LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND WITHDRAWAL POLICIES

Leave of absence
Graduate students may request leaves of absence from their programs through written appeals to their advisers. The graduate advisers/program directors will forward the requests to the appropriate school dean/dean designee who, following departmental governance procedures, will forward their recommendations and any supporting documentation to the dean of the Graduate School who will respond for the university. Students who are out of compliance with continuous enrollment policies (see policy on Continuous enrollment for degree-seeking graduate students (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/attendance-enrollment-policies)) and who have not been granted approved leaves of absence by the graduate dean must reapply for admission to VCU and to their graduate degree programs.

Graduate students with approved leaves of absence are exempted from continuous enrollment requirements for the LOA period. Students should note that while leaves of absence temporarily suspend continuous enrollment requirements, they do not extend time limits for completion of degrees. (See policy on Exceptions (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/exceptions).)

Leaves of absence must be requested and approved before or within a current semester. Requests for retroactive leaves of absence will not be approved.

The posting of the leave of absence on the student’s academic record prevents registration for the approved leave of absence period. If the student wishes to return to academic study before the end of the approved leave of absence period, the Graduate School must be notified via the special action form process so that the leave of absence is cancelled and the registration hold removed.

Withdrawal from classes
To withdraw officially from VCU courses, students must submit complete official withdrawal forms to the Office of Records and Registration by the official withdrawal date as published in the official VCU Calendar (http://academiccalendars.vcu.edu). The official withdrawal form is obtained from the Office of Records and Registration (Monroe Park Campus: Harris Hall, First Floor; MCV Campus: Sanger Hall, Room 1-055). Students may also withdraw on line via VCU eServices. Failure to complete this process may result in the assignment of failing grades in all or some of the courses.

A grade of withdrawn (W) will be recorded on the permanent student academic record for all courses from which students officially withdraw.

Health-related withdrawals
While graduate students are expected to work toward completion of their degrees without interruption, health-related problems may necessitate an interruption of their studies.

For a protracted illness, a student may choose to ask for an approved leave of absence (see leave of absence policy above).

Some students may experience medical conditions that make them unable to complete their studies once a semester is in progress. If this occurs before the last day of add/drop registration, students should drop their classes via eServices. If an illness occurs after add/drop