

## **Summary of Graduate College policy changes for AY 21-22**

### **Revision to the English Proficiency Policy**

*Approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee September 9, 2020*

This revision provides clarification around expectations for domestic and international students regarding meeting English proficiency requirements for admission. Specifically, the policy clarifies that domestic applicants would be exempted from submitting TOEFL or IELTS scores, but may be required to take an English Placement Test upon arrival to campus if they:

- who have lived, been educated, or worked professionally primarily outside of the United States\* or another approved [country](#); or
- who have U.S. permanent resident, asylee or refugee status and have lived in the United States for less than two years from the first term of enrollment.

*\*If their educational or professional work experience has primarily been within Guam, Puerto Rico, or the Northern Mariana Islands, they will be required to take the EPT.*

Additionally, this revision provides clarification around the exemption requirements.

### **Revision to the Format of Doctoral Examinations**

*Approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee January 21, 2021*

This policy revision would permit fully in-person, hybrid and fully online examinations to take place without any special permission from the Graduate College. The program, committee and student would identify the appropriate examination mode.

### **Establish a Graduate College policy for Academic Forgiveness**

*Approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee January 21, 2021*

This policy would allow re-entering graduate students who are returning with a cumulative GPA well below their department required minimum, the opportunity to work with their programs to identify courses that will satisfy degree requirements as well as create a path forward for success to return and finish a graduate program.

#### *Who is Eligible?*

Graduate students who are returning after a minimum of two years (6 terms) and who have a cumulative graduate level GPA significantly below the required minimum for their program.

#### *What is the process?*

1. As part of the Graduate College re-entry petition, students will work with their program to propose which courses previously taken will count toward degree completion and which will be set aside. The Graduate College will document these as a part of the re-entry process. Courses that are set aside will not be included in the computation of GPA for graduation purposes.
2. Students will be limited to requesting prior coursework for up to two-thirds of the required hours for the degree to count towards degree completion. Students will be required to complete the remainder of the credit hours after re-entry to the program.

3. The list of courses identified in the re-entry petition, plus the courses taken upon re-entry will be used to calculate the student's GPA for graduation purposes. The combination of these hours must meet the program's required minimum GPA to be eligible for graduation. All courses taken and grades earned in the Graduate College will remain on the student's transcript.
4. The prior coursework requested to count towards the degree are subject to the time limit policy and it will be up to the student's program to determine if those courses are still applicable for the degree.
5. Students are eligible for the academic forgiveness policy once during their enrollment in the Graduate College.

### **Revision to the Leave of Absence Policy**

*Approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee April 1, 2021*

The revisions to the Leave of Absence Policy include the following changes:

1. Removing the "types of leave" to simplify the policy.
2. Updated language on academic standing.
3. Creating some flexibility in the language around the timing of when the leave is requested. Addition of language that additional terms beyond the initial two terms of leave may be requested by petition.
4. Builds in automatic extensions of time to prelim and time to degree in the approved leave of absence process.
5. Builds in an automatic re-entry approval to streamline the return process for students.

**Existing**

**English Proficiency Requirements for Admission of International Applicants**

All degree-seeking applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit the results of the TOEFL or IELTS as evidence of English proficiency. Official scores are required to be submitted directly from TOEFL/ETS or IELTS.

Minimum Scores for English Proficiency Requirements for Admission are available on the Graduate College website. Students not meeting the minimum score for admission may be admitted on Limited Status. Please note that admission minimums are not equivalent to minimums required for holding a Teaching Assistant Appointment.

**Proposed**

**English Proficiency Requirements for Admission**

**DOMESTIC APPLICANTS**

All domestic applicants are exempt from taking the TOEFL or IELTS for admission. However, some domestic applicants may be [admitted on limited status](#) and be required to take the English as a Second Language Placement Test (EPT) prior to enrolling at Illinois. Success in your Illinois graduate program depends upon your ability to converse in, write and understand English. The EPT may be required of domestic applicants:

- who have lived, been educated, or worked professionally primarily outside of the United States\* or another approved [country](#); or
- who have U.S. permanent resident, asylee or refugee status and have lived in the United States for less than two years from the first term of enrollment.

