



FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: University Affairs Board

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DATE: November 13, 2025 for November 25, 2025

AGENDA ITEM: 4

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Annual Report: Report on the *Supportive Leaves Policy: 2024-25*

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Section 5.6 of the *Terms of Reference* for the University Affairs Board provides that:

The Board receives, annually from its assessors, reports on matters within its areas of responsibility, (for example, but not limited to, trademark licensing, non-academic discipline, and submission of audited financial statements of student societies) including statements of current issues, opportunities and problems, and recommendations for changes in policies, plans or priorities that would address such issues.

Section 82 of the *Supportive Leaves Policy*, provides that:

The Office of the Vice-Provost, Students, must prepare and submit annually to the University Affairs Board a report consisting of a narrative of the functioning of the *Policy* over the course of the preceding academic year. The report must also include statistics in aggregate form, without names or any identifying personal information, of the number of Students agreeing to a voluntary Supportive Leave, or being subject to a mandated Supportive Leave decision under this *Policy* and the numbers of any of those Students returning to registered status at the University during the academic year.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **University Affairs Board [For Information] (November 25, 2025)**

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

The *Policy* was initially approved on June 27, 2018, and revisions, stemming from the 2021-22 review, including renaming to the *Supportive Leaves Policy* were approved on February 15, 2023, and came into effect on March 1, 2023. A report has been brought to the University Affairs Board (UAB) for information in Cycle 2 each year since (November 2019 to present).

HIGHLIGHTS:

Policy Usage

In the 2024–25 academic year, the *Policy* was invoked once.

The case involved:

- Urgent Situation as defined under the *Policy*
- Parallel criminal charges
- Potential consideration under the *Code of Student Conduct*

Review Activity

During the reporting period (September 1, 2024 – August 30, 2025), there were no requests for review by the Provost of decisions made by the Vice-Provost, Students under the *Policy*.

Long-Term Reporting Shift

As noted in the 2023–24 Report, the *Policy* has now reached its 7-year milestone.

Accordingly, reporting has moved to a five-year data cycle, aligning with the *Code of Student Conduct* reporting practices.

Open Leave Cases

As of August 30, 2025, there are six open Leave cases spanning the period 2020–2025.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications.

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

Annual Report: Summary of the *Supportive Leaves Policy*, 2024-25.

Summary of Cases Under the Supportive Leaves Policy: 2024 – 2025

Preamble

This is the 2024-2025 report of the [Supportive Leaves Policy \(the “Policy”\)](#)¹ presented to University Affairs Board (UAB) annually in Cycle 2 for information. The details presented within this report relate to information on cases under the *Policy* for the 2024–2025 academic year (September 1, 2024 – August 30, 2025).

As indicated in the 2023-2024 report, now that the *Policy* passed the six-year mark, we are moving to report on activity under the *Policy* during the previous academic year (2024-2025) and the four preceding years of historical data. This practice aligns with the *Code of Student Conduct* report.

As outlined in section VII of the *Policy*, “The Office of the Vice-Provost, Students, must prepare and submit annually to UAB a report consisting of a narrative of the functioning of the *Policy* over the course of the preceding academic year. The report must also include statistics in aggregate form, without names or any identifying personal information, of the number of Students agreeing to a voluntary Supportive Leave or being subject to a mandated Supportive Leave decision under this *Policy* and the numbers of any of those Students returning to registered status at the University during the academic year.”

Statistics

The statistics presented in this report capture activity under the *Policy* from September 1–August 30 in the preceding academic year². To date, the annual report to UAB has included usage data since the *Policy* came into effect in 2018. However, now that the *Policy* is at the six-year mark, future reports will include data on the activity under the *Policy* during the previous academic year and the four preceding years of historical data.

Policy usage data 2020-2025:

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Mandated Supportive Leaves	4	4	3	7	1	19
Voluntary Supportive Leaves	0	0	0	2	0	2
TOTALS:	4	4	3	9	1	21

Urgent Situations	2	3	2	5	1	13
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Returned to Studies	2	1	2	5	2	11
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In the 2024-2025 academic year, the Vice-Provost, Students, received one request from a division head to invoke the *Policy*. After careful review of the circumstances, the *Policy* was used in this instance. The case involved Urgent Situations (section 46-49) and related criminal charges.

¹ The *Supportive Leaves Policy* replaced the *University-Mandated Leave of Absence Policy*, on March 1, 2023.

