

POLICY ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM GRADUATE STUDIES

Under compelling personal or medical reasons, a graduate student may request a leave of absence from their graduate program for a period of up to two semesters. The request for a leave of absence must be made using the Voluntary Separation Notification form on The Graduate School's website.

The request requires approval from the student's major advisor and the department or program head. The completed application is to be submitted to The Graduate School for review and approval at least thirty days before the leave of absence is to commence, or the earliest date possible in extenuating circumstances.

Information provided in the application for a leave of absence must address the specific reason(s) prompting the request. Examples could include, but are not limited to, physical and/or mental health issues, family leave and financial hardship. Students requesting a health-related leave of absence should not submit medical documentation to The Graduate School. In addition, consultation with university offices may be appropriate. For example, consultation related to assessment of the safety of the student's work environment may be requested by contacting the Division of Environmental Health and Safety at ehs.uconn.edu (<http://ehs.uconn.edu>) and accommodations and services for students with disabilities may be discussed with the Center for Students with Disabilities at csd.uconn.edu (<http://csd.uconn.edu>).

When students are on approved leaves of absence for the full duration of a fall or spring semester, they are not required to register for any credit or non-credit course. Requests submitted during an academic session will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine the most appropriate mechanism for recording the period of leave (e.g., requests made prior to the open enrollment closing date may be dated to cover the entire semester). An approved leave of absence indicates that the student status will be recorded as "inactive" for the duration of the requested period of leave, and as such, the student will not have access to university services as a graduate student. In addition, the terminal date (the date determined by The Graduate School by which all degree requirements must be completed) of any student granted a leave of absence will be extended by a period of time equivalent to the duration of the approved leave of absence. Thus, the period of the approved leave of absence will not be considered when calculating the time the student has spent working toward the completion of the degree. In contrast, a student who chooses to maintain Continuous Registration will maintain active status, which means the student will continue to pay associated fees and have access to university services as a graduate student, and the terminal date for degree requirements is not extended. Thus, the decision to choose a leave of absence versus Continuous Registration to maintain active status must be weighed accordingly. The information about refunds and cancellation of charges found in the Tuition and Fees section of the catalog applies to students taking an approved leave of absence.

International students are strongly encouraged to evaluate thoroughly the implications of any decisions on their student status. International students must obtain authorization from an international advisor at International Student and Scholar Services before any course is dropped. Failure to do so will be considered a status violation and will result in

termination of the student's SEVIS record. It is strongly recommended that students hold advisory meetings with international advisors if they are considering requesting leaves of absence.

The leave of absence can be extended up to a maximum of two additional semesters. The request must be resubmitted using the previously described procedures, and ultimately approved by The Graduate School. A leave of absence cannot exceed four semesters in duration. In cases in which a student needs leave for more than four semesters, the student must reapply for admission to The Graduate School with no assurance of acceptance.

Approval of a leave of absence does not assure or guarantee that a graduate program, an academic department, The Graduate School, or the University would be in a position to provide financial support or a graduate assistantship to the student upon the student's return to studies following an approved leave of absence. Students returning to studies after a leave of absence must work with appropriate faculty advisors and program personnel to resume their degree programs.

Reinstatement from an approved leave of absence will occur at the beginning of the appropriate academic term. To request reinstatement from an approved leave of absence, the student should complete the Request for Reinstatement from Leave of Absence from Graduate Studies form on The Graduate School website and submit it to The Graduate School.