

**School of Education Indiana University**

**Leaves for Graduate Students Policy**

**Effective date: 4/27/2011**

This policy provides continuing support, in the form of paid and unpaid leave, and milestone extensions, for graduate students in the School of Education.

**Part A – PAID LEAVE**

**PART B – UNPAID LEAVE**

**PART C – POLICIES APPLICABLE TO ALL LEAVES**

**PART D – SUPPORT APPLICABLE TO PAID AND UNPAID LEAVE**

**PART E -- PROCEDURE**

**A. PAID LEAVE (Family and Medical leave)**

**Reasons for Paid Family and Medical Leave :** Critical medical or family situation, defined as:

- A serious health condition requiring an absence of 3 weeks or more
- Care of a child within 12 months of the child's birth or adoption
- The serious health condition of a spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent when the student is the primary or co-primary caregiver and the absence is anticipated to continue for at least three weeks
- Death of a spouse, domestic partner, child or parent

**Eligibility** To be eligible for paid leave a student must:

- be enrolled full-time in an School of Education graduate degree-granting or teacher certification program
- have completed at least one full-time fall or spring semester in your current School of Education graduate program
- hold a Student Academic Appointment in the School of Education, including affiliated centers, of at least 37.5 % FTE at the time of the leave OR hold a stipend-bearing fellowship during a non-working year

**Terms and Conditions of Paid Leave** Students on paid family or medical leave who are on eligible Student Academic Appointments for the entire fall or spring term shall receive continuing full support including stipend, health insurance, and any fee remission for up to 6 consecutive weeks of leave, or to the end of the semester, whichever occurs first. Students on eligible summer appointments shall receive continuing full support for up to 2 consecutive weeks; students on other eligible appointments shall receive a number of leave days proportionate to the total duration of their appointment. During the time of the leave, the student's duties and responsibilities will be reduced to providing information related to current students or research projects, as requested by the hiring department or center. Students on paid leave will be considered active in their programs and enrolled fulltime. Those who have been nominated to candidacy will have to remain enrolled in dissertation credits (795, 799 or G901) during the time of the leave.

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## B. UNPAID LEAVE

**Reasons for Unpaid Family and Medical Leave :** Personal reason for sitting out of studies temporarily, and/or extension of a paid leave period without pay.

**Eligibility** To be eligible for unpaid leave a student must:

- be enrolled full-time in an School of Education graduate degree-granting or teacher certification program
- have completed at least one full-time fall or spring semester in your current School of Education graduate program
- the student *may* hold a Student Academic Appointment in the School of Education and request to combine unpaid leave with paid leave

**Terms and Conditions of Unpaid Leave** Students on unpaid leave will be considered active in their programs but not enrolled fulltime. Those who have been nominated to candidacy will have to remain enrolled in dissertation credits (795, 799 or G901) during the time of the leave.

Students on unpaid leave for serious medical reasons, caregiving, bereavement and maternity reasons as listed above, but *not* using the leave to extend paid leave, may apply for extension of academic milestones.

Students on unpaid leave and using this leave to extend a paid leave will **not** receive a stipend for the unpaid period of leave, but may continue to receive health insurance and fee remission depending on the timing of this extension During the time of the leave, the student's duties and responsibilities will be as agreed between the student and the hiring department or center.

Students on unpaid leave for personal reasons *not* including caregiving, bereavement and maternity reasons as listed above, are *not* eligible for extension of academic milestones.

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## C. POLICIES APPLICABLE TO ALL LEAVES

### Leave Frequency and Total Leave

Graduate students may take family or medical leave in up to two terms of every five calendar years, but must be enrolled full-time for at least one fall or spring term between leaves. All leaves of any kind taken during one program of study may not total more than 104 weeks, inclusive of summer sessions. Family leave for the birth or adoption of a child must be concluded within 12 months of the birth of the child or the date on which the child is placed for adoption with the student.

### Responsibility of the Student

It is the responsibility of the student:

- To request the leave as soon as possible after the need is realized, before the beginning of the semester if possible. If the leave could not be anticipated, request for the leave should be made no more than one week after the need for the leave occurs. Leaves may be denied if the student does not provide adequate notice of the request.
- To provide any requested medical certification or other verification of the reason for the leave.
- To discuss with the assigned faculty advisor the impact of the leave on course and degree progress, and to make any necessary special arrangements. These arrangements should be made as part of the initial request for a leave whenever possible, and may be denied if made more than one week after the leave has begun.

