GRADUATE STUDENT CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION AND VOLUNTARY SEPARATION

A PRIL 23, 2019
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Continuous Registration</th>
<th>Leave of Absence from Graduate Studies (Academic Leave)</th>
<th>GA Leave</th>
<th>Program Separation</th>
<th>Exit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Must be completed before first day of semester</td>
<td>• Temporarily separated from university; no active student status</td>
<td>• Leave solely from GA employment</td>
<td>• Separates a student from one UConn grad program while they remain active in another UConn grad program</td>
<td>• An exit is a discontinuation of all programs, meaning the student will no longer be a UConn student.</td>
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<td>• Maintains active student status</td>
<td>• Does not keep student loans in deferral</td>
<td>• GA must be continuing in their capacity as a graduate student in order to be eligible (meaning the student remains enrolled in their classes)</td>
<td>• Students who are switching majors/programs or discontinuing an additional degree track must notify The Graduate School via the online Voluntary Separation Notification form.</td>
<td>• Notification of intent to exit the university must come directly from the student.</td>
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<td>• GAs are not eligible; continuous registration is zero credits and GAs are required to be registered for at least 6 credits</td>
<td>• Cannot be employed as a GA if taking academic leave</td>
<td>• Article 15 of the GEU contract provides examples of eligible leave reasons</td>
<td>• Students who do not notify The Graduate School may remain active in two programs until they graduate, resulting in incorrect program reporting and delays in degree auditing</td>
<td>• Students should should complete the online Voluntary Separation Notification form if considering exiting the university. The Graduate School will provide consumer counseling.</td>
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<td>• Does not keep student loans in deferral</td>
<td>• No access to university resources (e.g., library, e-mail)</td>
<td>• Administered by Human Resources Leave &amp; Accommodations Team</td>
<td>• Example scenario: A GA who is enrolled in 6+ credits applies for GA leave due to personal illness/injury. The approved leave means the GA is on leave from employment, however they remain enrolled and engaged in their classes and will receive a grade.</td>
<td>• Example scenario: The student wishes to discontinue their current grad program before degree completion and will not be enrolling in any other UConn program.</td>
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<td>• Flat fee (no tuition)</td>
<td>• Should be requested in advance or asap in extenuating circumstances</td>
<td>• Example scenario: A GA contract provides examples of eligible leave reasons</td>
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<td>• Counts toward time to degree</td>
<td>• Students should complete the online Voluntary Separation Notification form if considering academic leave. The Graduate School will provide consumer counseling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Additional approval needed for international students</td>
<td>• Article 15 of the GEU contract provides examples of eligible leave reasons</td>
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<td>• Descriptions of courses can be found in The Graduate Catalog</td>
<td>• Administered by Human Resources Leave &amp; Accommodations Team</td>
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<td>• Example scenario: The student has no coursework remaining and is in the dissertation phase of their graduate program and needs to maintain active student status and access to university resources, such as e-mail and the library, while they continue graduate work, so they enroll in GRAD 6999 (Dissertation Preparation).</td>
<td>• Example scenario: A GA who is enrolled in 6+ credits applies for GA leave due to personal illness/injury. The approved leave means the GA is on leave from employment, however they remain enrolled and engaged in their classes and will receive a grade.</td>
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If you are unsure which option is most appropriate, contact The Graduate School at 860-486-3617 or gradseparation@uconn.edu for assistance.
Introduction

Graduate students may need to step away from their academic studies or GA employment at some point during their graduate career. This guide contains information about associated policies and procedures that may help as we guide students to the option that best suits their circumstance.

Continuous Registration

- Continuous registration courses maintain a student’s active student status. Students therefore maintain access to things like their UConn e-mail and the library. It does not keep any student loans from going into repayment.
- Continuous registration courses can help students comply with UConn’s continuous enrollment requirement for graduate programs. The continuous enrollment requirement also applies to students in graduate certificate programs.
- Enrollment in continuous registration courses count toward a student’s time to degree.
- This course charges a flat fee (no tuition or other fees).
  - For students with Storrs as their home campus, the fee is $400.
  - For students with a regional campus as their home campus, the fee is $100.
- Enrollment in continuous registration must be completed before the first day of the semester.
- International students require approval from ISSS via the Reduced Course Load form and are generally only permitted to enroll in continuous registration in their final semester. See the ISSS Part Time Study page for additional information.
- Students enroll themselves in continuous registration courses via Student Admin.
- A description of the continuous registration courses offered can be found in The Graduate Catalog (link).
Leave of Absence from Graduate Studies (Academic Leave)

