

FOR RECOMMENDATION

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: UTSC Academic Affairs Committee

SPONSOR: Prof. Karin Ruhlandt, Vice-Principal, Academic and Dean
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PRESENTER: Shelby Verboven, Registrar & Assistant Dean Strategic Enrolment Management
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DATE: April 22, 2026 for April 29, 2026

AGENDA ITEM: 6

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Academic Regulation Change: Return from Absence (Voluntary Leave or Withdrawal), UTSC

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The University of Toronto Scarborough Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) “is concerned with matters affecting the teaching, learning and research functions of the Campus (*AAC Terms of Reference*, 2022, section 4).” Under section 5.5 of its Term of Reference, “amendments to Campus academic regulations that will have a major effect on the entire Campus or that would require an exception to some element of University-wide policy” would require an approval by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs of the Academic Board following recommendation by the AAC.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **UTSC Academic Affairs Committee [For Recommendation] (April 29, 2026)**
2. Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [For Approval] (May 12, 2026)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

No previous action in governance has been taken on this item.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The proposed revisions to the Return from Absence (Voluntary Leave or Withdrawal) policy are intended to reflect recent institutional and UTSC policy changes to post-admission transfer credit processes and

Letter of Permission requirements, and to clarify the distinction between re-enrolment and re-application pathways for students returning after an absence.

Currently, the policy does not clearly distinguish between circumstances in which a student may request re-enrolment and those requiring re-application, particularly for students who have pursued studies at another institution during their absence.

The proposed changes bring UTSC into closer alignment with peer U15 institutions by requiring students who have studied at another degree- or diploma-granting institution without pre-approval during an extended absence to re-apply for admission. These revisions provide clearer expectations, more consistent processes, and greater transparency for students seeking to return to their studies.

These changes are implemented through three key revisions:

First, the revisions establish consistent and equitable processes for students seeking to return to their studies, including those who transfer to another undergraduate division and later wish to return, and those who study at another institution without prior approval.

Second, the revisions provide clear guidance for students who undertake studies elsewhere without pre-approval, including requirements for re-application and pathways for transfer credit or exclusion assessment. These changes align with updated institutional requirements effective September 1, 2025, which require pre-approval (e.g., Letter of Permission or exchange programs) for transfer credit.

Finally, the revisions ensure that the division has access to academic records for students who have studied elsewhere during an absence, enabling appropriate assessment of eligibility for re-admission and transfer credit.

The revisions also include a change to the regulation title to Return from Absence, reflecting updated terminology.

The proposal has been developed in consultation with the Scarborough Campus Students' Union, the Chairs of academic departments, the Academic Advising & Career Centre, and Registrar's Offices in the Faculty of Arts & Science, the University of Toronto Mississauga, and the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no significant financial implications to the campus operating budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Recommended:

THAT the proposed changes to the Return from Absence (Voluntary Leave or Withdrawal) policy, as described in the attached proposal, be approved effective September 1, 2026.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

1. Proposal – Changes to UTSC Academic Regulations - UTSC Academic Calendar, Return from Absence (April 9, 2026)

2025-26 Curriculum Cycle

Changes to UTSC Academic Regulations

Proposed Change	UTSC Academic Calendar, Return from Absence
Division	University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)
Proponents	Office of the Registrar, University of Toronto Scarborough
Contact	Registrar's Office: Shelby Verboven, Registrar and Assistant Dean, Strategic Enrolment Management (shelby.verboven@utoronto.ca)
Version Date	April 9, 2026
Effective Date	September 1, 2026

Governance Route

UTSC Academic Affairs Committee [For recommendation] (April 29, 2026)

Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [For approval] (May 12, 2026)

Summary

The [Return from Absence \(Voluntary Leave or Withdrawal\)](#) policy outlines the process for UTSC undergraduate students seeking to resume their studies after an absence of at least 12 months.