² As noted in 2021-2022 report, we shifted the reporting period, starting in the 2022-2023 report, to be to September 1–August 30 to capture activity across the full cycle of the academic year.

Activity highlights as of August 30, 2025, for cases 2020 - 2025:

- **Urgent Situations & Disciplinary overlap:** Of the 21 cases, 13 involved Urgent Situations under the *Policy*; seven had parallel criminal charges; and four involved *Code of Student Conduct* processes that were paused when the *Supportive Leaves Policy* was initiated.
- **Return to Studies:** 11 of the 21 cases have returned to studies
- **Current Leave status:** six cases remain open: five are active and one is considered dormant. All are mandated Supportive Leaves.
- **2024-2025 Policy Invocation:** The *Policy* was invoked once during the 2024-2025 academic year. The student placed on leave chose to withdraw from the University of Toronto and return to their home country after completing Mental Health Diversion via the court system. The University arranged continued access to medical coverage during the period that the student was required to remain in Ontario.
- **Voluntary Withdrawals:** Two additional students opted to leave the University and return to their home countries to continue their studies and treatment with local providers. One was in the return-to-studies process, and the other was on a voluntary Supportive Leave.
- **Denied Return Request:** One student, previously engaged in a return-to-studies review in 2023–2024, underwent further expert medical assessment in 2024–2025. Their request to return was denied for a second time due to new criminal charges, ongoing behavioural concerns, and not sufficiently engaging in recommended medical treatment. The student has been advised to engage in treatment and further assessment before a safe return can be considered. A recommended treatment plan has been provided, and the student continues to receive support from their Student Case Manager. Their family has been actively involved, and the student has expressed appreciation for the University’s ongoing support.
- **Extended Leaves:** Four students from the six active cases had their leaves extended by the University because they did not request to return to studies.
- **Dormant Case:** One Leave case is considered dormant. The student has not engaged with the University or expressed interest in returning. Due to the individualized nature of the *Policy*, the University may choose to maintain periodic contact through the Case Manager or allow the student to initiate re-engagement when ready. In this case, the University has not been able to connect with the student in five years.
- **Termination of Registration:** The University may terminate a student’s registration and/or association if there is no engagement within a specified period, as outlined in Section 81 of the *Policy*. This discretion was exercised in one case initiated in 2020–2021. The student underwent three expert medical assessments and was not ready to return. Despite being provided with terms, a treatment plan, and ongoing support, the student did not communicate with the University for over two years.

Demographic data

Of the 21 cases under the *Policy* from 2020-2025:

- 14 (67%) are domestic students and seven (33%) are international students;
- 20 (95%) are undergraduates and one (5%) is a graduate student, studying in a range of programs across the University; and
- 15 (71%) identify as male, six identify as female (29%).*

*Gender identity data is based on what was entered in ACORN at the time of reporting.

As noted in the 2024-2025 report, the University is committed to expand reporting in this area, as appropriate, based on information available through the [University of Toronto Student Equity Census Data](#).

Request for Review of Decision

During the reporting period (September 1, 2023 - August 30, 2024), there were no requests for the Provost to review the Vice-Provost, Students' decisions under the *Policy*.

Return to Studies

At the start of the Fall 2025 term, 11 of the 21 cases that have proceeded under the *Policy* from 2020-2025, have resulted in the student returning to studies to date:

- Seven students are continuing with their studies and remain in good academic standing.
- Two students have chosen to leave U of T and continue their studies and focus on treatment in their home country.
- Two students are on a break from their registration at U of T, not under provisions of the *Policy*.

For the two students who returned to studies in the 2024-2025 academic year, the types of conditions for return were like previous cases and include the following: regular contact with their Student Case Manager; engaging with accessibility plans arranged with Accessibility Services; adhering to recommended treatment plans; reduced course loads and/or remote return to studies for online courses in limited situations; limitations on access (e.g., living in residence); and no-contact orders with those who had been the focus of the safety concern.

Functioning of the *Policy*

Terms and Conditions

Some of the terms and conditions put in place under the *Policy* include the following: a full tuition refund for the courses the student was enrolled in; deferring exams and course deliverables; late withdrawals without academic penalty; providing access to Health and Wellness services during the leave and/or helping to transition to community care; continuation of student extended health-insurance coverage; arrangements to complete course work off-campus; housing assistance; bursaries and support with OSAP and other funding related processes; arrangements for remote and or virtual psychological/psychiatric risk assessments to be conducted; regular contact with the Student Case Manager; and ongoing review of status and progress by the Vice-Provost, Students and Student Support Team.