- To provide certification of ability to return to duties at the end of the leave, where appropriate.
- To provide information related to current students or research projects associated with SAA responsibilities, as requested by the hiring department or center. It is the responsibility of the hiring unit to arrange for covering the student's remaining duties during the time of the leave; the student is expected to be cooperative in this process.
- For students who have been nominated to candidacy, to remain enrolled in dissertation credits (795, 799 or G901) during the time of the leave.

### **Return from Leave**

Evaluation of a graduate student's academic progress and performance shall not be affected negatively by an approved period of leave which conformed to the requirements spelled out in this policy. Upon return from an approved leave, a student whose contract is still in effect will be assigned the same or similar duties, as determined by the needs of the department or center, to complete the remainder of that contract.

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### **D. Support Applicable to Paid and Unpaid Leave**

Students approved for a family or medical leave, paid or unpaid, will be entitled to apply for a one-term extension of all major degree milestones and time limits (qualifying exam deadlines, number of years between passing the oral qualifying exam and obtaining the degree). Students who are enrolled in G 901 during the leave, or who have incomplete grades due to expire during the term of the leave, may also be eligible for extensions of the standard limits. Applications for such extensions are subject to approval from Graduate Studies (SoE programs) or the University Graduate School (Ph.D. programs).

Current enrollment status will not be automatically affected by paid or unpaid Family and Medical Leaves. Students should discuss options with their primary faculty advisor and make individual arrangements with course instructors for any necessary accommodations to enrolled courses. On approval of the leave, these options may include:

- A waiver of drop/add fees so that students can transfer from regular courses to research credits during the period of the leave, and
- Complete withdrawal from current coursework, processed at the end of the semester and leaving the SAA and associated benefits intact.

If at all possible, such requests for these supports should be made as part of the initial request for the leave, and should be accompanied by a written recommendation from a faculty advisor. Such requests are likely to be denied if they are made more than one week after the leave has begun.

### **E. PROCEDURE**

A student should fill out the Request for Leave Form and review it with their primary faculty advisor and, for paid leaves, with their SAA supervisor. The student turns the form in to their major department, for paid leaves accompanied by a memo describing the specific arrangements, if any, pertaining to timeline and SAA responsibilities. When the form has been signed and approved at the department level, department staff forward it to the Office of Graduate Studies. Final approval of family and medical leaves will be made by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, after consultation with the department or center. Leaves will be considered only for current or future terms, and will not be granted retroactively. Milestone extensions for PhD students must be approved by the Graduate School, and for Masters, EdD, Specialist and Certificate Students by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.

Leaves for Graduate Students

Frequently Asked Questions

**GENERAL**

***What is a Graduate Student Leave?***

The Graduate Student Leave provides students with an opportunity to take care of uncontrollable events that interfere with their ability to work towards a degree. Policy provides for two types of leaves:

- Family and Medical Leave provides for up to six weeks paid leave provided to students who have at least a 37.5 FTE academic appointment, including teaching assistants, research assistants, associate instructors, and faculty assistants who receive University-paid health benefits. Employment or study elsewhere while on leave without explicit written approval is prohibited and may be grounds for cancelling the leave or academic dismissal.
- Academic leave provides up to two years of relief from coursework taken in increments of full regular terms (fall, spring)

***Is the Graduate Student Leave the same as the Indiana University Family and Medical Leave of Absence for Faculty and Staff?***

No. The Graduate Student Leave policy is designed for graduate students and differs from the faculty and staff policy.

***What are the benefits of an approved Graduate Student Leave?***

If approved for a Graduate Student Leave, the academic benefits are worked out individually for each student with the guidance of their faculty advisors, departments/centers, and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. A student receives a written record of their absence and, in the case of Family and Medical Leave, may request an absence from student academic appointment, transfer of current credits to research, grades of Incomplete, a one-term extension of current grades of Incomplete, or complete withdrawal from coursework. If necessary, the student works with the Student Advocates Office regarding complete withdrawal from coursework. The Leave may also extend financial commitments that are contingent on continued progress towards a degree.

In the case of Family and Medical leave, The Office of Graduate Studies may approve extensions of milestones for Ed.D, Ed.S., MS and Certificate students. The Office of Graduate Studies also works with the University Graduate School regarding extensions of milestones for Ph.D students. A student may use documentation of an approved leave as support for their request for a milestone and time limits extension from the University Graduate School. A leave does not guarantee an automatic or immediate extension of milestones or standard limits by the University Graduate School.