- This is an academic leave, which means a student is temporarily separated from UConn and does not have active student status.
  - Employment as a graduate assistant is contingent on active student status, which means that a student who takes an academic leave will be terminated from their assistantship.
  - The Graduate School coordinates this process to ensure that the academic leave start date and the GA payroll separation dates are aligned so that the GA’s tuition waiver remains intact.
- Students on an academic leave do not have access to UConn services such as e-mail or the library.
- Academic leave should be requested in advance, or at the earliest date possible in extenuating circumstances.
- Requests for academic leave require approval from both the major advisor and the department head.
  - This requirement exists because an approved academic leave guarantees a student’s ability to return to their program at the end of their leave.
  - Academic leave should not be used in place of recommending a student for academic dismissal because academic leave guarantees the student the right to resume their program at the end of their approved leave.
  - If an advisor or department does not support a student’s request for academic leave, they are not obligated to approve the form. If the major advisor or department head denies the request, The Graduate School will then reach out to the student to discuss other options for their enrollment.
- An academic leave request can be for a maximum of two semesters. If withdrawing mid-semester to go on leave, the current semester counts as the first semester (e.g., if a student withdraws on October 15, 2019, the first semester of leave is Fall 2019. They could request that their leave extend at most through the Spring 2020 semester.)
- Academic leave can be extended for up to an additional two semesters. Extension of academic leave requires the approval of the major advisor and department head.
- A student’s time on academic leave does not count toward their time to degree.
- The full policy on academic leaves can be found here in The Graduate Catalog.
• **Academic Leave Workflow** (view a flowchart [here](#)):  
  o A student who is considering an academic leave of absence should contact The Graduate School. This is particularly important for students considering taking academic leave mid-semester as there can be significant financial implications to withdrawing mid-semester. The Graduate School provides consumer counseling to the student and confirms the start and end dates of the leave. International students must also contact their ISSS advisor as there are visa and departure date implications to withdrawing mid-semester.
  
  o The student initiates an online Voluntary Separation Notification form, which provides general information about their current and future plans for their enrollment. The Graduate School contacts the student to review the financial and academic implications of separating in detail. The form is returned to the student to make an informed decision within ten business days about whether to move forward with separation or remain enrolled. The form then routes to the major advisor and department head for approval.
  
  o Once approved by The Graduate School, the form is sent to the Registrar to input the academic leave into Student Admin with a copy to the student, department graduate admin, advisor, and other offices as appropriate. For GAs who are taking an academic leave, the approval email will also confirm the date the GA should be separated from grad payroll.

• **Reinstatement from Academic Leave Workflow**:  
  o Before the end date of the academic leave, The Graduate School contacts the student to facilitate reinstatement from the Leave of Absence, extension of the academic leave, or discontinuation and exit from the university.
  
  o Students who plan to return to graduate study must submit a Request for Reinstatement from Leave of Absence from Graduate Studies form to The Graduate School. Once reinstated, the student can self-enroll in classes for the upcoming semester. The form can be found [here](#).
  
  o Extension of academic leave requires the student to complete a new online Voluntary Separation Notification request and submit it to the major advisor and department head for review and approval of the extended leave. The maximum amount of time a student can be on academic leave is four semesters. After that, if the student wished to return to the program, the student would need to submit a new application for admission with no guarantee of acceptance.
Graduate Assistantship Leave

- Per Article 15 in the GEU contract, graduate assistants may request a personal leave of absence from their GA appointment for reasoning including, but not limited to:
  - Maternity (paid)
  - Care for a newborn or adopted child (non-birth parent) (paid for up to 21 calendar days)
  - Personal Illness/Injury
  - Family Illness/Injury (spouse, registered domestic partner, child, parent, parent-in-law)
  - Bereavement (spouse, registered domestic partner, child, parent, parent-in-law)
  - Military Leave
  - Immigration Hearings
  - Jury Duty

- Graduate assistantship leave is a leave solely from the GA’s employment, not their academic studies. The GA must be continuing in their capacity as a graduate student (i.e., still enrolled and engaged in their classes) in order to be eligible to request a GA leave under the GEU contract provisions. A GA who wishes to take an academic leave must contact The Graduate School.

- GA leaves are administered by the Human Resources Leave & Accommodations Team (Suzanne Rogoz, 860-486-0398). More information and GA leave request forms can be found on HR’s website: [https://hr.uconn.edu/ga-leave-administration/](https://hr.uconn.edu/ga-leave-administration/)
Program Separation

- This process separates a student from one UConn graduate program while they remain active in another UConn graduate program.
- Graduate students who are switching majors/programs or discontinuing an additional degree track must notify The Graduate School via the online Voluntary Separation Notification form so they can be discontinued from the degree track.
- Without notifying The Graduate School, students could remain active in two programs until they graduate, resulting in incorrect reporting and delays in degree auditing.
- Students should complete the Voluntary Separation Notification form found [here](#).

Exit

- A student who is considering discontinuing their program(s) and exiting the university must complete an online Voluntary Separation Notification form. International students must also contact their ISSS advisor.
- There can be significant financial implications to withdrawing mid-semester so students who are considering this option should complete a Voluntary Separation Notification form as soon as possible. After The Graduate School receives the student’s Voluntary Separation Notification form, a representative from The Graduate School provides detailed consumer counseling to the student. The online VSN form is then returned to the student to make an informed decision within ten business days about whether to move forward with exiting the university or remain enrolled.
- The finalized Voluntary Separation Notification form is sent to the Registrar to input the exit into Student Admin with a copy to the student, department graduate admin, and other offices as appropriate.
- Notification from the department that a student wishes to discontinue their program and exit is not sufficient. The student must complete a Voluntary Separation Notification form. If there are extenuating circumstances where the student is unable to complete the form, please contact [gradseparation@uconn.edu](mailto:gradseparation@uconn.edu) for assistance.