

Student Guide: Leave of Absence (LOA) and University Withdrawal (UW)

Purpose of a Leave of Absence:

If a student needs time away from their studies, they may request a Leave of Absence (LOA). While students are on LOA they retain their student status and upon return to the university, complete all curriculum and program requirements that were in place at the time they were into their program of study. Academic suspension or disciplinary suspension override a leave of absence.

Purpose of a University Withdrawal:

Students who complete a university withdrawal will no longer be students at the university. If at a later time they want to continue their studies, they will need to re-apply (through Admissions) to the university. If accepted, they will be put on the most recent curriculum and program requirements of the degree.

Considering a LOA/UW:

Anytime a student takes time away from the university there are important things to consider that might impact the student's time to degree and/or financial obligations.

- ❑ Do you need to leave the university immediately, or can you finish the term and request a planned LOA the following term? Leaving during a term will result in a grade of "W" for all of your courses (unless taken prior to the last day of add/drop).
- ❑ International students, please be aware that taking a LOA/UW can affect your immigration status. Meet with International Student Services, (<http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/iss/>), PRIOR to meeting with your advisor to complete the *Leave of Absence Request/University Withdrawal* form.
- ❑ If you receive financial aid, meet with the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, (<http://www.rit.edu/emcs/financialaid/>), to discuss how a LOA/UW may impact your financial aid package, your student account, your loan repayment schedule, and exit counseling.
- ❑ Contact Student Financial Services (<https://www.rit.edu/fa/sfs/>) regarding tuition charges and to inquire about the refund policy, (<http://www.rit.edu/fa/sfs/refund#schedule>).
- ❑ If you have any outstanding library materials, return them to the Wallace Center and pay any outstanding fines. Unreturned materials or fines may result in a hold being placed on your student account. (<http://library.rit.edu/>)
- ❑ If you are living in RIT housing, you will need to make alternate housing arrangements. The *Terms & Conditions of Housing* is available on the Housing Operations website, (<http://www.rit.edu/fa/housing/publications>).

Requesting a LOA/UW:

- ❑ Set-up a meeting with your primary academic advisor to discuss the reason(s) you are considering a LOA/UW, as well as other possible options.
- ❑ Determine the appropriate type of LOA/UW request with your advisor; planned or immediate.
- ❑ Complete the *Leave of Absence Request/University Withdrawal* form with your academic advisor.
- ❑ If taking a LOA, develop a LOA Success plan with your academic advisor, that will be found in Starfish. This includes recommended steps that you should complete during the leave and will support your success upon re-entry to the university.
- ❑ Once paperwork is complete, sign the *Leave of Absence Request/University Withdrawal* form. Your advisor will submit the *Leave of Absence Request/University Withdrawal* form to the primary academic unit head or designee for consideration/signature. (Completing the LOA Request form does not mean your request is approved.)
- ❑ Update your contact information (mailing address, email address, phone number) **in SIS** (sis.rit.edu) – from **Student Center** click on the **Student Contact Verification** link under **Personal Information**.

Returning from a LOA:

- A student is allowed up to 3 consecutive terms, including summer, to be on a LOA. In the fourth term, the student must be re-enrolled in courses, or will be discontinued. If discontinued, you will need to re-apply to RIT through the admissions office. (See discontinuation schedule below)

Discontinuation Schedule:

Last Enrolled Term	Discontinuation Term (after add/drop)
2158 – Summer 2016	2171 – Fall 2017
2161 – Fall 2016	2175 – Spring 2018
2165 – Spring 2017	2178 – Summer 2018
2168 – Summer 2017	2181 – Fall 2018
2171 – Fall 2017	2185 – Spring 2019
2175 – Spring 2018	2188 – Summer 2019
2178 – Summer 2018	2191 – Fall 2019
2181 – Fall 2018	2195 – Spring 2020
2185 – Spring 2019	2198 – Summer 2020
2188 – Summer 2019	2201 – Fall 2020

- Contact your primary academic advisor to initial the *Return from Leave of Absence* form. This needs to be completed to give you an enrollment term in SIS. You will not be able to enroll until this is processed.
- Discuss with your advisors possible course options to enroll in for the upcoming semester.

Returning from a UW:

- If you completed a university withdrawal, and now want to return to the university, you will need to re-apply through the Undergraduate Admissions Office <http://www.rit.edu/emcs/admissions/apply>, or Graduate Enrollment Office https://www.rit.edu/emcs/ptgrad/grad_admission.php