Leave of Absence Policy:

Indiana Wesleyan University understands that life events may require a student to modify class enrollment and schedules. The leave of absence policy is designed to allow the student flexibility in his/her program enrollment to adjust to these life events. The leave of absence policy also extends to students the ability to make up any courses missed during the approved leave.

A student on an approved leave of absence will be considered enrolled at IWU and would be eligible for an in-school deferment for student aid loans. Federal financial aid and in-school deferment may be negatively impacted if a student fails to apply for the leave of absence or if the application is denied. This impacts students who receive Title IV federal financial aid (Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Grants, Federal Stafford Subsidized or Unsubsidized Loans, Federal Parent Loans) or who want to have a federal student loan deferred from payment while in school.

**Who needs to request a leave of absence?** Students who will be out of attendance for a period of 29 days or more should request a leave of absence. Students out of class for scheduled class breaks do not need to apply for a leave of absence. Students out of class for less than 29 days are not eligible for a leave of absence, and a recalculation on current financial aid will be done. Students who are not on federal financial aid programs or who do not have a federal loan in deferment are not required to request a leave of absence.

**How does a student request the leave?** Students needing to make a change in their schedule should contact the Office of Student Services to process the registration change. Those eligible for a leave of absence can access the form on the student portal. Students must request the leave within 21 days of initiating the registration change.

**When should the leave be requested?** The request should be made prior to the date the leave is to start. The start date of the leave is the first date after the last date of attendance.

**What are the criteria for a request to be approved?** An approved leave of absence must meet the following criteria: the request must be received within 21 days of the registration change; the request must be made prior to the start of the leave (first day of class); the reason for the request must be one approved by IWU’s Leave of Absence Committee (military, medical, jury duty, loss of job, family emergency, employment emergency, or other reasons as approved by the Committee); appropriate documentation must be submitted if the request is submitted after leave has started; and, the student has not accrued 180 days of leave within a 12-month period of time.

**When is documentation required? What kind of documentation is required?** Documentation is required if the request for the leave of absence is made after the beginning date of the leave of absence, and needs to address the nature of the reason for the request. Documentation for each circumstance will vary; the student is required to provide whatever paperwork from a third party will attest to the circumstance outlined on the application form. Examples would include physicians’
Documentation is also required if a request is submitted after the 21-day deadline, and needs to address the reason for the delay in the submission of the request.

**How long may a leave be?** The leave(s) of absence must not exceed 180 days in a 12-month period. Time in excess of 180 days will not be approved.

**What if the leave needs to be extended?** A student may request an extension to a leave providing the request is made before the end of the leave, there are unforeseen circumstances which prevent the return from the leave, and the total number of days of approved leave do not exceed 180 in a 12-month period.

**What if a student fails to return from a leave of absence?** Failure to return from an approved leave of absence may have an impact on student loan repayment terms as well as the grace period. The first day of the leave will be reported as the beginning of the grace period.

**What if a student returns early from a leave of absence?** Students may return early from an approved leave of absence prior to the leave end date. The leave will be shortened according to the student's return date.

**What about disbursements and payments during the leave of absence?** Students will not receive disbursements of Title IV student loan financial aid funds during the leave. Students are not deferred from making regularly scheduled payments to the Accounting Office for normal fees incurred.