The proposed revisions update the policy to reflect recent institutional and UTSC policy changes to post-admission transfer credit processes and Letter of Permission requirements, and to clarify requirements for students who have undertaken studies at other institutions during their absence. The revisions distinguish between approved and unapproved pathways and introduce clearer requirements governing students' return to studies following an absence.

The proposal also updates the policy title to "Return from Absence" to better reflect current categories of student absence and introduces clearer language in the UTSC Academic Calendar to support consistent and transparent application of existing processes.

The revisions clarify situations in which a student may request re-enrolment, and situations in which a re-application is required. Appendix A: Return from Absence illustrates the different scenarios.

Context

Currently, the Policy states that students previously registered at UTSC who have completed at least one course and wish to return after suspension or absence of three or more consecutive sessions (at least 12 months), and UTSC alumni wishing to return to studies as a non-degree student, can submit a ["Re-enrolment Request Form"](#) to the Office of the Registrar.

However, the policy language in the current UTSC Academic Calendar does not explicitly address existing processes for:

- Students who have **not** obtained a final grade, Aegrotat (AEG), Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR), Pass/Failure (P/FL), late withdrawal (LWD), or withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) in at least one course within their first two terms, who are required to **re-apply** for admission through the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) system (a process already in practice);
- Students who **have** obtained a final grade, Aegrotat (AEG), Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR), Pass/Failure (P/FL), late withdrawal (LWD) or withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) in at least one course within their first two terms and have not pursued studies at another recognized institution during their absence, who are required to **request re-enrolment** (also a process already in practice); and
- Students who **have** pursued studies at another recognized institution **with** prior approval (Letter of Permission or outbound exchange), who are required to **request re-enrolment** (another process already in practice).

The policy revision, along with the addition of more specific language to the Calendar, will provide greater clarity for these three existing processes. This revision also introduces **a change in process** for the following two situations:

- Students who transfer to another undergraduate division of the University of Toronto, and subsequently wish to transfer back to UTSC will be required to **re-apply**. A re-application process aligns with the current processes in place at the Faculty of Arts & Science (FAS) and University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM). In this instance, prior credits earned at UTSC will be “retained” while credits earned at other divisions of U of T credits will be “transferred.”
- Students who **have** obtained a final grade, Aegrotat (AEG), Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR), Pass/Failure (P/FL), late withdrawal (LWD) or withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) and **have** pursued studies at a recognized institution **without** prior approval, will be required to **re-apply** for admission through the U of T Internal Application on the OUAC system. The U of T Internal Application, administered through the Ontario Universities' Application Centre, is used to assess current or former University of Toronto students applying for admission to a different division or campus. In this instance, completed courses may

be assessed for transfer credit or exclusions. A re-application process aligns with the existing processes in place at FAS and UTM for students who transfer between undergraduate divisions of the University; FAS and UTM are also introducing the requirement that students who have pursued studies at another institution without prior approval must re-apply for admission.

Calendar Copy Showing All Changes

Current Text	Proposed Text
Return from Absence (Voluntary Leave or Withdrawal) Students previously registered at UTSC who have completed at least one course and wish to return after suspension or absence of three or more consecutive sessions (at least 12 months), and UTSC alumni wishing to return to studies as a non-degree student, can submit a "Re-enrolment Request Form" to the Office of the Registrar. Students should apply to re-enroll well before the final deadline to ensure there is sufficient time to process any requested post-admission transfer credit. Degree students in good standing who studied at a recognized degree-granting institution during their absence from UTSC may be eligible to receive transfer credit for courses completed with at least a 60% (C-), where the minimum passing grade is 50%. Students should apply for post-admission transfer credit online and make payments. Official final transcripts are required and should be sent directly to the Office of Admissions & Student Recruitment at UTSC. Enrolment in most courses is on a first-come, first-served basis. In order to have the	Return from Absence Previously registered degree or non-degree students who wish to return to studies after a suspension or absence of at least 12 months may be eligible to request re-enrolment, or may be required to re-apply for admission, depending on their situation. Students who were previously registered and who study elsewhere will be required to re-apply. Students are eligible to request re-enrolment if they: - obtained at least one course with a final mark or Aegrotat (AEG), Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR), Pass/Failure (P/FL), late withdrawal (LWD) or withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) in at least one course in their first two terms and - did not pursue any studies at a recognized institution during their absence except where pre-approved by a Letter of Permission or as part of an outbound exchange program or when pre-approved through another University of Toronto program, and