*\*If your educational or professional work experience has primarily been within Guam, Puerto Rico, or the Northern Mariana Islands, you will be required to take the EPT.*

**INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS**

All international degree-seeking applicants are required to submit the results of the TOEFL or IELTS as evidence of English proficiency unless they qualify for an [exemption](#). Official scores are required to be submitted directly from TOEFL/ETS or IELTS. Minimum Scores for English Proficiency Requirements for Admission are available on the Graduate College [website](#). Students not meeting the minimum score for admission may be [admitted on Limited Status](#) and be required to take the English as a Second Language Placement Test (EPT) prior to enrolling at Illinois.

Graduate applicants may be exempt from providing a TOEFL or IELTS score if one of the following criteria is met:

- Completion of at least two years of post-secondary full-time study, as defined by the home institution, in a country where English is the primary language and at an institution where English is the primary medium of instruction, within five years of the proposed term of initial enrollment.
- Completion of at least two years of professional work experience in a country where English is the primary language within five years of the proposed term of initial enrollment.
- Completion of a post-secondary degree in a country where English is the primary language and at an institution where English is the primary language of instruction, within five years of the proposed term of initial enrollment.

IMPORTANT: Please note that this exemption is for admission purposes only. This may not necessarily provide an exemption for international teaching assistants. For more information, please see the [English Proficiency Requirement for International Teaching Assistants](#).

Please [click here](#) for a list of countries that qualify for an exemption from the admissions requirement.

## ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT EXEMPTIONS

Applicants who meet one of the following criteria are exempt from submitting a TOEFL or IELTS exam and from taking the English as a Second Language Placement Test (EPT) prior to enrolling at Illinois:

- Completion of at least two years of post-secondary full-time study, as defined by the home institution, in an approved [country](#) where English is the primary language and at an institution where English is the primary medium of instruction, within five years of the proposed term of initial enrollment.
- Completion of at least two years of professional work experience in an approved [country](#) where English is the primary language within five years of the proposed term of initial enrollment.
- Completion of a post-secondary degree in an approved [country](#) where English is the primary language and at an institution where English is the primary language of instruction, within five years of the proposed term of initial enrollment.

## APPROVED COUNTRIES WITH ENGLISH AS THE PRIMARY LANGUAGE

Illinois Graduate Admissions recognizes the following countries as having English as the primary language: Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Cameroon-Anglophone, Canada(excluding the Quebec Province), Dominica, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Granada, Guyana, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malta, Malawi, Mauritius, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Scotland, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, St. Kitts, Swaziland, Tanzania, Trinidad & Tobago, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States\*, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

*\*If your educational or professional work experience has primarily been within Guam, Puerto Rico, or the Northern Mariana Islands, you will be required to take the EPT.*

## ENGLISH PROFICIENCY FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Please note that all English proficiency requirements and exemptions listed above are for admission purposes only. Admissions minimums are not equivalent to minimums required for holding a teaching assistantship; and not all exemptions apply for those holding a teaching assistantship. For more information, please see the [English Proficiency Requirement for Graduate Teaching Assistants](#).

# **Proposal to the Graduate College Executive Committee for New/Revised Graduate College Policy**

**PROPOSAL TITLE:** Establish a Graduate College policy for Academic Forgiveness

**SPONSOR:** Allison McKinney, Assistant Dean, Academic Affairs, Graduate College

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION:** This proposal seeks to establish an Academic Forgiveness policy for graduate students. The basis for this policy is to establish parameters and process by which students who have endured significant challenges while enrolled in a graduate program, to successfully graduate.

**BACKGROUND:** Current Graduate College policy states, “Campus policy requires a student to maintain a minimum cumulative graduate GPA of 2.75 and a semester GPA of 2.75 in order to continue in an advanced degree program, **and to have a cumulative graduate GPA of at least 2.75 to graduate.**”

The Graduate College only recently revised the academic standing policy to monitor semester GPA, which now allows for an earlier intervention should a student be experiencing challenges. Prior to that change, students who were underperforming in their courses may not have been “flagged” until their cumulative GPA dipped below their department minimum. In some of those scenarios, the damage to their cumulative GPA was so severe that it would become extremely difficult and lengthy for the student to recover.

Some programs and students attempt to address previous semesters of poor academic performance through petition processes or questions about grade replacements. We have received petitions from students who wish to retroactively drop courses or entire semesters in which they underperformed as an attempt to address previous semesters after the fact, often years after the fact in order to graduate. These cases are considered very seriously and it is important that the institution protects the integrity of student academic records. For transcripts, this means reflecting accurately the courses the students were enrolled in and the grades they earned for a given semester. This policy would allow us to graduate students with valid exceptions/reasons without necessarily altering the transcript by withdrawing from past terms or dropping past courses.

