



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY · GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES  
REQUEST FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Please read the instructions on the next pages carefully.  
Complete the form legibly, print it, and submit it to your department for approval.

The period of an approved leave of absence extends the original time to degree limit.

Students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents must contact the International Students and Scholars Office at 212-854-3587 prior to their leave in order to determine their eligibility to remain in the U.S.

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_ CU Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Currently in University Housing?  No  Yes  
Street, Apt. City, State, Country Postal Code

Master's only Student  MA/Ph.D. Student

CUID COO \_\_\_\_\_ (see SSOL) Citizenship/Visa Status \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ First semester and year of registration in GSAS \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any loans?  No  Yes Received M.Phil. Degree?  No  Yes, year: \_\_\_\_\_

Granted a Leave before?  No  Yes If so, when? \_\_\_\_\_ Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

**I am requesting a Leave**

<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Medical</u> (attach Doctor's note)	beginning	and ending
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Military</u> (attach copy of Orders)	<input type="checkbox"/> September _____	<input type="checkbox"/> December _____
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Personal</u> : Explain the reason for your request. If more space is needed, attach a separate sheet.	<input type="checkbox"/> January _____	<input type="checkbox"/> May _____

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Department Chair or DGS Approval indicating that the student is in good academic standing** as defined by the department, has progressed in a timely manner towards the degree according to GSAS and departmental requirements, and is eligible to continue in the degree program upon return.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name Title Signature Date

**GSAS Office of the Dean Approval:** For the Dean \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Registrar Use:**

LOA start Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOA end Semester: \_\_\_\_\_ TEXT: \_\_\_\_\_



Continuous registration is normally required of all degree candidates in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Under certain circumstances a student may be exempt from the continuous registration requirement as described below.

### 1. Medical Leave of Absence

On the written recommendation of a physician and with the approval of the department or program, a student who must interrupt study temporarily because of physical or psychological illness will be granted a Medical Leave of Absence. The physician should confirm that the student is unable to engage in graduate study and may suggest when the resumption of study can be expected. A Medical Leave may be approved at any time during a student's degree candidacy, except during the first term of study, when a Withdrawal would be more appropriate. A Medical Leave may be granted only to students in good academic standing (as defined by the student's department or program) who are eligible to continue in the degree program when they return from leave. In order to be reinstated after a Medical Leave the student must secure the written approval of the physician treating the student during the Leave, confirming that the student is capable of returning to graduate study and proposing any recommended qualifications (e.g. part-time study) as necessary. Accommodations and other matters relating to disability should be arranged with the Office of Disability Services at 212-854-2388, <http://www.health.columbia.edu/docs/services/ods/>.

### 2. Military Leave of Absence

A student who must interrupt study temporarily to fulfill a compulsory military obligation will be granted a Military Leave of Absence. The student seeking a military leave of absence must provide written documentation from the appropriate military authorities (including dates of the period of obligation), and the department or program must certify that the student is in good academic standing (as defined by the student's department or program) and is eligible to continue in the degree program upon return.

### 3. Personal Leaves of Absence

Students who must interrupt study temporarily for compelling reasons other than those described above may request a Personal Leave of Absence, which must be approved by the student's department or program and by the Dean's office. Such a leave must be approved before or during the term for which it is requested; it cannot be granted retroactively. Leaves of Absence are granted for one or two semesters. Under extenuating circumstances students may apply for a third or fourth semester of leave. Leaves are not granted beyond two years (four semesters); withdrawal is the proper route if absence from graduate study will exceed four semesters. (Students who fail to meet the continuous registration requirement must apply for reinstatement; an approved Leave does not require application for reinstatement.)

#### 3.1.: Personal Leave of Absence for Ph.D. Students

A student in a program leading to the PhD is eligible for a Personal Leave of Absence only after satisfactory completion of at least one year of study. Students who have completed the Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) or who have completed five years of full-time study or the equivalent are not ordinarily eligible for a non-medical, non-military leave. A leave will be granted only upon certification by the department or program that the student is in good academic standing (as defined by the department or program); has progressed in a timely manner towards the degree according to GSAS and departmental requirements; and is eligible to continue in the degree program upon return.