Student Case Manager and the Student Support Team

Each student was provided with a Student Case Manager (SCM) as per Section 28 of the *Policy*, and they acted as the student's point of contact, helping them navigate resources, understand the *Policy* and the process, and provide support. The SCM was chosen based on factors such as their familiarity with the student, the student's comfort level with the individual, and the position the individual holds at the University.

Further, in each case, a Student Support Team (SST) was formed as per Section 29 of the *Policy*. The SST was typically made up of the SCM, the local registrar, a regulated health professional, a representative from academic division/department, and other parties who were relevant to the case, such as an equity officer and accessibility services advisor. A medical professional who was not involved in the student's care was consulted in each case.

The *Policy* has provided flexibility to put a plan in place that is reflective of the individual needs of the student.

Review of the *Policy*

When the most recent revisions to the *Supportive Leaves Policy* were approved by Governing Council in February 2023, the administration agreed that the U of T Ombudsperson would be asked to review the cases handled under the first year of the revised *Policy* (2023-2024). As outlined in the Assessor Notes accompanying the 2023-2024 version of this report, the Vice-Provost, Students shared that, "I am pleased to report that the Ombudsperson [at the time], Emeritus Professor Bruce Kidd, reviewed all cases with an eye to the specifics of the *Policy* and the requirements for procedural fairness."

University Ombudsperson reviewed the cases after the first year of the *Supportive Leaves Policy* (2023-2024). This review was shared with UAB in Cycle 2, 2024.

Section VII of the *Policy* also indicates that, "The Provost undertakes to review the *Policy* in the seventh academic year of its operation, and to report to the Governing Council about that review. Subsequent reviews shall be as requested by the Governing Council or as suggested by the Provost." The University is currently in the process of initiating this review for 2025-2026, more information and updates to follow in upcoming governance cycles.

Understanding and Navigating the *Supportive Leaves Policy*

It is important to note that a student is not expected to navigate this process on their own. The Student Case Manager, defined by the *Policy*, is available to meet with the student regularly throughout this process and support them in obtaining any necessary medical information, resources and support referrals, and developing a return to studies plan that includes any necessary supports or accommodations.

In response to recommendations from the initial review of the *Policy*, the University agreed to create a Companion Guide to help students, and those who work with students, understand and navigate the *Supportive Leaves Policy*. The [Student Companion Guide to the Supportive Leaves Policy](#) is available on the Office of the Vice-Provost, Student's website. The development of the Guide included extensive consultation with student organizations as well as staff and faculty who have experience engaging with the *Policy*.

Concluding thoughts

The *Policy* continues to serve as a compassionate and non-punitive mechanism for addressing serious and concerning student behaviour that may pose a risk to others' safety or significantly disrupt the learning environment. In the 2024–2025 academic year, the *Policy* was invoked once, in a case involving concurrent criminal proceedings and potential application of the University's *Code of Student Conduct*. This limited usage underscores the *Policy's* role as carefully considered and selective intervention, reserved for complex cases where conventional disciplinary approaches may not be appropriate and attempts to support and accommodate the student have been exhausted.

Over the past five years, the data consistently demonstrate that the *Policy* offers a meaningful alternative to disciplinary processes, allowing students to step away from their studies to focus on their health and well-being. Importantly, it provides a pathway for students to return when they are ready, without the long-term academic consequences that may result from punitive measures. In cases where the *Policy* has been applied, students have been supported by the University through coordinated care, dedicated case management, and access to appropriate resources—reinforcing the institution's commitment to student wellness and success.

The University remains committed to the continued implementation of this *Policy*, which was originally established in response to a recommendation from the University of Toronto Ombudsperson's annual report to Governing Council. That report called for a compassionate and supportive framework to temporarily remove students from the University in cases where existing non-academic discipline policies were insufficient, particularly in situations involving serious mental health concerns or other extenuating circumstances.

Reflecting on the *Policy's* purpose, guiding principles, and outcomes to date, the University is highly satisfied with its impact. We are encouraged by the evidence that students who were previously struggling—academically and personally—are now being given the opportunity to prioritize their well-being. With appropriate support and intervention, these students are better positioned to return and pursue their academic and personal goals in a healthier and more sustainable manner.