LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Graduate students are required to maintain graduate status during their program of study. To maintain this status a student must either be registered or be officially On-Leave in Autumn, Winter, and Spring quarters. Failure to maintain graduate status effectively ends a student's continuation in the program; returning to graduate status after such a lapse requires formally applying to the Graduate School for reinstatement. Starting Spring of 2013, reinstatement involves forms, and a fee of $250.

REQUESTING ON-LEAVE STATUS

Students who wish to go On-Leave during the academic year must apply through MyGrad and pay a nominal (and non-refundable) fee each quarter they do not register. While you must apply for On-Leave status each quarter, typically up to three consecutive requests will be approved.

Detailed information on the University's On-Leave policies, including eligibility, special requirements for international students, and exceptions to the three-consecutive quarter rule, can be found at the Graduate School's On-Leave Status Web Page.

PROCEDURES

As of September 14, 2011, students requesting On-Leave status must submit an online "Request for On-Leave Status" form via the MyGradProgram.

1. Go to MyGradProgram and submit the on-line Request for Leave. Requests can be initiated two weeks before the quarter in which you plan to be On-Leave.
2. Your request will be forwarded to the Department's Graduate Program Coordinator for approval.
   - Typically the GPC will confer with your advisor before approving the request.
   - We recommend that you discuss your reasons for going on leave with your advisor and or the GPC before requesting your leave. This will expedite approval of your request.
3. Once your request is approved by the GPC, return to MyGradProgram to pay the non-refundable On-Leave fee and print a confirmation of your On-Leave status.
4. Submit a copy of your On-Leave confirmation to the Sociology Graduate Program Advisor for your file.
5. Return all Departmental keys to the Sociology Main Office for the duration of your leave.

DEPARTMENTAL LEAVE POLICIES

Requests for On-Leave status from students in good academic standing will routinely be approved for up to three consecutive quarters (one academic year). (See Academic Progress for expectations about academic progress.)

- If a student requests extension beyond three quarters, the request should be accompanied by a letter explaining the special circumstances that require an extension to the leave and outlining a plan for returning to the status of graduate student in residence by a specific date.
- Requests for leave beyond one academic year should be initiated with the GPC in time to allow an adequate review, normally no less than two months prior to the expiration of the last quarter of previously granted leave.
  - A request for extension of leave will not automatically be approved and may be denied if:
    - there is a reason to doubt that the student will return to resident status in the near future
    - the academic performance of the student was marginal before going on-leave
    - the request for extension of leave is received so late as to make an adequate review impossible before the previous leave expires
Students whose leave will take them in excess of the MA degree year limit or the 10 year limit for the Ph.D. degree will not be allowed to go on-leave without the department first filing a Petition to the Dean of the Graduate School documenting the necessity of the student remaining in on-leave status. Note that time spent On-Leave counts toward the time-to-degree limits.

Requests of On-Leave status from students on warning, probation, or final probation will be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee. (See Failure to Meet Requirements to learn more about falling behind normal academic progress.)

- Such requests may be declined unless there are special extenuating circumstances.
- Any leaves granted to students on warning, probation, or final probation will not be extended for more than three consecutive quarters (one academic year).

Students who are On-Leave maybe required to return all Departmental keys to the Sociology Main Office for the duration of their leave.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How early can I apply for my leave?

- For a given quarter, students can submit the request as early as two weeks prior to the first day of instruction.

Is there a way to apply for multiple quarters of leave at once?

- No, you must re-apply for On-Leave status each quarter and pay another fee. The only exceptions are for PCMI students, military personnel with deployment orders, and some UW Fulbright grantees (with the exception of military personnel with deployment orders, these students will be required to pay the fee for each quarter of leave requested).

I've already pre-registered for this quarter, but now I want to go On-Leave. What do I do?

- You must withdraw your registration before the first day of the quarter. Registered students are not eligible to be On-Leave.

My request for On-Leave status was approved for this quarter, but now I want to register. How do I do this?

- Registering for any credits will immediately end your on-leave status. Once ended, you cannot go back on leave for that quarter if you are registered for even one day of a quarter.

Can I use University facilities while I am On-Leave?

- On-Leave graduate students may use the University Libraries and the IMA, but you will need proof that you are On-Leave (this is why you should print your confirmation page). You may also continue to use your UW email account. Normally students are not eligible for office space in the department when they are On-Leave.

Can I take a departmental exam or defend the General Exam or Final Exam while I am On-Leave?

- No.

I am an International Student. Do special rules apply to me?

- Yes, you must have been registered full time (10 or more credits) for three consecutive quarters before you are eligible to request On-Leave status, and your request must be approved by both the department’s Graduate Program Coordinator and the International Student Services Office.

Further details about Graduate School leave policies and procedures are posted at:

- Policies Governing Graduate Students
- Graduate School Memorandum No. 9