LEAVE OF ABSENCE GUIDELINE

A leave of absence allows graduate students in the School of Informatics, Computing and Engineering's Informatics Department to deal with unforeseen events that interfere with their academic progress. During a leave, you are not expected to make progress toward your degree. Although you may complete coursework from previous terms during a leave, you may not attend class or use the leave to catch up on current coursework, prepare for exams, or write your dissertation.

After a leave of absence, you are expected to return to your program of study and resume progress toward your degree. Leave of Absence may not be requested retroactively.

In addition to the Informatics Leaves of Absence Guideline, international students should consult with the Office of International Services by emailing ois@iu.edu and reviewing their policy at https://ois.iu.edu/visas/student-visas/f1/univ-enrollment/break.html

Questions about Leave of Absence? Contact the Informatics Graduate Studies Office at infograd@indiana.edu.

General guidelines
The information provided here is intended to serve as a general guide to graduate student Leave of Absence in Informatics. All leave requests are reviewed and granted on a case-by-case basis.

Eligibility
To be eligible for a leave, you must be enrolled full time in an Informatics graduate program and have completed at least one semester (a minimum of nine credits) in the program. You also must be in good academic standing—if you are on academic probation, you are not eligible for a leave.

Circumstances for Leave of Absence
Leave of Absence may be granted under the following circumstances:
- For medical hardship (physical or mental illness, chronic conditions, conditions requiring multiple treatments, overnight hospitalizations) of three (3) weeks or longer
- To provide care for family members (spouse, dependent children under age 18, domestic partner, child of a domestic partner, or parent)
- For death of spouse, domestic partner, child or parent
- For military service. Leaves for military service are coordinated with IU Veteran Support Services and the Informatics Graduate Studies Office. International students who are called to military service are encouraged to contact the Office of International Services to determine how such service affects their academic and visa status.
- For other personal reasons, in exceptional circumstances

Academic accommodations

If your faculty advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies for Informatics, and the Informatics Graduate Studies Office approves the leave of absence, they will determine your academic accommodations. You will receive documentation of your leave that can be used to support requests to professors for extensions of incompletes, or requests to the University Graduate School for extensions of degree milestones.

Although the approval of a leave does not guarantee these accommodations, it provides supporting documentation for such requests. Depending on department guidelines, the leave may also extend funding commitments such as fellowships and student academic appointments that are contingent on continued progress towards a degree

Extensions of incompletes and degree milestones
- An Informatics leave of absence does not guarantee an automatic or immediate extension of incompletes, degree milestones, or standard time limits. However, you may use documentation of an approved Informatics leave as support for such requests.
- If you wish to receive extensions of incompletes, you should contact the professors of courses in which you received incompletes to make the request. The Director of Graduate Studies may be available to assist with such requests.
- The University Graduate School handles extensions of degree milestones and time limits, and such requests should be made directly to the Graduate School.

Student Academic Appointment or other funding
- If you have a student academic appointment (SAA) and you take a leave of absence after the semester has begun, your position will be terminated, your remaining salary will be canceled, and any unused fee remission will be canceled. If you hold an Informatics-funded SAA, you are eligible to maintain student health insurance until the end of the academic term in which you request a leave.
- If you receive funding from external sources (e.g., research positions on external grants, foundation fellowships), you are subject to the leave of absence guidelines of those funders. The Informatics Graduate Studies Office staff are available to review those guidelines and determine an appropriate plan to meet your needs.

University services
- While you are on leave, you will maintain access to basic university resources such as library services, email, and campus buses. To use the Student Recreational Sports Center and the city bus service during your leave, you must pay the public rate.
- If you do not enroll for two consecutive terms (fall, spring, and summer are each considered one term), your university accounts will be disabled.

Alternatives to leaves
- We encourage you to work closely with the Informatics department to determine whether a leave of absence meets your needs and to craft an appropriate plan to address your specific circumstances before contacting the Informatics Graduate Studies Office.
- In some circumstances, a leave might not be necessary. You can expect faculty to reasonably accommodate brief illnesses or medical hardship during a term, even if you do

not take a leave of absence. It may be possible for you to schedule medical appointments around your normal work and class schedules and arrange informally for department accommodations of foreseeable absences. If you experience extended absences from your courses due to illness, you may be able to remain registered by taking incompletes, or by reducing coursework or other academic requirements.

- If you are a master's student or a doctoral student in the pre-qualifying examination stage, you are not required to be continuously enrolled. The Informatics Department may allow you to take extended time away from your studies without taking a leave of absence and without requiring that you reapply to the program. However, if you feel that you will not be able to meet degree milestones or time limits due to your circumstances, a leave of absence is more appropriate.
- If you are a doctoral student who has passed the qualifying exam, you must maintain enrollment in at least one credit hour each semester until you defend your dissertation, *even if you are on leave*.

Applying for a leave of absence
- Before requesting a leave of absence, you should first discuss the leave and possible alternatives with your advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. If you decide to proceed with your leave request, you must follow these steps:
    1. Fill out the leave of absence request form.
    2. If the leave is for medical reasons, please provide the supplementary documentation (PDF only) to the application. Leaves for medical reasons cannot be approved until the medical certification is received by the Informatics Graduate Studies Office.
    3. Meet with your advisor to create a leave of absence return plan.
    4. The Informatics Graduate Studies Office will review your request and make a formal decision. Your advisor and you will receive official notification of the decision by email.

PARENTAL ACCOMODATION GUIDELINE

Parental Accommodation overview
- Informatics is committed to accommodating the needs of graduate students who are new parents. If you hold an Informatics-funded student academic appointment (SAA) of at least 37.5 percent FTE and have completed a minimum of one semester (a minimum of nine credits) in the School of Informatics and Computing, you are eligible for a parental accommodation period up to six weeks one time during your academic career.
- You must complete this accommodation period within six weeks of the birth or adoption of a child. During the accommodation period, you will continue to receive full support from Informatics, including the SAA stipend, health insurance, and fee remission.
- Because summer appointments are discretionary, parental accommodations are not available during summer sessions.
- If you have questions about parental accommodation, contact the Informatics Graduate Studies Office at infograd@indiana.edu

The Parental Accommodation period

- A parental accommodation is not a leave of absence, as you must remain enrolled in at least six credit hours during the accommodation period. However, the accommodation period allows academic flexibility, including extended deadlines and the ability to postpone coursework, exams, and other academic duties.
- It is your responsibility to work with faculty in your department to determine what academic accommodations can be made.

Student Academic Appointment accommodations
- The accommodation period provides full release from SAA duties for six weeks. If you hold an instructional SAA, the School of Informatics and Computing will cover the cost of hiring a replacement graduate assistant during a parental accommodation period. It is the department's responsibility to identify and appoint a replacement instructor.
- The School of Informatics and Computing will not cover the cost of replacements for non-instructional SAAs.

Applying for Parental Accommodation
To request a parental accommodation, you must follow these steps:
- Contact the Informatics Graduate Studies Office to request academic accommodations and to notify your advisor and the Informatics Graduate Studies Office of the expected timeframe for your absence from SAA duties.
- Fill out the parental accommodation request and the medical certification form and submit them to the Informatics Graduate Studies Office.
- Your advisor and Informatics Graduate Studies Office may ask to review the medical certification form prior to submission.
- Please note that your parental accommodation cannot be approved until your medical certification form is received by the Informatics Graduate Studies Office. The Informatics Graduate Studies Office will review your request and make a formal decision. Your advisor and you will be notified of the decision.

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