How does taking a Graduate Student Leave affect my student loan status?

If you are a doctoral student and have been nominated to candidacy, you must be enrolled in at least 1 hour of **dissertation credit**, every fall and every spring, to keep your student loan repayment deferment.

If you are a pre-candidacy doctoral student or a master's, specialist, or graduate teacher certification program student, you must be enrolled in at least 4 credit hours (half-time) to keep your student loan repayment deferment for most federal student loan programs. You are strongly advised to check with the IU Student Loan Administration office for the specific requirements for your loan (<http://www.fms.indiana.edu/sla/home.asp>).

***How long is a term extension?***

A term extension is equal to one Fall or Spring semester. A department/center may also determine a different length of time for their student, not to exceed one semester.

### ***When can a student request a Graduate Student Leave of Absence?***

In the case of Family and Medical leave, a student seeking a Graduate Student Leave should request the leave as soon as possible. If the leave is anticipated, this should occur prior to the beginning of the semester. If the leave is unanticipated, the request should be made no more than one week after the need for the leave occurs. Departments may submit paperwork on behalf of and with approval by the student. Leaves may be denied because of the failure of the Student to provide adequate notice of the request for leave. Leaves of absence may not be requested retroactively.

In the case of unpaid leave taken for personal reasons, the request for leave should be made prior to the start of the term in which the leave will occur

### ***What qualifies a student to receive an unpaid Academic Leave?***

Unpaid Academic Leaves of Absence are granted for students with unanticipated responsibilities that interfere with the ability to work towards a degree and at the discretion of the department/center. Leaves for military duty are coordinated in conjunction with the Indiana University Veteran Support Services.

### ***How long does it take to process a Graduate Student Leave request?***

If the request is complete upon submission, the typical process time is 7-10 business days. However, if the request is incomplete, the process may take up to 21 business days.

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE**

### ***What counts as a serious health condition?***

Under the Indiana University Family and Medical Leave policy, qualifying serious health conditions include any of the following: Chronic conditions (diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, etc.); Multiple treatments (chemotherapy, dialysis, etc.) Pregnancy & prenatal care; overnight hospitalization; permanent/long term conditions (Alzheimer's, terminal disease); Incapacity of more than three calendar days requiring a continuous regimen of treatment (including injury).

### ***Is medical certification required?***

Medical certification is required for any serious health condition. A student should obtain a copy of the medical certification form and take it to the health care provider to have it completed. The medical certification should be submitted within in 15 days of the leave request.

### ***Who qualifies as a health care provider under the Graduate Student Leave guideline?***

Under the Indiana University Family and Medical Leave policy, persons authorized to provide health care services include podiatrists, psychologists, optometrists, chiropractors, dentists, doctors of medicine or osteopathy, nurse practitioners and midwives, clinical social workers, Christian Science practitioners, and any recognized IU health plan provider.

### ***Who are the family members covered under the Graduate Student Leave guideline?***

A student may use the Graduate Student Family and Medical Leave for his/her own care, the care of a spouse, dependent children under age 18, same sex domestic partner as qualified by the University Affidavit of Domestic Partnership, child of the same sex domestic partner, or the parents of the student.

## STUDENTS

### ***How do I apply for a Graduate Student Leave of Absence?***

Requests for Family and Medical Leave can be made by the student to his or her faculty advisor, center director, or department chair by completing the Leave Request Form.

Requests for Academic Leave should be made by the student to the department chair for the student's major program. Approved leaves will be reported to the Graduate Studies Office and recorded in the student's file.

### ***What signatures do I need on Graduate Student Leave of Absence request form?***

A complete unpaid Academic Leave request form will have the student's and the Faculty Advisor signatures. A student requesting a paid Family & Medical Leave **must** have the Department Chairperson's or Center Director's signature in addition to the advisor's.

### ***What if I need more than the 6 weeks provided under a Family and Medical Leave?***

Although very few students are granted Leaves of Absence for more than one semester, a student may request a leave of up to two years. The two years may include 6 weeks of paid leave and the remainder in unpaid leave. For a mixed leave, the student should fill out both the Family and Medical leave Request and the Academic Leave Request.