application processed in time to take advantage of the wider availability of courses, students are strongly advised to submit the application to re-enroll by the dates listed below: • Mid-March for the Summer Session • Mid-June for both the Fall and Winter Sessions • Early October for the Winter Session Late applications to re-enroll will be considered ONLY if received before classes begin in the session. Late fees may apply. For further information on re-enrolment, visit the Office of the Registrar website.	• have not transferred to another undergraduate division of the University of Toronto or • are returning from academic suspension or suspension due to academic misconduct. Students requesting re-enrolment will follow the deadlines of the Office of the Registrar. Enrolment in courses is not guaranteed. Students with outstanding accounts will not be permitted to re-enrol until these accounts are paid. Students are required to re-apply for admission to continue their studies if they: • did not obtain at least one course with a final mark or Aegrotat (AEG), Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR), Pass/Failure (P/FL), late withdrawal (LWD) or withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) in at least one course in their first two terms • transferred to another undergraduate division of the University of Toronto. • pursued studies at another recognized institution without pre-approval (by Letter of Permission, outbound exchange program or other University of Toronto approved program).
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Implementation

Upon University governance approval, the change will be implemented through the following means:

- UTSC Academic Calendar: this change will be included on the ‘New for 2026-2027’ webpage designed to highlight new program, policy and regulation changes. The 2026-27 UTSC Academic Calendar will take effect as of September 1, 2026.
- The substantive proposed modification requires an update to the current OUAC internal transfer student application. The Office of the Faculty Registrar of the Faculty of Arts & Science, on behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, UTM, and UTSC, contacted the University Registrar’s Office in November 2024 concerning the possibility of this update. It was confirmed in July 2025 that all necessary actions were being taken to implement the proposal, pending governance approval.
- The re-enrolment form completed by UTSC students who have not been registered in at least 12 months will, pending governance approval, be updated with a statement requiring students to disclose all studies they pursued at degree and diploma granting institutions while not registered. The form will direct students who pursued studies without pre-approval to re-apply through OUAC.
- Stakeholders will be notified in writing of the academic regulation change to keep academic advisors, departmental leadership, and administrators informed.

Rationale

The proposed revisions to the Return from Absence (Voluntary Leave or Withdrawal) regulation are necessary to address a regulatory gap created by the [change to the Policy on Transfer of Course Credits approved by Academic Board on May 23, 2024](#). The policy established the principles that post-admission transfer credit opportunities for courses administered by a third-party organization would not be eligible for transfer credit consideration, and that post-admission transfer credit for online courses completed at another recognized institution will only be considered with prior approval from a student’s home academic division’s post-admission transfer credit process.

Under the previous framework, students could pursue studies at another recognized institution while not registered at UTSC and could request transfer credit upon return, under a policy called “post-admission transfer credit.” The Faculty of Arts & Science, U of T Mississauga and U of T Scarborough all eliminated the post-admission transfer credit opportunity in alignment with the U of T policy change, effective September 1, 2025 and now require that students seek pre-approval for courses taken elsewhere through a Letter of Permission or another approved pathway.