#### 3.2.: Personal Leave of Absence for M.A. Students

A student in a free-standing Master's program that does not lead to the Ph.D. is eligible for a personal leave of absence after satisfactory completion of at least one semester of study. A leave will be granted only upon certification by the department or program that the student is in good academic standing (as defined by the department or program); has progressed in a timely manner towards the degree according to GSAS and departmental requirements; and is eligible to continue in the degree program upon return.



4. Health Insurance:

A student whose Leave of Absence is approved during the first 30 days of the term will not be eligible for either the Insurance or Health Service programs, and a full refund will be applied to the Student Account Payment unless the student has utilized the benefits of insurance plan or accessed care at Health Services.

A student whose Leave of Absence is approved after 31 days will remain enrolled in the Insurance and Health Service programs for the remainder of that term; no refund will be allowed. They will also owe tuition through the Leave of Absence approval date (see <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/registrar/docs/students/withdrawal/index.html>.)

Students who go on an approved Medical Leave of Absence during the first 30 days of a term are eligible to remain enrolled in the Insurance and Health Service Programs. Students should contact the Health Services Insurance Office to complete their enrollment.

Please consult the brochure *Detailed Description: Student Medical Insurance Plan* here: <http://www.health.columbia.edu/docs/csmip/brochures.html>

5. Registration and Completion of Requirements:

A Leave of Absence is not a registration. No tuition is charged for semesters for which a Leave of Absence has been approved. The fact that a Leave has been granted is entered on the student's permanent academic record. The period of the Leave is not counted as part of the time allowed for completion of the degree requirements. A student on Leave may not fulfill any degree requirement other than, if he or she wishes, the completion of work in courses for which an approved grade of "Incomplete" has been issued by the instructor. The period of the Leave will not be counted toward the time allowed for completion of an Incomplete. Other degree requirements, including language exams, oral exams, dissertation research and writing, may not be undertaken while on Leave.

6. Use of Facilities and Services:

Because a Leave of Absence is not a registration, a student on Leave may not use University facilities, including libraries and housing, nor receive financial aid (see below). Email accounts are normally suspended within 6-9 months after approval of the Leave. Currently occupied University housing must be vacated and students are advised to contact UAH upon approval of the Leave of Absence request. Although students who vacate housing retain their eligibility status for housing, they are not guaranteed housing upon return. The GSAS will make every effort to place students into University housing upon return if space is available; students should contact Mr. Craig Knobles (212-854-2889, jck4) as soon as possible after the return date is anticipated; for spring, by December 1, for fall, by May 1. Students who are on Leave but who previously have already been awarded a Columbia degree may use Columbia facilities such as the library and email forwarding with their alumni status, see <https://alumni.columbia.edu/index.html>.

7. Loans, Fellowships and Other Financial Aid:

Most University and government loan programs do not permit the deferment of loan repayment while a student is on Leave. A student wishing to be considered for fellowships (including reinstatement of multi-year Ph.D. fellowships held at the time of the request for leave) or for financial aid other than loans for the academic year following the leave must notify the GSAS Financial Aid office by February 1 if he or she wishes to return in fall and by October 1 if he or she wishes to return in the spring. When the student notifies the Financial Aid office of his or her intent to return, the decision to award financial aid, including the reinstatement of such aid, will be based on satisfactory academic progress prior to the Leave and departmental recommendation.

8. Reinstatement and Registration:

Students returning from an approved Leave do not need to file a formal application for reinstatement. They should contact their department and the GSAS Dean's office (Regula Arduser, 212-854-2866, ra476) approximately six weeks before the start of the semester in which they wish to return. Students returning from leave will register during the registration period just prior to the start of the term in which they return (August for fall, January for spring.) Students returning from a Medical Leave of Absence are reminded that a doctor's note approving their return is required. Students who are not on an approved leave of absence and who neglect to register are required to submit an application for reinstatement, <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/pdf-files/readmission.pdf>.