

# Continuous Enrollment

Students are required to maintain continuous enrollment from their first quarter of registration until completion of all degree requirements with the exception of school approved breaks or approved leaves. Students who maintain continuous enrollment are subject to the degree requirements and academic policies in place at their date of matriculation as communicated by the university catalog. Degree requirements may be changed at the discretion of the University when professional requirements or educational standards change and are communicated accordingly.

The continuous enrollment requirement will be waived for students who are granted an official leave of absence, although they retain matriculated status (per LOA policy).

Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment or fail to receive approval for a leave of absence must reapply for admission, and are subject to all admission requirements and criteria at the time of re-application. Decisions for re-enrollment are made by the academic department. Students may be subject to changes in the degree or additional requirements as deemed by the program.

## Leave of Absence

RFU expects students to maintain continuous enrollment in an academic program with the exception of scheduled breaks. However, at times it may be necessary or desirable for a student to take a leave of absence. All leave of absence requests must be approved by the appropriate dean or dean's designee. Individual leave of absences are granted for no more than one year. In special circumstances a leave may be extended if requested in writing and approved prior to the end of the initial leave of absence. Maximum approved leave of absence time may not exceed two years. Approved time does not have to be consecutive. If the leave of absence exceeds two years, the student will be involuntarily withdrawn and may re-apply for admission.

Students on leave of absence retain their matriculated student status. Academic program and degree requirements may change during a student's leave of absence. Once the student has been approved for return, it is at the discretion of the dean or dean's designee to define the program and graduation requirements in accordance with degree requirements at the time of the leave initiation or the requirements at the time of return (if they have changed). In exceptional circumstances, the requirements may reflect a combination thereof in order to satisfy all requirements for degree. The Continuous Enrollment Policy will help advise as to the enrollment effects of Leave of Absence. Suspension, dismissal or expulsion overrides a leave of absence.

- **Voluntary Leave of Absence**

A student may request a voluntary leave of absence (LOA). Students requesting voluntary leaves of absence must comply with this policy, both in making requests for such leaves, and prior to returning from approved leaves of absence. Any RFU student contemplating a voluntary leave of absence should consult with their appointed Leave of Absence Coordinator, Dean/Dean's designee to discuss the necessary application procedures.

Students on an approved voluntary leaves of absence retain their Student Identification card and access to their email account. Students may visit the campus and any other University-owned facilities. Exceptions may be made under specific circumstances.

- There are five types of voluntary leave of absence:
  - **Medical Leave of Absence**  
Students who must temporarily interrupt their progress toward a degree due to a physical or mental health need must petition for a medical leave of absence. All medical leave of absence requests will be assigned to the RFU ADA Coordinator who will serve as the LOA coordinator.
  - **Academic Leave of Absence**  
Students who must temporarily interrupt their progress toward a degree in order to maintain appropriate academic progress must petition for an academic leave.
  - **Personal Leave of Absence**  
Students who wish to temporarily interrupt their progress toward a degree for a non-medical or non-academic reason must petition for a personal leave of absence.
  - **Educational Leave of Absence**  
Students who wish to temporarily interrupt their progress toward a degree to pursue academic research at an approved institution or pursue a combined degree at RFU must petition for an educational leave of absence.
  - **Military Leave of Absence**  
Students who need to temporarily interrupt their progress toward degree to fulfill military obligations should petition for a military leave
- In emergency cases, where the student is unable to initiate the request, the Associate Vice President (AVP) of Student Affairs may initiate and process a leave of absence in conjunction with the student's Dean or Dean's designee. In such cases, supporting documentation may be accepted in lieu of the student signature for a voluntary Request of Leave of Absence form.

- **Involuntary Leave of Absence**

The university may place a student on an involuntary leave of absence when a student is unwilling or unable to request a voluntary leave of absence and when there is evidence to suggest that:

- The student poses a significant threat of imminent or serious harm to self, others, or University property.
- The student impedes the educational activities of other members of the campus community. Examples of such behavior include being disruptive in the educational environment or having needs which exceed the level of care and supervision that the University community can provide.
- The student has a medical reason that prevents return to the University in the foreseeable future and is unable to document and request for leave.

- The student fails to meet enrollment requirements such as providing documentation, completing unfulfilled academic requirements, or having unpaid tuition in violation of the tuition policy.
- Involuntary leave of absence is initiated by the Dean of Students in conjunction with the Dean or Dean's Designee.
- An involuntary leave of absence may be executed at any time. If a student is placed on an involuntary leave, the RFU Student Identification card must be returned to or deactivated by the Department of Campus Safety and access to his or her email and/or computer account may be suspended at the discretion of the Dean of Students. The student may visit the campus and any other University-owned facilities only with the written permission of the Dean of Students. Such permission may be set forth in the letter notifying the student of the involuntary leave. Otherwise, the student must be off the campus during the involuntary period of leave.
- A student is notified in writing that they are placed on involuntary leave. The student may petition the Executive Director for Campus Life for reconsideration and may appeal to the Dean of Students for final decision.

