdrawn" student for Federal Title IV Student Aid purposes but allow the student to remain administratively enrolled at the school. South University must perform a Return to Title IV calculation for each administrative leave of absence based on the student's last date of recorded attendance as required by Federal regulations. During the approved administrative leave of absence, students are reported to NSLDS as withdrawn and are not eligible to receive any Federal Student Aid during this period.*

## Nursing Emergency Leave

A nursing student may be granted an official emergency leave for personal or medical reasons for a period not to exceed one calendar year. The student must make this request in writing to the Nursing Program Director and include documentation of the reason emergency leave is being requested. If the emergency leave is approved, the Nursing Program Director will provide the student, the registrar and the Director of Financial Aid with written

notification including applicable timeframes of the leave. If the emergency leave requires the student to withdraw from classes, the withdrawal will not count against the student as a course attempt as outlined in the Withdrawal Policy. An emergency leave can only be granted one time.

The student must notify the Nursing Program Director at least thirty calendar days prior to the anticipated date of re-entry. Students will not be required to repeat successfully completed nursing courses. In all cases of emergency leave, the student is required to complete the full nursing curriculum of the program in which the student was enrolled. Reentry is based on space availability as determined by the program director and must occur within the timeframe of 1 year. Reentry is not guaranteed. The student who fails to reenter the nursing program within the timeframe established may be required to apply for readmission to the nursing program.

## Doctor of Business Administration Emergency Leave of Absence Policy

While it is an expectation that students enroll in courses continuously throughout the DBA program, once a student enters the Comprehensive Exam and Dissertation phase of their program (i.e. beginning with INS7200 and BUS8000) they are subject to the DBA Emergency Leave of Absence Policy. The only opportunity for a student to request a leave of absence during this part of the program is in the case of an emergency. A DBA student may be granted an official emergency leave for personal or medical reasons for a period of one session or quarter, but no longer than one calendar year. The student must make this request in writing to the DBA Program Director and include documentation of the reason emergency leave is being requested. If the emergency leave is approved, the DBA Program Director will provide the student, the Registrar and the Director of Financial Aid with written notification including applicable timeframes of the leave. If the emergency leave requires the student to withdraw from classes, the withdrawal will not count against the student as a course attempt as outlined in the Withdrawal Policy. An emergency leave can only be granted one time.

The student must notify the DBA Program Director at least 14 days calendar days prior to the anticipated date of re-entry. Students will not be required to repeat successfully completed courses in the DBA Program. In all cases of emergency leave, the student is required to complete the DBA curriculum of the program version in which the student was enrolled. Reentry to a dissertation course is based on availability of Committee Chairs and/or Members as determined by the Program Director and must occur within the timeframe of 1 year. The student who fails to reenter the DBA program within the timeframe established may be required to apply for readmission to the DBA program.

## Leave of Absence for Students attending South University, Richmond and South University, Virginia Beach

A student who expects to be absent due to extended mitigating circumstances should contact his/her Dean of Student Affairs. The university has defined the following as possible mitigating circumstances: serious illness of the student, serious illness of a member of the student's immediate family for whom the student is the primary caregiver, or death of a member of student's immediate family. To request an accommodation or waiver based on mitigating circumstances, the student must provide the Dean of Student Affairs with the appropriate written documentation supporting the student's claim of mitigating circumstances prior to the student violating or exceeding the attendance requirements.

The Dean of Student Affairs is responsible for reviewing and approving the request. Request for an additional Leave of Absence or an extension of a current Leave of Absence must be received 15 calendar days prior to the end of the current Leave of Absence. No monetary charges or accumulated absences may be assessed to the student during a leave of absence.

Leave of Absence may not exceed 180 calendar days in a 12-month period. The 12-month period begins the first day of the first Leave of Absence. Students who fail to return on the 181st calendar day will be administratively withdrawn from school.

## Returning from an Approved Leave of Absence

Students returning from an approved Leave of Absence that was granted during the time they were enrolled in a course will be allowed to complete coursework started prior to the leave with no additional charges assessed. The University allows students who start a Leave of Absence during a course to withdraw (with a grade of WV).

If a student does not return from an approved Leave of Absence, the official withdrawal date and beginning of the loan grace period (if applicable) is the last date of class attendance.

Notes: Students enrolled are eligible to apply for an approved administrative leave of absence for a period not to exceed 180 days in a rolling 12-month period. During the approved administrative leave of absence, students are reported to NSLDS as withdrawn and are not eligible to receive any Federal Student Aid during this period.

## Voluntary Intent to Continue

Eligible students may elect to take a break in their enrollment without being withdrawn from the institution.

Students may only take Active Not Attending (ANA)/Voluntary Intent to Continue (VITC) status in the first session of a term as long as it is not the first term within the student's enrollment. NOTE: The first term enrollment requirement applies to initial or new enrollment, re-entry, or any other breaks in enrollment) Students are required to complete and submit an acceptable Voluntary Intent to Continue (VITC) form prior to violating the attendance policy.

- Programs with one 10, 11, 12, or 15 week module/course: If the student is taking courses that span the entire length of the quarter, the student is not eligible for an ANA as the student cannot cease attendance and return within the same session.
- Programs with two 5 week courses within the term: student may only take ANA in the first session of the first term as long as it is not the first term within the student's enrollment. NOTE: The first term enrollment requirement applies to initial or new enrollment, re-entry, or any other breaks in enrollment)

The student must resume attendance by the date the student provided on the VITC form or the student will be withdrawn from the institution.