It should also be noted that there is not a grade replacement policy at the graduate level. If a student fails a course and retakes that course, both grade results are factored into the student’s cumulative GPA.

Finally, as further background, our campus does have a campus level medical withdrawal policy, which addresses options for students who have experienced a documented medical interference in their academic pursuits to withdraw from a current semester or apply for a retroactive withdrawal on the basis of medical reasons from a previous semester. A withdrawal would result in the removal of all courses in a given term. This does not provide a good option for someone who has no documented medical circumstance, who performed well in one class but could not successfully complete a full-time academic load, or who may be returning after quite some time and medical documentation is not available.

**JUSTIFICATION:** We propose to establish a policy for Academic Forgiveness for graduate students. This policy would allow re-entering graduate students under certain circumstances the opportunity to work with their programs to identify courses that will satisfy degree requirements as well as create a path forward for success to return and finish a graduate program.

Who is Eligible?

Graduate students who are returning after a minimum of two years (6 terms) and who have a cumulative **graduate level GPA significantly below the required minimum for their program.**

What is the process?

1. As part of the Graduate College re-entry petition, students will work with their program to propose which courses previously taken will count toward degree completion and which will be set aside. The Graduate College will document these as a part of the re-entry process. Courses that are set aside will not be included in the computation of GPA for graduation purposes.
2. Students will be limited to requesting prior coursework for up to two-thirds of the required hours for the degree to count towards degree completion. Students will be required to complete the remainder of the credit hours after re-entry to the program.
3. The list of courses identified in the re-entry petition, plus the courses taken upon re-entry will be used to calculate the student's GPA for graduation purposes. The combination of these hours must meet the program's required minimum GPA to be eligible for graduation. All courses taken and grades earned in the Graduate College will remain on the student's transcript.
4. The prior coursework requested to count towards the degree are subject to the time limit policy and it will be up to the student's program to determine if those courses are still applicable for the degree.
5. Students are eligible for the academic forgiveness policy once during their enrollment in the Graduate College.

**BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:** *None*

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE:** *Fall 2021*

**NEW/REVISED POLICY STATEMENT:**

Graduate College Handbook (page 24)

<https://grad.illinois.edu/sites/grad.illinois.edu/files/pdfs/handbook.pdf>

GPA Computation

The graduate GPA includes all hours and grades for all courses taken while enrolled as a graduate student. The GPA component of academic status is calculated at the end of each semester. At the point of calculation, graduate students must have a cumulative graduate GPA at or above their department's minimum and must have a semester GPA of at least 2.75 to be in good standing.

Academic Forgiveness

Students who are applying for re-entry to the Graduate College and who are returning after at least two years with a GPA significantly below their department minimum may petition the Graduate College for Academic Forgiveness. If granted, the student's GPA for graduation will be calculated based on previously taken coursework as identified in the re-entry process and the courses taken upon return. All courses will remain on the student's transcript.

**CLEARANCES:** *(Clearances should include signatures and dates of approval.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate College Unit Representative:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate College Dean:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

**ADDITIONAL APPROVALS:** *(If necessary. Clearances should include signatures and dates of approval.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Provost Representative:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Representative:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

# Proposal to the Graduate College Executive Committee

## Remote Doctoral Exams

1/15/2021

**PROPOSAL:** Revise policy on remote doctoral examinations

**CONTACT:** Associate Dean Alexis Thompson, 300-3983, [athmpsn1@illinois.edu](mailto:athmpsn1@illinois.edu)

**BACKGROUND:** The current policy requires that the student, a committee chair and at least one additional voting member be physically present in the examination room on campus. In extraordinary circumstances, a student can petition to participate remotely.

Since March 2020, the Graduate College has allowed fully remote examinations because of the pandemic. In light of the experience during the pandemic, we are proposing a permanent change to the policy.

**JUSTIFICATION:** With developments in technology and proficiency gained during the pandemic, video conferencing has become a widely used and successful format for meetings. In consulting with faculty, colleges and students about the option for remote examinations, we have found strong support for continuing to have this option after the pandemic is over.

While there is interest in returning to in-person examinations, faculty and students identified that the option for remote examinations provided more opportunities to include external members, especially from other countries, ease of scheduling and reduction of financial and travel burdens.

This policy change would permit fully in-person, hybrid and fully online examinations to take place without any special permission from the Graduate College. The program, committee and student would identify the appropriate examination mode.