### ***What do I receive on a paid Family and Medical Leave?***

A student on a paid Family & Medical Leave receives continuing full support including stipend, health insurance, and any fee remission for up to 6 consecutive weeks of leave or to the end of the semester, whichever comes first. Students on eligible summer appointments shall receive continuing full support for up to 2 consecutive weeks. Students on other eligible appointments may receive a number of leave days proportionate to the total duration of their appointment.

### ***What happens to my coursework when I am on an Family and Medical Leave?***

The details of each Leave of Absence are worked out for each individual student in consultation with their faculty advisors. Students approved for a family or medical leave (paid or unpaid) often apply for and receive a one-term extension of all major degree milestones and time limits such as qualifying exam deadlines and the number of years between passing the oral qualifying exam and obtaining the degree. Students who are enrolled in G901 during the leave or who have incomplete grades from previous terms may also be eligible for extension of the standard limits. It is necessary to work with the student's faculty advisors and University Graduate School to determine eligibility and approval for milestone extensions.

### ***How often may I take a Graduate Student Leave of Absence? May I take a Graduate Student Leave of Absence on an intermittent basis?***

Academic Leave may provide up to 104 weeks total relief from coursework in a given program of study. Each graduate student with at least a 37.5 FTE academic appointment is eligible for paid family or medical leaves in up to two terms of every five calendar years, but must be enrolled full-time for at least one semester in between leaves. Extended or intermittent leaves may be granted for students with chronic serious health conditions or ongoing treatments (i.e., chronic asthma, chemotherapy or dialysis treatments, care of a qualifying family member). Students should schedule foreseeable appointments around their normal work schedule and seek department/center approval on foreseeable absences. We encourage students to work with their faculty advisors to craft a Leave request that best suits their needs.

### ***In the event of child birth or adoption, if both I and my spouse/domestic partner are graduate students in Education, are we able to take paid Family and Medical Leave at the same time?***

Yes. Requests for leave are treated on an individual basis. If both parents meet all necessary conditions, they may request and be approved for leave at the same time.

## **FACULTY AND DEPARTMENTS**

### ***Who pays for an approved Family and Medical Leave?***

The School expects each department/center to cover the cost of paid Graduate Student Leaves in much the same way as it does for other employees. A department chairperson's or center director's signature on the leave request acknowledges their awareness and understanding of their financial responsibility. If the costs present a major hardship, the department/center should contact the Office of Graduate Studies as soon as possible to discuss alternatives.

### ***Who covers for the student's academic appointment duties and academic load while the student is on leave?***

The School leaves it to each department/center to work out the details of a replacement. Some departments have hired temporary instructors; others temporarily shift the work responsibilities to faculty or other staff.

### ***May a student use the Graduate Student Leave on an intermittent basis?***

Yes, a student is eligible, with department/center approval, to use Graduate Student Leave intermittently. The School asks departments/centers to work closely with the student to craft a Leave request that best accommodates both the student's and the department's/center's needs.

### ***May a part time graduate student request Graduate Student Leave?***

Yes, if you are a part time graduate student wanting to sit out of your program for personal reasons you may request unpaid leave of up to 104 weeks total during one program of studies. Speak directly with an advisor or with program/department head about outstanding grades of incomplete and other timeline issues that may affect you during an unpaid leave taken for personal reasons.

Graduate students studying part time are *not* eligible for paid leave or timeline extensions.

**Summary of Leaves**

	<b>must hold SAA</b>	<b>repeatable</b>	<b>requires medical, family reason</b>	<b>requires interval between requests</b>	<b>time limit</b>
<b>extension of milestones</b>	NO	NO	YES	N/A	2 terms (1 year)
<b>paid leave</b>	YES	YES	YES	YES	6 weeks
<b>unpaid leave</b>	NO	YES	<b>YES</b> - if extension of paid leave or requesting timeline extensions <b>NO</b> - if standalone leave for personal reasons	NO	2 years (104 weeks)

**Example of multiple leaves in one program of study**

SEM	F	S	sum	F	S	sum	F	S	sum	F	S	sum	F	S	sum	F	S	sum	
	fulltime study (FTS)	6 week paid leave		16 weeks unpaid leave	FTS		FTS	6 week paid leave		FTS	FTS		FTS	FTS				16 weeks unpaid leave	
		<b>PARENTAL LEAVE</b>						<b>LEAVE FOR ILLNESS</b>										<b>PERSONAL LEAVE</b>	
	year 1			year 2			year 3			year 4			year 5			Year 6			
total weeks		6		22				28										44 weeks	

