



LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

For various reasons, students sometimes find it necessary or desirable to interrupt their enrollment at Pace University. The reasons for a leave of absence include, but are not limited to, the following:¹

- To pursue academic endeavors elsewhere such as studying or conducting research at another institution.
- Financial hardship.
- An internship.
- A serious medical condition of the student's spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, child or step-child.²
- Employment obligations.

A leave of absence pursuant to this *Leave of Absence Policy* may commence during a semester or prior to the beginning of a semester and is limited to two consecutive semesters, excluding summer semesters. A student, who is unable to complete the semester and applies for a leave of absence, must also withdraw from the courses in which he or she currently is enrolled and will receive a "W" for each course from which the student withdrew. Although the "W" grades will appear on the student's transcript, they will not affect the student's cumulative quality grade point average. In addition, the student will be subject to the *Tuition Cancellation Policy* and certain financial aid rules and procedures. (Further information about the impact of a leave of absence on a student's financial aid may be found below under Financial Aid.)

Procedure. Students who are contemplating a leave of absence are encouraged to speak with their academic advisor prior to submitting a Leave of Absence Application. Academic advisors can provide information about the effect of a leave of absence on such issues as course sequencing and graduation date. After meeting with an academic advisor, in order to apply for a leave of absence, a student must:

- Complete a Leave of Absence Application.
- Submit the completed Leave of Absence Application for approval to the chair of the department in which the student's major is housed, or the assistant or associate

¹ Information about a leave of absence due to military service may be found in the *Military Leave of Absence Policy*.

² Students considering a leave of absence due to their own serious medical condition should consult the *Medical Leave of Absence Policy*.

dean of the school or college in which the student is enrolled, or the student's academic advisor.

- Submit the completed Leave of Absence Application with the signature of approval to the Office of Student Assistance.
- Provide whatever additional documentation the University may require concerning the student's request for a leave of absence.

Upon returning from a leave of absence, the student must complete a Resumption of Study Application. Information about resuming studies may be found in the *Resumption of Study Policy*.

Length of a Leave of Absence. Ordinarily, a leave of absence pursuant to this *Leave of Absence Policy* is limited to two consecutive semesters excluding the summer semesters and may be commenced at any time. For purposes of counting the two consecutive semesters, a leave of absence shall commence at the beginning of the first fall or spring semester after the student applies for and approval is granted for a leave of absence. A leave of absence due to non-medical reasons will not be approved for more than two consecutive semesters (excluding summer semesters).

Under certain circumstances, however, a leave of absence due to a serious medical condition of the student's spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, child or step-child may be extended for a total of four consecutive semesters (excluding summer semesters). For example, when a student applied for a leave of absence due to the serious medical condition of a parent, the expected time required for the parent to recover from an automobile accident was unknown. Subsequently, due to the prolonged recovery period, the student was unable to resume his or her studies on the date previously approved by the University. Under such circumstances, and following the same procedure set forth above, the student may request an extension of the leave of absence. In order to be eligible for an extension, the student must provide whatever documentation the University may require concerning the reason for the extension. A leave of absence due to a serious medical condition of the student's spouse, domestic partner, sibling, parent, child or step-child will not be approved for more than a total of four consecutive semesters (excluding summer semesters).

Degree Requirements and Graduation Date. Ordinarily, the degree requirements applicable to the student's declared major will not change due to the student's leave of absence. Nevertheless, there are circumstances when the degree requirements or program offerings will change while the student is on a leave of absence, e.g., requirements of the New York State Education Department, accrediting agencies or applicable law.

The time within which a student is required to complete the degree requirements ordinarily will not change because of a leave of absence, although the graduation date may change. For

example, a student who is required to complete the degree requirements within eight semesters is scheduled to graduate in May 2012 takes a leave of absence in the spring 2011 semester. Because of the one-semester absence, the student's graduation date may be postponed one semester until December 2012 at which time he or she will have been enrolled for eight semesters. However, a student's graduation date may be postponed in excess of the number of semesters he or she was on a leave of absence if the student is enrolled in a program with required course sequences and the prerequisite courses are not offered every semester.

Students should check with their academic advisor before submitting a Leave of Absence Application, and again when resuming their studies, about the consequences, if any, of their leave of absence on degree requirements and graduation date.

Transfer of Credits Earned During Leave of Absence. Students contemplating taking courses at another college or university during their leave of absence and transferring those course credits to Pace University upon their resumption of studies should consult with their academic advisor before enrolling in courses elsewhere. Transfer credits for such courses must be approved in advance by Pace University; otherwise, they may not be accepted by the University.

Financial Aid. Students on a leave of absence pursuant to this *Leave of Absence Policy* are considered to be withdrawn from the University for purposes of financial aid. Consequently, loan repayment obligations may be triggered. Students should speak to a representative of the Financial Aid Office for more detailed information about the status of their financial aid during a leave of absence prior to submitting a Leave of Absence Application.

Ordinarily, Pace-funded merit awards will be restored upon a student's resumption of studies after a leave of absence in accordance with this *Leave of Absence Policy* provided (i) all other requirements for such merit aid are satisfied, and (ii) the student resumes his or her studies by the date identified and approved in the Leave of Absence Application. If a student does not resume his or her studies on or before the date identified and approved in the Leave of Absence Application or obtain an extension of the leave of absence if the student is eligible for one, Pace-funded merit awards may be excluded from future financial aid awards. (Related information about the reinstatement of Pace-funded merit awards may be found in *Reinstatement of Pace-funded Merit Award Following a Medical Leave of Absence Policy*.)

International Students. The University is legally obligated to report a leave of absence for any reason by a student with an F-1 or J-1 visa to the Department of Homeland Security. Students with an F-1 or J-1 visa who take a leave of absence may not remain in the United States during the leave unless the reason for the leave is an illness that prevents the student from returning to his or her home country and appropriate documentation from a hospital in the United States has been provided.

Students with an F-1 or J-1 visa who are contemplating a leave of absence must first consult with an advisor in the International Students and Scholars Office, and again when they resume their studies after a leave of absence.

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