Modifications to the Return from Absence (Voluntary Leave or Withdrawal) policy bring UTSC into closer alignment with several U15 universities by stipulating that students who, while not registered at UTSC for at least 12 months, have pursued studies at another degree or diploma granting institution without prior approval must re-apply for

admission. Currently, this approach is reflected in policies at institutions such as Western University, where students who have studied at another institution since leaving are required to re-apply for admission, and at McMaster University, where students who attend another university or complete a college credential during their absence must re-apply using the OUAC Undergraduate application. At Queen's University, students who complete coursework elsewhere during a leave may be deemed to have established a new basis of admission and therefore may be required to re-apply.

The existing Return from Absence (Voluntary Leave or Withdrawal) regulation does not clearly distinguish between students who followed approved pathways (e.g., Letter of Permission or exchange programs) and those who pursued studies elsewhere without authorization. As a result, the current wording permits inconsistent treatment of students and does not adequately support transparent academic review.

The proposed revisions also include a change to the regulation title to simply Return from Absence, as “voluntary leave” and “withdrawal” no longer accurately describe the categories of student absences.

The proposed revisions to this policy aim to achieve four objectives.

First, the proposed changes will provide students with clearer expectations, more consistent and aligned processes, and greater transparency in how they may return to their studies, while ensuring fair consideration of prior academic work.

Second, the revisions would resolve existing inconsistencies and ensure equity of process for two groups of students when seeking to return to their studies: those who transfer to another undergraduate division and subsequently wish to return to UTSC, and those who study at another institution without prior permission.

Third, the revisions would address the specific example of a student who does not secure pre-approval before studying at another recognized institution by providing clear guidance on re-application, and an equitable path for the assessment of transfer credit or exclusion (i.e., recognition of prior coursework either for credit or to determine its eligibility toward program and degree requirements). Note that effective September 1, 2025, current students who wish to study at another institution while a U of T student are required to receive pre-approval through a Letter of Permission, outbound exchange program or other pre-approved University of Toronto program in order to receive transfer credit.

Finally, the revisions would ensure that the division has consistent access to the academic records of students who, while not registered in the division for at least 12 months, pursued studies at another institution without pre-approval, in order to assess whether these studies have an impact on their eligibility to return. This is because, as part of the

re-application process, students will submit transcripts of the studies pursued elsewhere as a part of the re-application process, and these transcripts can then be evaluated for academic eligibility to the campus and for transfer credit.

Impact

Re-applying rather than re-enrolling may be considered positive for students, as they may be eligible for increased transfer credit upon re-application. Re-application might also be viewed negatively due to the fee required and the timing of when readmitted students can begin their studies. It is important to note that the goal of this proposal is to ensure equity of process and access to apply for transfer credit for students who pursue studies outside of UTSC without pre-approval, whether as a student in another undergraduate division at the University of Toronto or as a student at another degree-granting or a diploma-granting institution.