## University Withdrawal

A University withdrawal is a permanent separation from the university. Any student who plans to leave the University on a permanent basis must formally withdraw. Any student who has withdrawn from the University and then wishes to return is required to reapply for admission. Suspension, dismissal, or expulsion will override a University Withdrawal.

A withdrawn student cannot petition to return to the University in the same term that the University Withdrawal occurred. Withdrawn students cannot attend classes, will not have access to University services, and must establish an agreed upon timeframe with the Director of Student Housing to vacate University-owned housing. Financial adjustments to tuition, fees, University housing, and student financial aid will be applied.

There are two types of University Withdrawals: Voluntary and Involuntary.

- **Voluntary Withdrawal:** A voluntary withdrawal occurs when the student notifies the University of his or her intent to withdraw by following the University's Voluntary Withdrawal Policy.
  - If a voluntary withdrawal is requested prior to the end of the Add/Drop period, all classes for the term will be dropped.
  - If a voluntary withdrawal is requested after the Add/Drop period and through the last day of classes for the current term, the student will receive grades of 'W' (Withdraw) in all courses enrolled for the term.
  - Students who are withdrawn from their courses during the quarter will be subject to the tuition refund schedule on the academic calendar.
- **Involuntary Withdrawal:** University administrators have the authority to withdraw a student from the University and to revoke that student's registration at any time for the following reasons:
  - Failure to comply with academic progress

- Failure to comply with the University tuition and fee policy
- Other reasons deemed appropriate by their Dean or Dean's designee.

A student is notified in writing that they have been Involuntary Withdrawn. The student may appeal to the Dean of Students for a final decision.

## **Financial Considerations of Leave or Withdrawal**

A student granted a leave of absence during an academic term will have their tuition adjusted according to the RFU Tuition Refund Policy. While a student is on leave they will not be charged tuition, are not eligible for federal student loans, and are not covered by medical malpractice insurance. Students approved for a leave of absence are eligible to purchase student medical health insurance for the period of absence.

It is the responsibility of the student who is considering a leave of absence or voluntary withdrawal to contact the Office of Student Financial Services to discuss any possible financial impact before initiating the process.

In accordance with federal regulations, the Office of Financial Aid will recalculate federal aid eligibility for students who withdraw or take a leave of absence prior to completing more than 60 percent of the term.

Students on a leave of absence are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Students on a leave of absence are not considered to be working toward their degree; the grace (deferral) period for loan repayment may lapse during the leave. For loans with the typical six- or nine-month grace period, repayment will start after six or nine months of leave and continue through the rest of the leave. For such students, loan repayment will begin immediately after graduation, rather than six or nine months into the first postgraduate year.

### **Other Considerations**

- Health Insurance and Disability
  - Students participating in the RFU Student Sponsored Health Insurance plan who take a leave of absence may continue coverage in RFU Student Sponsored Health Insurance Plan for four (4) quarters while on a leave of absence. Although in special circumstances, if the leave is extended, the student sponsored health insurance plan may be available. If the leave of absence crosses academic years, insurance coverage may be provided that crosses two separate plan years at the premium rates in effect during those plan periods. Students are responsible for payment according to the published due dates. Non-payment will result in cancellation of health insurance coverage.
  - Students on leave of absence must continue their coverage of the disability insurance policy if applicable to their school/program and will be charged the standard fee for this coverage.
- Students must graduate within their degree maximum timeframes. Exception to the timeframe limitations may be made for students who have not had academic difficulties and who are enrolled in combined degree programs at the College or School (such as MD/PhD or DPM/PhD ).

- Transcripts will not distinguish between voluntary and involuntary leave of absence.
- International students on an issued F-1 or M-1 visa must also have their leave of absence approved by the International Student Advisor.

## Definitions

**Voluntary Leave:** A voluntary leave is defined as an active student status representing an approved temporary break from University studies for one or more terms, and with intent to return in a future term. During a leave, students are not enrolled in classes at any point during the academic term of the leave. Degree-seeking students maintain matriculated status.

**Involuntary Leave:** An involuntary leave is defined as a non-punitive, temporary separation of a student from the University imposed by the Dean of Students in conjunction with the Dean or Dean's Designee.

**Voluntary Withdrawal:** Voluntary withdrawal is defined as the student voluntarily submitting notification of their withdrawal from the academic program.