With the expansion of remote defenses, the policy language around the public nature of the defense is being revised to clarify the intent to include our academic community.

**COMMUNICATION PLAN:** Graduate programs and students will be notified by email and the Graduate College handbook will be updated to reflect the change with the start of next academic year.

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 2021 (the pandemic-related exception to the policy would stay in place until then)

**REVISED POLICY STATEMENT:**

### 6.5 Doctoral Committees and Examinations

*(Sections skipped)*

**Remote participation.** Synchronous remote participation of the student or committee member(s) is permitted on preliminary and final examination committees under the following conditions:



- Technology must allow all participants to communicate throughout the examination and to access all materials presented. Video technology is encouraged for remote committee members and required for a student participating remotely.
- ~~The chair (or co-chair) and at least one additional voting member must be physically present in the examination room on campus.~~ The chair (or co-chair) is responsible for coordinating the use of any technology, for recessing the examination if technical problems prevent full participation, and for making arrangements to resume the examination promptly.
- ~~In extraordinary circumstances, the student can petition to participate remotely. Approval must be received from all members of the committee. The Graduate College strongly encourages the student to participate in person.~~
- ~~Students in fully online doctoral programs can participate remotely without a petition.~~

*(Additional sections skipped)*

## **Format and Results of a Final Examination (Defense)**

### **Format**

- The examination consists of an ~~public~~, oral examination **open to the academic community of the University** followed by a ~~private closed-door~~ deliberation of the committee. The student is informed of the result immediately following the deliberation.
- All voting members of the committee must participate for the entire duration of the final examination the deliberation, and determination of the result.
- Students must adhere to departmental procedures or requirements. These procedures and requirements must be clearly communicated to all students in advance of the exam.
- For final examination committees, the student's dissertation adviser (i.e., director of research) need not be the chair of the committee. Co-directors of research are acceptable.
- For final examination committees, committee members should be chosen for their expertise in the student's research area but may also be chosen to give diversity in viewpoint, methodology, or academic discipline. The faculty of a department may establish procedures or requirements for introducing diversity in the membership of the final examination committee (e.g., by including members from more than one sub-discipline within the department, from other departments, or from other institutions).
- No audio or video recording of the examination or deliberation may be made without the express permission of the student and all members of the committee.

# Proposal to the Graduate College Executive Committee

## Leave of Absence Policy

3/26/2021

**PROPOSAL:** Revise policy on leave of absence

**CONTACT:** Associate Dean Alexis Thompson, 300-3983, [athmps1@illinois.edu](mailto:athmps1@illinois.edu)

**BACKGROUND:** The leave of absence policy provides students an option to take a semester or two away with a clear path for resuming the program. In reviewing how this policy has been used and the questions that have arisen, we are recommending some changes to make the process more clear for students and departments, add benefits for using the policy, and simplify the process for a student to return.

**JUSTIFICATION:** The current policy has options for both an academic progress leave of absence and a personal academic leave of absence. The academic progress leave of absence option is only possible when the student will not be using any University of Illinois resources or faculty time. One use case would be for a student who was taking time away in order to enroll at another institution to develop language skills not available here. It would not typically be appropriate for a student in the dissertation phase because of the role of an Illinois faculty adviser in advising on their work. In practice, we very rarely see this option used, and it is a source of significant confusion. The revised policy has a single option for “academic leave of absence” without distinction as to the reasons for the leave.

The current policy has very firm limits around the number and timing of requests. Currently, only two semesters of leave are permitted. We recommend adding language to indicate that students may petition for additional terms based on extenuating circumstances. Additionally, the current policy requires that the paperwork be submitted prior to the first day of the semester. A student who may be navigating a challenging situation may need some flexibility around the timing of the request. The recommended language changes “must” to “should” to allow for some flexibility while clarifying that the leave of absence policy is only for situations in which the student has not registered and withdrawn for the term. (Other options are available for students who many need to leave mid-semester.)

We also recommend that as part of a leave of absence, the student’s time to degree be extended by the number of terms of the leave. This addition to the policy would help support students who take leaves by adjusting their expected times to degree accordingly.

To help smooth the re-entry process, we recommend that as part of the leave paperwork, the student and department will indicate the re-entry term. This can be processed at the time of the leave request, removing the need for a petition for re-entry at the time that the student plans to restart the program.