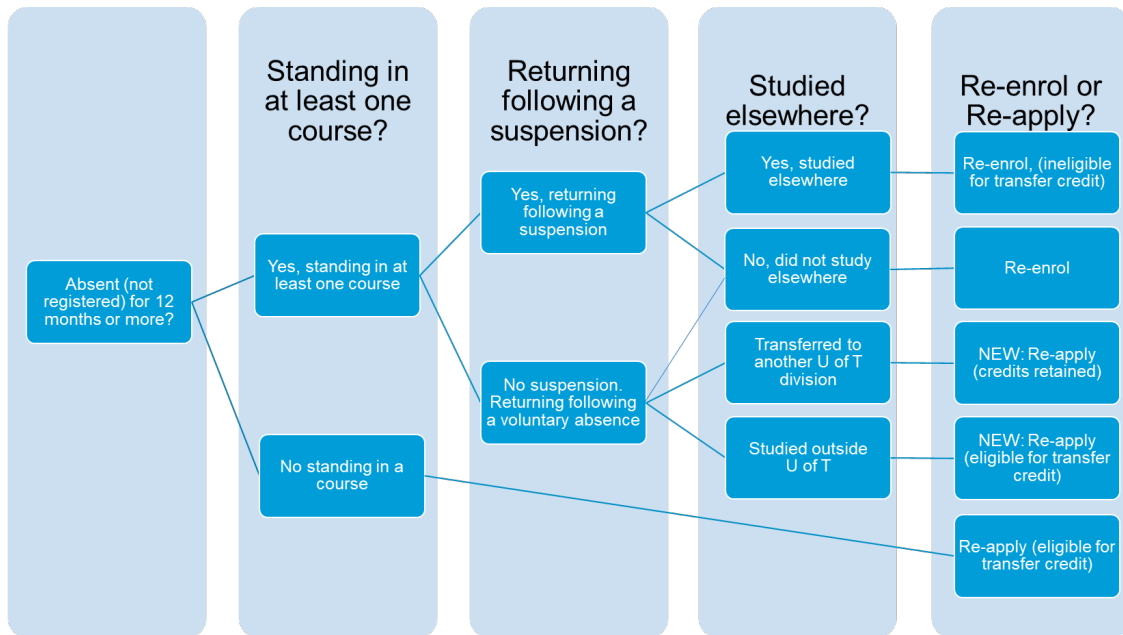
Resource Implications

No additional resource implications. Resources will be part of the regular Academic Calendar production process. Resources required to communicate changes to stakeholders as well as implement changes to the different UTSC websites and systems will be supported by the Office of the Registrar. Changes required to the Internal Application via OUAC will be supported by the Office of the University Registrar.

Consultation

- Scarborough Campus Students Union (January 2026) – In support with no feedback
- Office of the Registrar, U of T Mississauga (November 2025) - In support and provided feedback on consistency of language with the UTM proposal
- Office of the Faculty Registrar, Faculty of Arts & Science (November 2025) – In support and provided feedback on consistency of language with the FAS proposal
- Office of the Registrar and Student Services, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design (April 2026) – In support. Noticed a line missing in Appendix A, which was corrected.
- Academic department chairs, UTSC (January 2026) - In support with no feedback
- Academic Advising & Career Centre, UTSC (December 2025) – In support and asked about clarification on process for students returning to UTSC after studying in another division.

Appendix A: Return from Absence



Note: For the purpose of this diagram, “standing” refers to a student having achieved a mark or Aegrotat (AEG), Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR), Pass/Failure (P/FL), late withdrawal (LWD) or withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) in at least one course in their first two terms.

Appendix B: Proposed Changes to Current Calendar Text – 2025-26 UTSC Academic Calendar (in Track Changes)

Return from Absence

Previously registered degree or non-degree students who wish to return to studies after a suspension or absence of at least 12 months may be eligible to request re-enrolment, or may be required to re-apply for admission, depending on their situation. Students who were previously registered and who study elsewhere will be required to re-apply.

Students are eligible to request re-enrolment if they:

- obtained at least one course with a final mark or Aegrotat (AEG), Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR), Pass/Failure (P/FL), late withdrawal (LWD) or withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) in at least one course in their first two terms and
- did not pursue any studies at a recognized institution during their absence **except where pre-approved** by a [Letter of Permission](#) or as part of an outbound exchange program or when pre-approved through another University of Toronto program, and
- have not transferred to another undergraduate division of the University of Toronto or
- are returning from academic suspension or suspension due to academic misconduct.

Students requesting re-enrolment will follow the deadlines of the [Office of the Registrar](#). Enrolment in courses is not guaranteed. Students with [outstanding accounts](#) will not be permitted to re-enrol until these accounts are paid.

Students are required to re-apply for admission to continue their studies if they:

- did not obtain at least one course with a final mark or Aegrotat (AEG), Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR), Pass/Failure (P/FL), late withdrawal (LWD) or withdrawal without academic penalty (WDR) in at least one course in their first two terms
- transferred to another undergraduate division of the University of Toronto.
- pursued studies at another recognized institution without pre-approval (by Letter of Permission, outbound exchange program or other University of Toronto approved program).