

A student responding to a lawful deployment order through a branch of the United States armed forces may avail himself or herself of specified course alterations or modifications by requesting a Military Leave of Absence (MLOA) through his/her instructor. Military leave policy relates to students who are registered for classes at WNCC, whether by face-to-face or distance learning instructional delivery.

Military leave is defined as any mandated physical relocation which causes a disruption in the student's ability to participate in the class or classes, either by personal attendance or through remote access. Factors such as availability of connectivity, available off-duty time, or a requirement of singular focus upon a military task are considerations in the determination of the student's inability to participate successfully in a distance learning course. The leave covers active military deployment for reasons of war, natural disaster (such as hurricane relief), required annual training for National Guard or Active Reserve, or special short-term deployment for any reason determined necessary by the military unit commander. Deployment shall refer to the required service for any length of time.

The student requesting modification, extension, or other adjustments on the basis of military leave consideration shall be currently enlisted in a branch of the United States armed services, National Guard, or the U.S. Coast Guard, and the required absence, re-assignment, or dislocation shall be verified by a letter from her/his commanding officer or the presentation of official orders issued through the U.S. military.

The allowable course alterations or modifications for an MLOA are as follows:

- 1) Before classes start = full refund—slot reserved for future entry into restricted courses or programs
- 2) $\frac{1}{2}$ or less of class completed = W or Incomplete with re-entry at a later date (negotiated)
- 3) $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ of class completed = W or Incomplete (with no conversion to an F), up to 1 year to complete
- 4) Over $\frac{3}{4}$ class complete = W, Incomplete, extension for 2 months, or grade earned-to-date assigned
- 5) Last week of class or final exam week = Early final exam, no-penalty late exam (up to 3 weeks extension granted), Incomplete, or grade earned-to-date assigned

The following conditions are also specified:

- 1) The student is required to master all learning competencies or objectives of the course.
- 2) The student and instructor will determine which option in 2-5 above is best for the student.
- 3) Tuition remission is granted in #1 above and in #2 if the student receives a W.
- 4) The completion time allowed in #3 is flexible, based on discussions between the instructor and student and depending primarily upon the nature, scope, and length of the deployment.
- 5) If an early grade is assigned based upon work-to-date in the class (options # 4 & 5), the grade earned is calculated and presented to the student before it is entered as a final course grade.
- 6) A student who accepts an earned-to-date grade has no appeal process for the course grade.
- 7) A grade of Incomplete granted on the basis of an MLOA shall not default to an F upon being entered, and a grade of W may be entered to replace it at any time if the length or nature of the deployment means that the student cannot complete the class (per the instructor's discretion).

Guiding Principles

The purpose of the MLOA is to ensure equality of opportunity for success to students who are called to military service. Students are still expected to fulfill the learning requirements of a course, but they should not be penalized for circumstances beyond their control.

The fundamental principle of the policy is collaboration and cooperation between instructors and students so that instructors use their professional judgment about the students' mastery of the essential concepts in the class (as in the case of grade-to-date exit options) or early or late final exams. Essentially, the focus for all parties must remain the educational purpose of the course, the ramifications of alternative strategies, and the ability of students to reach their educational goals while meeting national service obligations. All parties are expected to perform deliberations and inquiries with good faith efforts toward finding the appropriate and equitable solution.

A student who believes that he or she is not receiving fair consideration for a request for a course alteration may appeal to the Academic Supervisor for the instructional area. This notification should happen within two (2) days of the instructor's initial consideration and denial. The Supervisor has two (2) days to gather information and to make a determination as to what should be done.

If the student believes that the Instructor or the Supervisor is basing a denial of the course alteration on personal reasons or demonstrable bias rather than academic considerations, the student should contact the Dean of Instruction.

Students are required to furnish any necessary documentation to substantiate a request for an exemption, and they are also required to accept the option for accommodation recommended by the instructor, unless they feel the recommendation to be arbitrary or unreasonable. In that case, the student follows the above appeal process, beginning with the Supervisor.

Instructors are expected to maintain and to make available for examination by the appropriate Supervisor within the reporting line any related course materials, syllabi, assignments, and course grade records which may be necessary to establish the degree of completion of the learning objectives or the mastery level of concepts the student has achieved.

Adopted – May 21, 2014