Finally, we have added some subheadings and reorganized the section to make the policy easier to navigate and understand. Because of the extent of the revisions, the current and proposed policy language are presented separately below.

**COMMUNICATION PLAN:** Graduate programs and students will be notified by email and the Graduate College handbook will be updated to reflect the change with the start of next academic year.

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 2021

**REVISED POLICY STATEMENT:**

**2.5 Academic Leave of Absence**

**Academic Leaves of Absence**

An academic leave of absence provides an opportunity for a student to not enroll for one or more semesters. An academic leave of absence may be used for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to, health reasons, personal reasons, active military service, or dependent or family care responsibilities. Students who are on an approved academic leave of absence are not expected to make progress on the degree. In addition, students on academic leaves of absence should not expect that faculty will provide feedback on academic work, including proposals or drafts of theses.

Enrolled students who need to take time away after the semester has begun are not eligible for academic leaves of absence. Students should consult with their program on academic and registration options and human resources regarding employment leave options.

Graduate students in degree-seeking programs are eligible for a total of two terms (fall and/or spring semesters) of academic leave. Students must document their request for a leave and meet the eligibility requirements. Students who anticipate not being enrolled for one or more terms, (fall or spring semesters, not summer), for whatever reason should meet with their program adviser before the first day of classes of their period of non-enrollment to request an academic leave of absence.

**Academic Standing**

Student status does not change during the period of an approved leave of absence. The student's academic standing that was in place when the leave began will be in place for the approved re-entry term.

**Timing and Limits**

All academic leaves should be requested before the term begins and cannot be approved for a term in which the student had registered and withdrawn. An academic leave of absence cannot be requested for a previous term.

Students are eligible for a two terms of academic leaves of absence (spring or fall semesters) during a student's degree program. These terms may be consecutive or approved individually. In exceptional circumstances a student may, upon submitting a petition, receive approval for additional academic leave after exhausting the two initial terms.

When an enrolled student withdraws from the current term, this term will not be counted towards an academic leave of absence.

**Degree Time Limits**

An approved academic leave of absence extends the Graduate College time limits for completion of the preliminary examination and the time to degree by the number of approved leave terms (up to a maximum of two terms).

If the student's time to degree will have expired by the start of their academic leave, then they will need to petition for a time extension when requesting the academic leave of absence.

### **Summer-only Graduate Programs**

Students who are enrolled in summer only programs must apply for a leave of absence before taking a summer term off. Students in summer only programs are eligible for two summer terms of leave.

### **Reentry after Leave of Absence**

At the time their leave of absence is approved, students will be approved to re-enter the same graduate program for the designated term following their leave.

### **Procedures to Request a Leave of Absence**

Requests for a leave of absence should be approved by the student's academic department prior to the first day of classes. To request a formal academic leave the student should complete the Request for Academic Leave of Absence form before the first day of classes of the term of non-enrollment.

### **Absent Without Leave Policy**

Degree seeking graduate students are required to request a formal academic leave of absence before not being enrolled for one or more terms, (fall / spring, not summer). Students in summer-only programs are required to request a formal academic leave of absence before taking a summer term off from their enrollment. There are potentially negative consequences for failing to request an academic leave of absence. Students who do not enroll and do not meet with the program and document their status with an approved academic leave of absence before a period of non-enrollment are considered absent without leave. A program may put an advising hold on a student who is absent without leave. A student who is absent without leave may be prevented from reenrolling, may have additional degree requirements to complete if allowed to return, or may be subject to new degree requirements.

### **EXISTING POLICY STATEMENT:**

#### **2.5 Academic Leave of Absence**

##### **Academic Leaves of Absence**

Graduate students in degree-seeking programs are entitled to a total of two terms (fall and / or spring semesters) of academic leave of the types described below, in the course of a single degree program. Students must document their request for a leave and meet the eligibility requirements. Students who anticipate not being enrolled for one or more terms, (fall or spring semesters, not summer), for whatever reason must meet with their program adviser before the first day of classes of their period of non-enrollment to apply for and receive approval for an academic leave of absence. Students who are enrolled in summer only programs must apply for a leave of absence before taking a summer term off. There are two categories of academic leaves of absence:

**Personal academic leave of absence** may be requested for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to leave for health reasons, for personal reasons, for active military service, or to take care of dependents or family members. Students who are on an approved personal academic leave of absence use the leave for personal reasons and not to make progress on the

degree. In addition, students on personal academic leaves of absence should not expect that faculty will provide feedback on academic work, including proposals or drafts of theses.

