

### PHD LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

To request a Leave of Absence, please fill out the following information, obtain your Department Chair's approval signature and return to the Office of Student Services (110 Meyerson Hall). Please see the full policy on the back of this form.

**Student Information (please print clearly)**

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Date:</b>   | <b>Term:</b>            |
| <b>Full Name:</b>  | <b>PennID:</b>          |
| <b>Graduate Group/Department:</b>  | <b>Faculty Advisor:</b> |
| <b>Email While on Leave:</b>   | <b>Phone:</b>           |
| <b>International Students Only:</b> I've completed the leave process with International Student and Scholar Services ( <a href="http://global.upenn.edu/isss/absence">http://global.upenn.edu/isss/absence</a> ) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  |                         |
| <b>Length of Leave Requested:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> One term <input type="checkbox"/> Two terms   |                         |
| <b>Date Leave Will Begin:</b> _____ / _____ / _____ (MM / DD / YYYY)   |                         |
| <b>Please indicate the last date you attended classes in the current term:</b> _____ / _____ / _____ (MM / DD / YYYY)<br><i>(If your leave request is for the next term, please use the last day of classes in the current term).</i>  |                         |
| <b>Anticipated Leave Date Return:</b> _____ / _____ / _____ (MM / DD / YYYY)   |                         |
| <b>Reason for Leave of Absence:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Military Leave<br><input type="checkbox"/> Medical Leave<br><input type="checkbox"/> Personal Leave<br><br><i>If documentation has been requested for a Medical Leave of Absence, please ask your healthcare provider to fax documentation to Student Health Service (attention: Request Leave of Absence at 215-746-1032) and/or CAPS (attention: Request Leave of Absence at 215-573-8966). Do not provide medical documentation to faculty or staff in your Graduate Group.</i> |                         |

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Student Signature

Date

**Approvals:**

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Department Chair Signature

Date

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Registrar Signature

Date

## University PhD Student Leave of Absence Policy

PhD students will be granted a leave of absence for military duty, medical reasons, or [family leave](#); any of these may require documentation. Military, medical and family leave “stops the clock” on time to completion. Personal leave for other reasons may be granted with the approval of the Graduate Group Chair in consultation with the Graduate Dean of the student’s school, but does not, absent exceptional circumstances, “stop the clock” on time to completion.

Notification of permission or denial of leaves of absence will be communicated in writing by the student’s Graduate Group Chair. The terms of the leave will be specified at the time the leave is granted, including the extent to which the student will have access to resources, facilities, or campus – either physically or remotely -- during the leave period. Requirements for return may be imposed by the Graduate Chair in consultation with the Graduate Dean of the student’s school; such requirements will be provided in writing to the student when the leave is approved.

Leaves of absence from PhD studies are typically granted for one or two semesters. Leaves requested for a longer period are approved only in exceptional circumstances (for example, mandatory military service). Students may request an extension of leave, to be approved by the Graduate Chair in consultation with the Graduate Dean. Extension requests should be made by the student at least 30 days before the expiration of the original leave of absence.

Continuous registration as a graduate student is required unless a formal leave of absence is granted. A student is considered to have withdrawn from candidacy for the degree if the student: (1) fails to return from leave as scheduled, (2) fails to secure an extension of a prior leave, or (3) does not have an approved leave of absence and fails to register each semester. In these cases, approval to return by the Graduate Dean and recertification are required as outlined in the [Academic Rules for PhD Programs](#).

While on leave, a student’s funding from the University is deferred until the student returns from leave. Students receiving funding from external sources, such as government grants, are subject to the conditions established by the funding source. No language or other degree examinations may be taken while a student is on a leave of absence. Students may not earn credit for courses taken at another institution during a leave of absence. Leave should not be granted for the purpose of evading tuition charges.

Students returning from leave are not guaranteed to return to the same research group, project, or lab. If necessary, Graduate Group will make every effort to find a suitable new research group, project, or lab for the student.

In order to ensure successful completion of the PhD, a student’s leave(s) should generally not exceed two years over the course of the doctoral program. If, however, it is determined in an individual case that extension of the leave period(s) beyond two years is appropriate, students may need to repeat coursework or other requirements, as determined by the Graduate Group Chair. Original funding limits remain in place for students who must repeat requirements. In addition, the Graduate Group Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Dean, will annually review each case in which a further extension has been granted, or repeated leaves have been taken, to assess if the length and/or number of leaves have made it impossible for a student to make sufficient continuous academic progress to complete the degree. In such a case, the student will be advised that no further extensions will be granted and that they will be withdrawn from the program.

*Important note:* Students taking Family Leave who anticipate adding a dependent (e.g., newborn) to their Penn Student Insurance Policy must remain in active student status at the start of the fall semester. See more information at <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/family-friendly-policies-phd-students/>.