**School of Education Indiana University  
Graduate Student Leave of Absence Request**

Last	First	Student ID #
		_____ Yes _____ No
Degree Program	Name of Fellowship or Student Academic Appointment	I receive Student Loans
Date leave is to begin _____ end: _____		Type: A. _____ Medical /Family _____ Personal
		B. _____ Paid _____ Unpaid

**This Leave is for the following qualifying reason:**

- a serious health condition requiring an absence of 3 weeks or more
- care of a child within 12 months of birth or adoption of a child
- care of a spouse, domestic partner, child or parent with a serious health condition when the student is the primary or co-primary caregiver and the absence is anticipated to continue for at least 3 weeks
- death of a spouse, domestic partner, child or parent  
 Name/Relationship of relevant family member: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Note: Same sex domestic partner and children of partnership coverage must be qualified by the University's Affidavit of Domestic Partnership.
- Other/personal, please attach explanation

All requests must be accompanied by a memo from the department chair/center director describing how job duties will be covered if the student is a Student Academic Appointee. If the student has multiple appointments, memos are required for all appointments.

**Requested accommodations:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Term extension of incompletes<br><input type="checkbox"/> Absence from Student Academic Appointment duties<br><input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of all current credits to research | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade of Incomplete for current coursework<br><input type="checkbox"/> Complete withdrawal from coursework<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other, please attach explanation |
|---|--|

A graduate student in the School of Education may request a leave of absence by submitting a Leave of Absence Request form to the Office of Graduate Studies. **Approval is subject to the following conditions and understandings:**

1. I have completed at least 1 full-time semester prior to the leave request.
2. This leave will not exceed the total allowable limit of 104 weeks in this program of study, including any prior or current approved leave.
3. The student and department understand that a leave does not apply retroactively.
4. The student and department understand that a leave does not automatically extend grades of incomplete.
5. The student and department understand that a leave does not automatically extend or circumvent milestones or other requirements determined by the School of Education or the University Graduate School.
6. The student and department understand that a leave preserves the curriculum and requirements designated in the School of Education Graduate Program Bulletin and the University Graduate School Bulletin at the time of the students leave in the event of change in curriculum or degree requirements while a student is on leave.
7. The student understands that a department may choose not to accept a course, thesis or doctoral requirement while he or she is on leave.
8. The student understands that depending on the length and timing of his or her leave, the leave may affect their funding, i.e. fellowship monies received, AI stipend, federal loan, etc., and will contact the Office of the Bursar or their funding source to discuss this matter.
9. The student understands that not returning to their academic program following the end of an approved leave without prior communication, forfeits any remaining commitments or agreements from the School, Department, or Center of ongoing financial support or special academic arrangements made in subsequent semesters.
10. The department understands that if a student is applying for and the department agrees to a paid leave department maintains financial responsibility for the student on leave and any temporary replacement.

Student Signature	Date
Faculty Advisor Name & Signature	Date
Department Chair/Center Director Signature (required for paid leave request)	Date
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies	Date

**Please submit completed and signed request along with medical certification to:  
Office of Graduate Studies ED 2100 201 N. Rose Ave Bloomington IN 47405  
p.812.856.8504 f. 812.856.8505 e. [educate@indiana.edu](mailto:educate@indiana.edu)**

**FOR GRADUATE OFFICE USE ONLY:**

\_\_\_Leave **conditionally** approved pending receipt of medical certification (received w/in 15 days on \_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_Leave **approved**

With the following accommodations:

- Extension of incompletes and milestones
- Transfer of all current credits to research
- Change in SAA duties
- Grade of incomplete for current coursework
- Complete withdrawal from coursework
- Other (see attached)

Leave **denied** because Student:

- is not enrolled full-time in an Education Graduate program or is not in good academic standing
- has not been enrolled full-time in an Education Graduate program for 1 semester before/between leaves
- does not have a qualifying reason for leave
- has exhausted calendar year allotment
- is not eligible for paid-leave because the student does not hold an eligible Education appointment
- did not submit medical certification

Additional Comments:

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Office of Graduate Studies (signature of reviewer)

Date

Date given to student: \_\_\_ Via: \_\_\_U.S. Mail \_\_\_E-mail \_\_\_Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

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