

Heritage Christian University's Policy for Students Called to Active Duty

Heritage Christian University will make every effort to assist students in the military reserves or the National Guard, or active duty personnel who are called to active military duty. When a student is notified of military duty, s/he should contact the Registrar's Office immediately in person, by email or by phone (256-766-6610).

The Registrar's Office will initiate and coordinate procedures for arranging a leave of absence, receiving refunds, and returning to the University upon completion of the military assignment. The Registrar's Office will also notify the student's instructors, Office of Financial Aid, Business Office, and the Dean of Students of the student's status. Students must provide a copy of their military orders in order to request a leave of absence for military call to active duty. Please note that the policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate students, including both degree seeking and non-degree seeking students.

Faculty Procedures

Faculty are to instruct students to go to the Registrar's Office to receive information about taking a leave of absence for military duty and refunds. Faculty are to work with students to complete missed work when possible. If a course has been sufficiently completed when the student is called to active duty, and if the student chooses not to withdraw from the University, the faculty will award a final grade or an incomplete grade for the course based on the work completed to date. The deadline for Incompletes will be suspended indefinitely for students on a military leave of absence.

Student Procedures

Students who are called to active military duty must contact the Registrar's Office for assistance with arranging a leave of absence and their subsequent return to the University. A copy of the student's military orders must be presented to the registrar. Students who expect to return to class within the current semester to complete their course work, or who are called to duty after completing a significant part of the course requirements, should contact their faculty regarding missed work. Students who cannot complete the current semester will be granted a leave of absence for military duty and will be allowed to return for the next semester without penalty.

Registrar Procedures

The Registrar's Office will keep a list of students who officially notify the registrar that they are being called to active duty. Students must present a copy of their military orders for verification. The Registrar's Office will notify students' instructors that they will be absent from class indefinitely due to military duty. The Registrar's Office will notify other administrative offices, including Financial Aid, Business Office, and Housing (Dean of Students), of the student's status. If the extent of the military leave is so long that a student finds it impossible to make up missed class work, the registrar will process a leave of absence for the entire semester. This would allow the student to return the next semester without penalty. Students who take a leave of absence for military duty will be given an opportunity to participate in early registration for the next term, or receive

special scheduling assistance from the registrar when they return. The deadline for Incompletes will be suspended indefinitely for students on a military leave of absence.

Determining Enrollment Status and Refunds

HCU students in the military reserves or the National Guard who are called to active duty after the beginning of a semester or active duty personnel may consider two options in determining enrollment status and refund options with the University. The same options are offered to active duty personnel who are transferred unexpectedly as a result of the activation of Reserve or National Guard units:

Students may withdraw from all courses as of the effective date of the orders to report to active duty and be placed on a leave of absence for the period of one year, which can be extended. In this case, s/he may choose **(1) Total Semester Withdrawal from All Classes** and receive a full refund for tuition and fees; any university dorm and meal plan fees would be refunded on a prorated basis for the actual services received up to the date of the withdrawal. This option requires the student to withdraw from every course and receive no grade for any course taken that semester. **(2) Seek Appropriate Grade Assignment.** If a substantial part of the semester has been completed by the time the student is called for active military duty, the student may meet with each instructor to determine an appropriate grade. Since assignment of grades is the responsibility of the instructor, he/she may assign whatever grade is appropriate. If the appropriate grade is an "Incomplete," HCU will extend the deadline by which the incomplete must be removed from your academic transcript to 1 year (may be extended by written request) from the time the student returns from active duty. Any university dorm and meal plan fees would be refunded on a prorated basis for the actual services the student received up to the date of leaving the university for active duty.

Courses No Longer Offered

If a course in which a student returning from active duty has an incomplete grade is no longer offered or if the faculty member is no longer with the University, the returning student will receive a full tuition credit for a replacement course. Please note that if the student is called to active duty in her or his last semester prior to graduation, the student should contact the appropriate office to make arrangements for completion of graduation requirements.

Textbooks

Textbooks purchased for the current semester may be presented, with a copy of the applicable military orders, to the University bookstore for a full refund (*there will be no refund(s) issued for textbooks if the student chooses to take an incomplete grade (I) in his or her courses*).

Payments Received for Future Semesters

Payments and/or deposits received for future semesters are refunded in full. The student will be responsible for any miscellaneous charges such as library fines, Chapel fines, cafeteria charges, etc.

Returning from Active Duty

When the active duty assignment is complete, students should contact the Office of the Registrar within 6 months of discharge to discuss plans to resume attending HCU. The student's right to reenroll in the future and register for courses is maintained unaffected.

Refunds of Federal Financial Aid

For students receiving financial aid at the time of their withdrawal, please be aware that the Office of Financial Aid is required by federal regulation to calculate the amount of aid (if any) that must be returned. This applies to any student that withdraws and there is not an exception for military deployment. Depending on the amount of aid received and the date of withdrawal in that semester, the student may have to repay a percentage of aid to the appropriate aid programs.

Federal Student Loan and Additional Financial Aid Information

The federal government provides options for servicemen and women who are being deployed for active duty and who have student loans. As a deployed service member, a student may be eligible to delay or temporarily suspend making loan payments to reduce the burden on them and their family. In general, service members will fall into one of three categories:

- Those currently enrolled in school, have taken out student loans, and are being called to active duty.
- Those within the grace period of their student loans, have yet to make a first payment, and are being called to active duty.
- Those currently making payments on student loans and are being called to active duty.

The key for the student is to contact the lender or the agency that services their student loans to see if they are eligible for the delayed or suspended repayment benefit.

Other Financial Aid Information

The financial aid application is an annual process and students can file their aid application in advance of readmission to the University. Students should file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online by going to www.fafsa.gov and completing the form for the aid year they plan to return.