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Graduate Division
Grad@uci.edu

UCIRVINE | GRADUATE DIVISION

Academic Leave Of Absence (LOA) For Graduate Students

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACADEMIC LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA)

NOTE: Much of the text below is adapted from UCI's *Graduate Policies & Procedures Handbook* <https://grad.uci.edu/current-students/academic-policies/>

Purpose of this Form:

An academic leave of absence (LOA) is intended to cover the temporary interruption of the student's academic program. The reason(s) for requesting a LOA **must** be consistent with University policy and guidelines (see below), and with the guidelines of the student's academic program.

Guidelines to Establish Eligibility:

A leave may be granted when a student plans to be away from the University of California for any of the following reasons:

- (a) Serious illness or other temporary disability.
- (b) Concentration on an occupation not directly related to the student's academic program.
- (c) Responsibilities related to family obligations.
- (d) Temporary interruption of the student's academic program for other appropriate reasons.

Limitations:

LOA does not apply to the student who will be absent from the campus and **outside the designated local campus region**. **UCI's local campus region consists of the following:** Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Diego, or San Bernardino County while continuing to pursue graduate research or scholarly activity. Students engaged in such activity outside the designated local campus region must register *in-absentia* (the "in-absentia" registration form can be found at: <https://www.grad.uci.edu/academics/DocuSignForms.php>)

The student who must leave the academic program for more than three quarters should withdraw from UCI and apply for readmission at the time they expect to resume graduate study at UCI. In addition, and in accordance with established policy, the following principles apply:

Leaves of absence cannot be granted: 1) for a quarter(s) prior to the current quarter; 2) if a student has not completed at least one complete quarter of academic work at UCI; or 3) if a student has not demonstrated satisfactory academic progress.

Policy:

The academic LOA can be granted for up to one year (3 quarters) if, following review of the student's academic record, it is deemed consistent with the student's academic objectives and academic progress. A request for an LOA in excess of 3 quarters must be accompanied by a letter of exception from the student's home departmental office. A student who has not attained the academic objective for which they were admitted, and who either fails to enroll or secure a formal leave, loses all graduate student standing within the University.

When and Where:

The deadline to submit the LOA paperwork to the Graduate Division is Friday of the third week of classes. No further extensions will be granted. You will be notified via email when approved.

In Case Your LOA Request is not Approved:

It is important that applications for LOA status be submitted to the Graduate Division prior to the beginning of the quarter for which approval is sought. This way, in the event that the student's request is denied, the student will be able to enroll prior to the deadline (and hence avoid late payment fees, etc.).

OTHER POLICIES RELEVANT TO LOA

- **Financial Support:** While on an LOA, a student is not eligible for University fellowship support, University research grants, or financial aid. In addition, the student will, in most cases, lose eligibility for deferment of student loan obligations. It is the responsibility of the student to contact their loan agency to verify their loan status before applying for academic leave of absence.
- **Housing:** LOA status may affect eligibility for student housing. Students living in on-campus housing who are contemplating an LOA should check with their housing office for information prior to submitting an LOA form.
- **Academic Appointments and Employment at UCI:** A student on an approved leave may not hold student academic appointments (Graduate Student Researcher, Teaching Assistant, Reader, etc.) or other student employment titles.
- **Degree Requirements:** A student on LOA cannot take qualifying examinations for advancement to candidacy or final examinations for the degree, nor pursue their graduate studies on the UCI campus in any other manner. A student may not receive academic credit for work done at another institution during the leave period unless an exception is approved in advance by the Dean of the Graduate Division.
- **Filing Fee Restriction:** Immediately following an LOA, a student is required to register as a full-time student. Students will not be eligible to be on Filing Fee status, in lieu of full registration, immediately following an academic leave of absence.
- **International Students:** In accordance with visa restrictions, a student who is not a permanent resident or citizen of the U.S. is not permitted to take an academic leave of absence. Any exception to this policy requires written approval by UCI's International Center, as indicated on the LOA form, which must then be submitted to the Graduate Division.
- **Library Privileges:** A student on leave will lose library privileges. Students should contact the library for more information. In some cases, special arrangements can be made with the library to maintain privileges.
- **Health Insurance:** A student on leave will not be covered by the student health insurance program (GSHIP) unless the student self-pays for continued coverage. Students should contact the Student Health Services at (949) 824-2388 or shc-insurance@uci.edu for more details.
- **Residence:** If you have been approved for a leave of absence for 3 or more quarters, please be aware that upon your return, you are required to file a Statement of Legal Residence (SLR) with the Registrar's office. Please contact the Residence Officer via e-mail at regres@uci.edu for more information
- **Fee Refunds:** If fees have been paid for the quarter the leave is requested, the student must submit a Withdrawal request which can be completed in Student Access. On the Withdrawal Form, in the space for “Reason for Withdrawal” the student should enter, “Academic Leave of Absence.” The refund schedule is posted on the Registrar’s website. The effective date for the refund is the date the student submits the Withdrawal form via Student Access.

Additional Details:

1. Once the Withdrawal Form has been approved, courses will be dropped automatically. **If you withdraw after your fees have been paid you may owe money to the University**, based on any graduate aid, financial aid, or both, that you received previously. Please pay careful attention to your ZOT bill after your LOA and Withdrawal Forms have been processed to determine if you have a balance due. Balances that remain unpaid after 6 months will be sent to collections.
2. Housing and Student Health Services offices will make necessary arrangements upon their notification that an approved LOA is in effect. Please contact these offices to make arrangements with them.

NOTE: The Student Health Services office requests any payments for insurance be made to that office, not the University Cashier.