**Academic progress leaves of absence** may be requested for instances of academic activity, such as study abroad when the student registers at another institution, or fieldwork when the student is not using university resources including faculty time, or receiving financial support paid through the university. Students who are on an approved academic progress leave of absence do use the leave to make progress toward completion of the degree, but must not use campus resources. Expectations of progress to be made during the leave should be documented in the student's academic file.

### **Academic Standing**

Student status does not change during the period of an approved leave of absence. The student's academic standing that was in place at the time of the leave is not changed at the time of return as long as the conditions of the approved leave are met.

### **Timing and Limits**

All academic leaves must be requested before the term begins. An academic leave of absence cannot be requested retroactively, cannot be used to return to good standing, and cannot be used to extend the time to degree. The maximum allowed academic leaves of absence is two terms (spring or fall or two summer terms for summer-only programs) during a student's degree program. These terms may be consecutive terms or terms approved individually. In cases where an enrolled student must leave the university after the first day of classes, the student must withdraw from the current term. In these cases it may or may not be appropriate to request an academic leave of absence for the following semester.

The Graduate College policy on time to degree applies and must be addressed in the record of the approved leave. If by requesting a leave, the student is going to go beyond the degree program's approved time to degree during the leave, then the student also needs to request a time extension for the degree through the Graduate College petition process at the time of the request for academic leave.

### **Procedures to Request a Leave of Absence**

Requests for a leave of absence must be approved by the student's academic department prior to the first day of classes. To request a formal academic leave the student must complete the following before the first day of classes of the term of non-enrollment:

- Complete and follow instructions on the Request for Academic Leave of Absence form, and
- If necessary, complete a petition to request an extension of time to degree.

### **Absent Without Leave Policy**

Degree seeking graduate students are required to request a formal academic leave of absence before not being enrolled for one or more terms, (fall / spring, not summer). Students in summer-only programs are required to request a formal academic leave of absence before taking a summer term off from their enrollment. There are potentially negative consequences for failing to request an academic leave of absence. Students who do not enroll and do not meet with the program and document their status with an approved academic leave of absence before a period of non-enrollment are considered absent without leave. A program may put an advising hold on a student who is absent without leave. A student who is absent without leave may be prevented from reenrolling, may have additional degree requirements to complete if allowed to return, or may be subject to new degree requirements.

Proposed	Existing
<p data-bbox="191 228 1045 266"><b>2.5 Academic Leave of Absence</b></p> <p data-bbox="191 303 1045 331"><b>Academic Leaves of Absence</b></p> <p data-bbox="191 375 1045 688">An academic leave of absence provides an opportunity for a student to not enroll for one or more semesters. An academic leave of absence may be used for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to, health reasons, personal reasons, active military service, or dependent or family care responsibilities. Students who are on an approved academic leave of absence are not expected to make progress on the degree. In addition, students on academic leaves of absence should not expect that faculty will provide feedback on academic work, including proposals or drafts of theses.</p> <p data-bbox="191 695 1045 829">Enrolled students who need to take time away after the semester has begun are not eligible for academic leaves of absence. Students should consult with their program on academic and registration options and human resources regarding employment leave options.</p> <p data-bbox="191 836 1045 1117">Graduate students in degree-seeking programs are eligible for a total of two terms (fall and/or spring semesters) of academic leave. Students must document their request for a leave and meet the eligibility requirements. Students who anticipate not being enrolled for one or more terms, (fall or spring semesters, not summer), for whatever reason should meet with their program adviser before the first day of classes of their period of non-enrollment to request an academic leave of absence.</p>	<p data-bbox="1045 228 1908 266"><b>2.5 Academic Leave of Absence</b></p> <p data-bbox="1045 303 1908 331"><b>Academic Leaves of Absence</b></p> <p data-bbox="1045 375 1908 797">Graduate students in degree-seeking programs are entitled to a total of two terms (fall and / or spring semesters) of academic leave of the types described below, in the course of a single degree program. Students must document their request for a leave and meet the eligibility requirements. Students who anticipate not being enrolled for one or more terms, (fall or spring semesters, not summer), for whatever reason must meet with their program adviser before the first day of classes of their period of non-enrollment to apply for and receive approval for an academic leave of absence. Students who are enrolled in summer only programs must apply for a leave of absence before taking a summer term off. There are two categories of academic leaves of absence:</p> <p data-bbox="1150 836 1908 1187"><b>Personal academic leave of absence</b> may be requested for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to leave for health reasons, for personal reasons, for active military service, or to take care of dependents or family members. Students who are on an approved personal academic leave of absence use the leave for personal reasons and not to make progress on the degree. In addition, students on personal academic leaves of absence should not expect that faculty will provide feedback on academic work, including proposals or drafts of theses.</p> <p data-bbox="1150 1226 1908 1404"><b>Academic progress leaves of absence</b> may be requested for instances of academic activity, such as study abroad when the student registers at another institution, or fieldwork when the student is not using university resources including faculty time, or receiving financial support paid through the</p>

