

Attendance Policy

As an academic curriculum, courses are designed to address specific areas of knowledge in a whole-person learning mode, with each class contributing to the completion of the learning objectives. This means that presence in each class meeting is essential for student learning and instructor evaluation. Students must be in attendance in residential and global courses. The policy statements below detail the nature of the required attendance for courses according to the various modalities of instruction, including on-campus, online, and at residential seminars and intensives.

In addition, if at any time after the first week of class a student is absent from the University for 14 consecutive calendar days, and no contact has been made by the student indicating intent to continue, the student may be dropped/withdrawn from the course and/or administratively withdrawn from the University.

Campus – Attendance:

Students in residential courses are expected to attend all campus-based course meetings as scheduled and complete all assigned course work. If an absence is expected during the quarter, the student should ask permission from the instructor ahead of time. Students must maintain a minimum of 70% attendance for each course in each quarter. However, this minimum does not mean that students can or should plan to miss class sessions. Rather, it is a recognition that circumstances may sometimes prevent students from attending a particular scheduled session. F1 visa students are allowed to miss one class session without being required to make up the seat-time on campus. However, the opportunity for students to make up the assignments and classwork missed in that session will be up to the individual instructor. And this opportunity may not always be possible due to scheduling. F1 students who miss a second on-campus session must make up the seat time by arranging with their instructor ahead of time to attend another course session and completing the classwork assigned by the instructor. Students who fail to maintain regular attendance may be terminated from their degree program and/or receive a failing grade for the course. Students who receive a failing grade may be required to retake the course.

Online – Attendance:

Canvas records all student's classwork related activity each quarter. Students have ten weeks to complete an online course. Failure to complete a course will result in a failing grade, and the student may be required to retake the course. Students who are absent for two or more weeks, as evidenced by no engagement with the course as hosted by the Learning Management System, will receive a failing grade. Required engagement may vary from course to course, but generally consists of posting to discussion boards, exchanging emails of a substantive nature about course content with the instructor, completing reviews of audio-taped lectures, etc. Please refer to the course syllabi for how attendance is defined. Page views are not counted as attendance.

Seminar and Intensives – Attendance:

Seminars are an integral part of the curriculum for Online + Low-residency programs and, therefore, require full attendance for successful completion. Students should make travel arrangements cognizant of the official beginning and ending of seminar sessions, and plan to attend the full seminar. Students who leave the seminar or intensive early and do not sign-out on the final day will not receive credit for the course. Furthermore, these students will be required to make up the required hours by enrolling in an additional seminar at a later date.

As with campus-based courses, the attendance policy for seminars and intensives does not provide “blanket permission” for students to miss a few sessions. Rather, the policy assumes that students will seek the approval of the instructor prior to an expected absence, and contact will be made with the instructor as soon as is practicable after an emergency. In all cases, missed class time may result in make-up assignments or re-registration in the courses at a later time.

Leave of Absence:

It is the expectation that Sofia University students will maintain continuous enrollment in order to achieve their academic goals. Occasionally, students must interrupt their enrollment for a variety of reasons. Allowing students to take a “leave of absence” (LOA) provides students the opportunity to return to the University under the rules and policies in effect when they left. Reasons for a LOA may include personal/medical, financial, or academic circumstances; military service; career opportunities; or a family obligation.

Students may take a maximum of two consecutive quarters off (including Summer) without penalty during the academic year. Some students take the Summer quarter off, which means that they are not enrolled in any courses for the Summer. If students fail to register after the term off, then their official academic record will be made inactive, and they will need to re-apply to the University to return to their program of study. The maximum allowable time period for a LOA is two quarters in any academic year. LOA begins on the first day of the quarter and ends on the last day of the quarter.

Leave of Absence – Impacts on Financial Aid:

Students receiving Title IV financial aid should be aware that entering LOA status will mean that financial aid awarded for the terms in which the LOA applies will be canceled. Since the student on leave will not be enrolled at least half-time, any previously borrowed federal loans may enter the grace or repayment period. If a LOA is taken after the start of a term, it will be treated as a withdrawal for that term for financial aid purposes and will follow the procedures outlined in the Title IV Withdrawal section of the Catalog. Any student considering requesting a LOA should consult with the Financial Aid Office to determine how financial aid will be affected.

Administrative Leave:

The University initiates administrative leave. Administrative leave is generally assigned to students who have been placed on Academic Probation and have been unable to resolve the issues due to outside circumstances of short-term duration. The length of the leave and requirements for return to active enrollment will be specified when the student is placed on administrative leave. Students on Administrative Leave are required to pay the quarterly leave fee.

Units and Calendar System:

Sofia University operates on a quarter system. A quarter consists of 10 weeks. All units associated with courses are quarter units: 1.0 unit generally requires 10 hours of class instruction and 20 hours of work outside class (a total of 30 hours per unit.)

Sofia University's definition of a credit hour is consistent with the federal regulation (CFRs 600.2 and 600.4), which defines the credit hour as “the amount of work represented intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."