ACADEMIC LEAVE POLICY

A student who is unable to continue their graduate studies may request an academic leave to temporarily suspend their pursuit of a graduate degree. An academic leave may be granted for a degree-seeking graduate student who is in good standing and has completed at least one semester of prior graduate enrollment at UNL. An academic leave may be requested for illness or injury; to provide care or assistance for immediate family and/or dependents; to meet military service obligations; or for other personal reasons.

It is the student’s responsibility to consult the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and, if applicable, the International Student and Scholar Office (ISSO) before applying for an academic leave. A student on leave does not receive the benefits, services, and eligibility associated with registered student status.

Conditions

1. Students may request an academic leave for one or two semesters (excluding summer term). The duration of leave may be extended for military service or in other cases, subject to approval by the Dean for Graduate Studies. A leave can be granted for future semesters and up through the first Friday of classes during a current semester. No leave will be granted retroactively for a semester already completed.

2. During an academic leave, the student is considered “inactive” and shall make no academic progress toward their degree.
   a. Students are not permitted to register for any credit hours for the period covered by the academic leave. If already registered during the leave, students must officially withdraw from those courses.
   b. No tuition or fees are assessed during the leave.
   c. The time limit for completing the doctoral or master's degree is extended only by the number of semesters that have been approved for leave.
   d. For doctoral students in candidacy, an approved leave satisfies the continuous enrollment requirement (https://catalog.unl.edu/graduate-professional/graduate/degrees/doctoral/#candidacy).
   e. Students may not take comprehensive or qualifying examinations for advancement to candidacy or final examinations for the degree (although language competency examinations are allowed).
   f. Students may not file a thesis or dissertation.
   g. Students may not receive academic credit for work done at another institution during the leave.
   h. Students are not eligible for graduate assistantships or fellowships while on academic leave.

3. Students returning from an approved leave do not need to reapply or be readmitted. The Office of Graduate Studies will automatically change the student’s record to “active” status at the end of the academic leave.

Requesting a Leave

Upon receipt of an Academic Leave Request form (https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/academics/academic-leave), the request will be reviewed by the Dean for Graduate Studies. If approved, an email notification will be sent to the student, graduate chair, faculty advisor, and department office.

Requesting an Extension of an Approved Leave

Only under special circumstances will an extension of an approved leave be considered. To request an extension, students must submit an Extension Request (https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/academics/academic-leave) to the Office of Graduate Studies prior to the end of the semester in which the leave terminates. As with the original leave request, it is the student’s responsibility to consult the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and, if applicable, ISSO before applying for extension of a current leave. The request will be reviewed by the Dean for Graduate Studies. If approved, an email notification will be sent to the student, graduate chair, faculty advisor, and department office.