



Procedure for Requesting a Personal Leave of Absence

The Office of Research Education and the Graduate school allow students to take a personal leave of absence, due to circumstances that impact their ability to participate in their graduate education that are not appropriate for Medical or Parental leave. This provides an opportunity for students to take an extended break (up to one year) to handle personal issues and subsequently resume their graduate studies.

Personal LOAs are approved by a student's Program in consultation with ORE the Assistant Dean of Students Affairs (Andy Bradford). A student considering an LOA should first speak with their thesis advisor (if applicable) and Program Director or Program Student advisor. Students should also meet with the ORE Assistant Dean of Student Affairs (Andy Bradford). It is important that students are advised of all their options and directed to appropriate support.

Students should be advised that their stipend will terminate on the effective date of their LOA and their student health insurance (SHIP) will finish at the end of the semester from the start of their LOA. Students have the option to extend their SHIP coverage at their own expense by completing a [Special Enrollment Form](#). Students should also speak with financial aid as an LOA may impact deferred student loans.

Having discussed their LOA with their Program and ORE, students should work with their Program to route the Request for Personal LOA Form using the DocuSign Template. Students should work with their Program Administrator to withdraw from classes or request an Incomplete "I" grade if appropriate. Incomplete grades can be given if a student is in good academic standing (determined by the Course Director) and has completed a substantial fraction of the course (typically >50%).

Program Administrators will work with DFA and/or ORE to suspend stipend.

An approved LOA pauses the student's academic record and automatically extends the time limit for completing a degree by the equivalent amount of time that the student spends on leave. Prior to returning from an LOA, students must contact their Program (at least 2 weeks prior to their anticipate date of return) to facilitate their re-entry and develop a plan for their success. Students may request an extension of their LOA subject to approval by their Program and ORE. Students who do not return from their approved LOA will be considered to have withdrawn from their program and will either be required to formally re-apply for admission, or, at the discretion of the Program, may be re-admitted through an expedited process.