**Involuntary Withdrawal:** An involuntary withdrawal is defined as University administrators using their authority to withdraw a student from the University and to revoke that student's registration.

**Continuous Enrollment:** Continuous enrollment is defined as registering for at least one credit in all quarters (excluding authorized academic program breaks in enrollment) until the degree is attained or status as a degree-seeking student is terminated.

**Leave of Absence Coordinator:** Students requesting a leave of absence will be assigned a Leave of Absence Coordinator from the University Division of Student Success and Wellness, or another agreed upon official as appropriate, who will support the student through the administrative and logistical issues associated with leave, possible appeal, and return processes.

## Procedures

- **Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Procedures**
  - A student experiencing circumstances that require a leave of absence or withdrawal should schedule an appointment with their Dean or Dean's Designee to review the following academic implications of a leave of absence or withdrawal:
    - Discuss alternatives to a leave of absence/withdrawal
    - Determine the appropriate type of leave of absence/withdrawal. All medical leave of absence requests will be processed by the RFU ADA Coordinator or Leave of Absence Coordinator as assigned and should be reviewed immediately
    - Impact on progress toward degree
    - Requirements for degree and enrollment per quarter
    - Catalog year and status

- Previous quarters academic standing at the time of the requested leave/withdrawal
  - Incomplete grades or other academic issues, if applicable
- The Student and Dean/Dean's designee will develop an initial academic plan for re-entry. (This plan will be reviewed upon request for return from leave.)
- The Student and Dean/Dean's designee should review the RFU Leave of Absence/Withdrawal Policy and complete the Request for Leave of Absence Form or Withdrawal Form which will be submitted to the Leave of Absence Coordinator.
- Students with a Rosalind Franklin University issued F-1 or M-1 visa must meet with an International Student Advisor to discuss how immigration regulations will impact the proposed leave of absence. The Advisor (DSO) must sign-off on the leave of absence clearance form.
- Students will meet with the Leave of Absence Coordinator to review the plan for re-entry. The Leave of Absence Coordinator will also work closely with the Academic Program and with the University administrative offices for clearance, if applicable; these offices include Student Accounts, Financial Aid, Student Health Insurance, and Student Housing, as well as determine the date of withdrawal from classes, date of determination for financial aid purposes, and return date, if applicable.
- Once all required signatures have been obtained, the Request for Leave of Absence/Withdrawal form will be returned to their Dean or Dean's designee for review.
- The Dean or Dean's designee will notify the student and University Registrar of the approval status. If approved, they provide a written communication to the student outlining the details of the leave, including any conditions for return and academic plan.
- The University Registrar's Office will notify the student of an official change of status including the effective date and date of return, if applicable.
- At the end of the approved leave of absence, a student must petition for return by contacting their Leave of Absence Coordinator and Dean or Dean's designee via email at least 8 weeks before the start of the quarter in which the student plans to return, or as stated in the LOA approval.
- **Request for Extension**
  - Leave of absence extensions must be received prior to the end of the initial leave of absence.
  - A student experiencing circumstances that may require extending a leave should schedule an appointment with their Dean or Dean's designee to review the academic implications of extending the leave.
    - Students should also contact their leave of absence coordinator and the Dean's designee to discuss plans for re-entry.
  - A student requesting a leave of absence extension or return from a leave of absence at a different time must complete the leave of absence form including the extension portion.
  - Once all required signatures have been obtained, the Request for Leave of Absence form will be returned to the student's Dean or Dean's designee for review.
  - The student's Dean or Dean's designee will notify the student and University Registrar of the approved extension and if approved, will provide a written

communication to the student outlining the details of the leave including any conditions for return and academic plan.

- The University Registrar's Office will notify the student with an official change of status including the effective date and date of return, if applicable.

- **Request to Return Procedures**

- Students on a leave of absence should contact their Leave of Absence Coordinator and the Dean or Dean's designee at least 8 weeks prior to the start of the term they are scheduled to return or as stated in their LOA plan approval.
- A student must complete a Return from Leave of Absence form and be eligible to register for the term in which they want to register (e.g. no financial holds, no academic holds, no disciplinary hold, etc.)
- A student must schedule a re-entry meeting with the Leave of Absence Coordinator and the Dean or Dean's designee as appropriate to discuss any outstanding issues associated with the student's return and obtain all required signatures on the Return from Leave of Absence Form.
- The student's Dean or Dean's designee will notify the student and University Registrar of the approved return.
- A student should meet with the Office of Student Financial Services to verify that all financial aid requirements for the year or term in which the student is returning are complete.

- **Returning to the University after Withdrawal:** Students who have formally withdrawn from RFU and decide to return to the University must reapply for admission through the Office of Admissions.