**Academic Standing**

Student status does not change during the period of an approved leave of absence. The student's academic standing that was in place when the leave began will be in place for the approved re-entry term.

**Timing and Limits**

All academic leaves should be requested before the term begins and cannot be approved for a term in which the student had registered and withdrawn. An academic leave of absence cannot be requested for a previous term.

Students are eligible for a two terms of academic leaves of absence (spring or fall semesters) during a student's degree program. These terms may be consecutive or approved individually. In exceptional circumstances a student may, upon submitting a petition, receive approval for additional academic leave after exhausting the two initial terms.

When an enrolled student withdraws from the current term, this term will not be counted towards an academic leave of absence.

**Degree Time Limits**

An approved academic leave of absence extends the Graduate College time limits for completion of the preliminary examination and

university. Students who are on an approved academic progress leave of absence do use the leave to make progress toward completion of the degree, but must not use campus resources. Expectations of progress to be made during the leave should be documented in the student's academic file.

**Academic Standing**

Student status does not change during the period of an approved leave of absence. The student's academic standing that was in place at the time of the leave is not changed at the time of return as long as the conditions of the approved leave are met.

**Timing and Limits**

All academic leaves must be requested before the term begins. An academic leave of absence cannot be requested retroactively, cannot be used to return to good standing, and cannot be used to extend the time to degree. The maximum allowed academic leaves of absence is two terms (spring or fall or two summer terms for summer-only programs) during a student's degree program. These terms may be consecutive terms or terms approved individually. In cases where an enrolled student must leave the university after the first day of classes, the student must withdraw from the current term. In these cases it may or may not be appropriate to request an academic leave of absence for the following semester.

The Graduate College policy on time to degree applies and must be addressed in the record of the approved leave. If by requesting a leave, the student is going to go beyond the degree program's approved time to degree during the leave, then the student also needs to request a time extension for the degree through the Graduate College petition process at the time of the request for academic leave.

the time to degree by the number of approved leave terms (up to a maximum of two terms).

If the student's time to degree will have expired by the start of their academic leave, then they will need to petition for a time extension when requesting the academic leave of absence.

### **Summer-only Graduate Programs**

Students who are enrolled in summer only programs must apply for a leave of absence before taking a summer term off. Students in summer only programs are eligible for two summer terms of leave.

### **Reentry after Leave of Absence**

At the time their leave of absence is approved, students will be approved to re-enter the same graduate program for the designated term following their leave.

### **Procedures to Request a Leave of Absence**

Requests for a leave of absence should be approved by the student's academic department prior to the first day of classes. To request a formal academic leave the student should complete the Request for Academic Leave of Absence form before the first day of classes of the term of non-enrollment.

### **Absent Without Leave Policy**

Degree seeking graduate students are required to request a formal academic leave of absence before not being enrolled for one or more

### **Procedures to Request a Leave of Absence**

Requests for a leave of absence must be approved by the student's academic department prior to the first day of classes. To request a formal academic leave the student must complete the following before the first day of classes of the term of non-enrollment:

- Complete and follow instructions on the Request for Academic Leave of Absence form, and
- If necessary, complete a petition to request an extension of time to degree.

### **Absent Without Leave Policy**

Degree seeking graduate students are required to request a formal academic leave of absence before not being enrolled for one or more



terms, (fall / spring, not summer). Students in summer-only programs are required to request a formal academic leave of absence before taking a summer term off from their enrollment. There are potentially negative consequences for failing to request an academic leave of absence. Students who do not enroll and do not meet with the program and document their status with an approved academic leave of absence before a period of non-enrollment are considered absent without leave. A program may put an advising hold on a student who is absent without leave. A student who is absent without leave may be prevented from reenrolling, may have additional degree requirements to complete if allowed to return, or may be subject to new degree requirements.

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