

SPIA Graduate Students and Leave Policy

UGA Graduate School Pregnancy/Childbirth/Adoption Leave Policy

Graduate students are an integral part of our School. For that reason we have worked to provide reasonable accommodations in the instance of need relating to family or medical leave. The Graduate School provides for a leave of absence for graduate students in the event of pregnancy, childbirth, and adoption when filed under Graduate School Enrollment Policy.

Leave of Absence

For students experiencing unusual circumstances, a leave of absence provides a mechanism to be exempted temporarily from the continuous enrollment policy. A leave of absence requires approval of the program's Graduate Coordinator and the Dean of Graduate School. A leave of absence will be granted only for good cause such as serious medical and health-related issues, major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, child care, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study. An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of 3 credits for each semester for which the leave of absence is granted. During a leave of absence, students may not use UGA facilities, resources, or services designed or intended only for enrolled students; receive a graduate assistantship, fellowship, or financial aid from the University; or take any UGA courses related to their program of study. An approved leave of absence does not stop the clock unless the leave is granted for pregnancy, childbirth, or adoption (see below): time on leave counts toward any University, Graduate School, or program time limits pertaining to the degree being sought.

[Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Adoption](#): Time spent on an approved leave of absence due to pregnancy, childbirth, and/or adoption of a child under six years of age will not count toward time limits governing their graduate degree.

1. **Application.** Students may apply for a leave of absence for good cause such as serious medical and health-related issues, major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, child care, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study. An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of 3 credits for each semester for which the leave of absence is granted.
2. **Student Responsibility.** It is the student's responsibility to apply for a leave of absence in a timely fashion. An approved leave of absence does not exempt students from the enrollment requirements of other programs, offices, and agencies such as the Veterans Administration, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and federal financial aid programs. Eligibility for certain types of financial aid, including graduate

assistantships, requires enrollment for more credits than the Continuous Enrollment Policy.

3. **Deadlines.** A student may apply for a leave of absence before or during any semester in which they are not registered for courses. Application for a leave of absence must be received by the Graduate School Office of Enrollment Services on or before the last day of classes for the semester for which it is requested. A leave of absence will not be granted retroactively after the end of a semester.
4. **Limits.** A student may request a leave of absence for one semester, two consecutive semesters, or three consecutive semesters (summer semester included). There is a 12-month limit for any one request of leave of absence. A student may submit multiple requests for a leave of absence subject to a 3 semester limit. [[Get the Form](#)]

Again, if you have any questions, please contact SPIA's Human Resources representative, Shelly Terrazas, at 706-542-1881. In addition, UGA Human Resources will provide answers to many of your questions. Their Faculty and Staff Relations contact numbers are 706-542-9231 or 706-542-2167.