

Leave of Absence Policy

Students who wish to temporarily discontinue their enrollment at Siba may formally request an approved leave of absence by completing a *Leave of Absence Form*, which can be obtained from the Office of the Academic Dean. Students who receive Title IV financial aid (Pell Grants and/or Direct Loans) must also meet with the Office of Financial Aid to learn whether there are consequences of a leave of absence (LoA) on their financial aid eligibility or loan repayment.

Students placed on academic probation for failure to make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) are eligible to apply for an LoA, but their academic status will remain in effect upon their resumption of studies at Siba.

In order to qualify as an approved LoA, the following criteria must be met:

- 1) The student requesting the LoA must have completed at least one full academic term and earned a minimum of 6 credit hours at Siba prior to the start of the LoA.
- 2) The student must submit the completed LoA form to the Office of the Academic Dean. Approval of the LoA is at the discretion of the Academic Dean.
- 3) The student must provide the reason(s) why he/she is requesting the LoA, and provide his/her anticipated return date to classes. Approved reasons will include (but are not necessarily limited to) medical/health issues, military duty, family issues, financial issues, and/or work conflicts.
- 4) The LoA may not exceed two (2) academic terms in any 12-month period.
- 5) Leaves of absence will only be approved for future academic term(s). In other words, a student may not begin an LoA in an academic term in which they are currently enrolled and have attended classes. In cases where students cannot complete any classes in which they are currently enrolled, the college's Refund Policy, Return to Title IV policy, and withdrawal policy will apply (See pages 10 & 13-14 of the *Catalog*).

A student may request that the LoA be either one (1) or two (2) academic terms per 12-month period. An approved LoA that is one (1) academic term in length may be extended to two (2) academic terms, but the extension must be requested by the student prior to the expiration of the approved LoA on file.

If a student on an approved LoA does resume classes in the academic term directly following the term of the LoA, the student will not be required to complete any re-enrollment or re-admission paperwork. A student who does not return as expected, however, will be retroactively withdrawn from the college based on his/her last date of attendance prior to the start of the LoA. Students who receive Title IV funds must make an appointment with the Financial Aid Director prior to submitting the request for the LoA so they can be made fully aware of the impact the LoA may have on the student's loan repayment terms, including the expiration of the student's grace period.

A student who returns to classes according to the terms of an approved LoA will experience the following benefits:

- 1) The student will not have to pay an admission fee or fill out an application for admission in order to return;
- 2) Neither the tuition nor the program cost will increase, even if there has been an increase in tuition or fees that became effective while the student was on an approved LoA;
- 3) The student will return under the same program requirements that were in place when the LoA commenced, even if there have been program changes that took effect during the LoA.

Absence without Leave

A student who discontinues enrollment without following the leave of absence procedures described above will be withdrawn from Siba per the college's Withdrawal policy (See page 10 of the *Catalog*) and will be required to reapply for admission if they wish to return. If a student does re-apply and his/her application is accepted, the student will be subject to any increases in tuition or fees that took effect during the period of withdrawal, and he/she will also be subject to any changes in his/her program that became effective during the withdrawal.