



## Policy Title: Student Supportive Leave

Effective Date: 2025-10-07

Next Review Date: 2029-09-01

|                      |                                          |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Parent Policy        | None                                     |
| Policy Administrator | Director, Community Wellness             |
| Approving Body       | Senate                                   |
| Approval History     | 2025-10-07; Senate Motion #2025-26 – 004 |

**Purpose:**

The objective of this policy is to provide a non-punitive system by which the University can offer voluntarily or, if deemed necessary, mandate a leave of absence for a student when other existing academic accommodations and/or institutional support services cannot adequately address concerns regarding:

- That student's personal safety or the safety of others.
- Behaviour that significantly and negatively affects the learning, living, or work environment of others, OR
- Behaviour that indicates a student is unable to adequately function in the context of the University setting which can include professional and/or safety concerns in the practicum, co-op, or similar academic setting or in the context of campus work or housing.

**Scope of this Policy:**

All undergraduate and graduate students.

**Policy Statement:****1. General Principles**

- a. This policy should be a last resort, in case of exceptional circumstances after reviewing all other possible options and keeping with the principles of natural justice and fairness.
- b. This policy is intended to be used as an additional tool in helping students pursue their educational goals and student participation in the process is expected to be sought.
- c. This policy DOES NOT replace pre-existing University policies like those pertaining to Accessible Learning, Course or Program Withdrawal, Graduate Studies Leave of Absence, or the Student Code of Conduct, all of which should be reviewed as options first and/or could be concurrently reviewed for the student involved.
- d. The University is obligated to provide a safe learning environment for the entire University community and as such must address student behaviours that compromise safety or the proper functioning of the learning, working and/or living environment.
- e. The underlying goal of this policy is to support the student towards resumption of their studies when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

## **2. Criteria for Initiating the Policy**

- a. This policy is to be initiated when other approaches/resources/options are not successful or not applicable AND:
  - i. The student's behaviour poses a serious risk of harm to self or others.
  - ii. The student's behaviour creates serious disruption to the learning environment, or,
  - iii. The student's behaviour indicates they are unable to adequately function in a university setting including in their residence.

## **3. Mandated v. Voluntary Leave**

- a. Review of students referred under this policy is done by the Behavioural Intervention Team (BIT or BI Team) as part of the University's Student Care Program.
- b. The BIT has the discretion to invite other University staff and/or faculty involved with the student's care to participate or provide additional information.
- c. Students referred for this policy will first be presented with the option to voluntarily accept a supportive leave.
- d. Wherein a Student Supportive Leave is assessed to be appropriate, and the student involved does not want to accept the recommendation, the Director of Community Wellness can mandate a supportive leave. The student has the right to appeal this decision as outlined below; while the appeal is in process the mandated leave will remain in effect.

## **4. Appeal Process**

- a. Students who receive mandated leave may appeal it through the process laid forth in the procedures attached to this policy.
- b. The Appeal Officer will be the VP of Student Life with the Provost as a second choice if needed..
- c. The mandated leave remains in place until the appeal outcome is determined.

## **5. Supported Return of the Student**

- a. As part of the Leave (mandated or voluntary) a process for the student's return to studies will be provided within 10 business days of the Leave's effective date.
  - i. Should additional time be needed to confirm a student's unique return, they will be notified of the extended deadline within that initial period of 10 business days.
- b. A supported return will be a collaboration between the student and University employees.

## **6. Awards for Students On-Leave**

- a. In accordance with other university leaves, a student on-leave will retain the full value of any award for which the terms and conditions are established by the University.
  - i. Payments for said awards will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon the student's return to their level of study at the time of the leave.
- b. Awards for which the terms and conditions are not established by the University will be paid according to the terms and conditions of the granting agency.

**Definitions:**

**Behavioural Intervention Team (BIT):** an interdisciplinary group of staff and faculty from across the University that is created to gather information on students identified to be struggling psychosocially or academically, to assess and triage those reports, and when indicated, develop an intervention plan to care for both the student and the community.

**Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL):** the program within the Learning Commons that promotes equitable access to educational programs for TWU students, often through registration for academic accommodations, and guided by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Human Rights Code (BC), and the Accessible BC Act.

**Leave of Absence:** deferment of a student's program of study that does not count toward time for degree completion. While on-leave, the student is not eligible for campus housing or regular campus sponsored activities and teams.

**On-leave:** registration status of a student while on an approved leave of absence.

**Program of study:** a curriculum intended to lead to a degree.

**Program withdrawal:** discontinuation of admittance in a program of study.

**Natural Justice and Fairness:** ensures impartiality, transparency, and equal treatment for all individuals. It provides an opportunity for parties to be heard, ensures decisions follow established laws and regulations, requires reasoned explanations for decisions, and maintains consistency in similar cases.

**Procedures:** Please see Procedures for A 1-10 Student Supportive Leave.

**Child Policies:** None

**Other Related Policies:** A 2-07 Course Withdrawal; A 2-13 Graduate Studies Leave of Absence; A 3-07 Incomplete Grade Policy; A 6-01 Academic Concessions