

California State University San Marcos (CSUSM)

Service Member Readmission Policy

Purpose

California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) is committed to supporting students who serve in the Armed Forces of the United States. In compliance with the Higher Education Act, 34 CFR § 668.18, and the Federal Student Aid (FSA) Handbook (Vol. 2, Ch. 3), CSUSM ensures fair and equitable readmission for service members whose studies are interrupted by military service.

Policy Statement

A student who cannot attend CSUSM due to military service will be promptly readmitted with the same academic status they had when last attending, or when accepted for admission, provided they meet the conditions described below.

This policy also applies to applicants who have been accepted for admission but are unable to enroll due to military service.

Definitions

- **Military Service:** Voluntary or involuntary service in the U.S. Armed Forces, including the National Guard or Reserve on federal active duty (but not state active duty), active duty for training, or full-time National Guard duty, for more than 30 consecutive days under a federal call to active duty.
 - **Service Member:** A member of, or applicant to, the U.S. Armed Forces who has an obligation to perform service.
 - **Academic Status:** Admission to the same program, with the same enrollment status, credit/clock hours completed, and satisfactory academic progress standing held at the time of withdrawal.
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Notification Requirements

- **Notice of Service:** The student (or an appropriate military officer/official) must provide oral or written notice of military service to CSUSM as far in advance as reasonable under the circumstances.
 - Notice does not need to indicate the student's intent to return.
 - No notice is required if precluded by military necessity (e.g., classified operations).
 - **Notice of Intent to Return:**
 - Students must notify CSUSM of their intent to return to school within three (3) years of completing service.
 - Students who are hospitalized or recovering from an illness/injury incurred during service must notify the University within two (2) years of recovery.
 - CSUSM designates the Office of the Registrar and the Veterans Services Department as points of contact for all such notifications.
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Readmission Procedures

Upon return, CSUSM will:

- Promptly readmit the student into the next available program cohort (or program start date), unless the student requests a later return or unusual circumstances exist.
- Restore academic status by readmitting the student:
 - To the same program, or the closest equivalent if the program is no longer offered.
 - At the same enrollment status, unless the student requests otherwise.
 - With the same number of completed credit/clock hours, unless transferring to a new program.
 - With the same academic standing, including satisfactory academic progress.

Tuition and Fees

- For the first academic year, the student will be assessed the same tuition and fee charges as when the servicemember left, unless military benefits will pay the increase, but never more than the institution is charging other students.
 - For subsequent years, tuition and fees will be the same as for other students in the program.
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Academic Preparation and Support

If CSUSM determines a student is not fully prepared to resume studies at their prior academic status, the University will make reasonable efforts at no additional cost to help the student become prepared. This may include:

- Refresher courses,
- Tutoring,
- Retaking placement or prerequisite exams.

If the University determines that no reasonable effort can prepare the student, or that doing so would cause undue hardship, the student may not be readmitted. In accordance with federal law, undue hardship is defined as a significant difficulty or expense considering CSUSM's overall resources and circumstances.

Limitations

- The cumulative length of absence for military service may not exceed five (5) years, excluding certain federally mandated exceptions (e.g., wartime orders, national emergencies, involuntary extensions).
 - Readmission rights are terminated in cases of dishonorable or bad conduct discharge, general court-martial, or certain criminal convictions.
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Documentation

Upon seeking readmission, the student must provide documentation confirming eligibility, such as:

- DD-214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty,
- Copy of duty orders,
- Letter from commanding officer,
- Certificate of completion from military training school, or
- Comparable official documentation.

CSUSM will not delay readmission by demanding documentation that does not exist or is not readily available.

Compliance Statement

This policy is intended to ensure full compliance with:

- 34 CFR § 668.18 (Readmission requirements for servicemembers), and
- U.S. Department of Education guidance (FAQ on Readmission of Servicemembers to Institutions of Higher Education).

CSUSM affirms that no student or admitted applicant will be denied readmission or charged additional tuition or fees on the basis of military service obligations, except as expressly permitted under federal law.