Leave of Absence FAQs

• How do I request a leave of absence from my degree program?
  Students must petition for a leave of absence from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs who approves all leave requests. In addition to submitting the forms requesting a leave of absence, you are required to meet with the Associate Dean. Only upon written approval of the Associate Dean is a leave of absence granted. If you do not enroll in classes for the semester without first receiving approval for a leave of absence, you are subject to dismissal from the program.

• Will my merit financial aid remain the same when I return?
  Yes—if you properly notify the Associate Dean by the dates required in the catalogue. August 1st for the fall semester enrollment and December 1st for spring semester.

• May I extend a leave of absence beyond one year?
  You must submit a written request to the Associate Dean to extend a leave of absence by August 1 for the fall semester and December 1 for spring semester. The Associate Dean then submits the request to the Academic Programs committee who will determine if a leave may be extended.

• What happens if I don’t return after my leave of absence?
  You are subject to dismissal from the degree program. If the student wishes to re-enter the degree program, the student must re-apply for admission to the Divinity School.

• Will I have to start repaying my student loans?
  If a student ceases enrollment regardless of the reason then they begin their 6-month grace period for their federal student loans. Repayment begins at the end of the 6-month period. If a student is in a situation where they are unable to make a payment due to an economic hardship situation then he/she should consult with their lender about loan deferment or forbearance options.

• Will I still be eligible for Vanderbilt-related student health insurance?
  Please review the latest information on the Student Health website and confirm your eligibility with a representative at Gallagher Koster.

Please be aware that students taking a year long medical leave of absence must submit an enrollment form quite early—often August 1st. For medical leaves of absence, please review the process at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_health/student-health-insurance/medical-leave-of-absence.

• May I still use the services of the Psychological & Counseling Center?
  Students on a medical leave of absence can be seen at the PCC for two semesters. If the leave is approved prior to Fall or Spring Break of that semester, then that semester will be counted as one of the two semesters. If it is after the breaks, then they would get the rest of that semester and two more. It is unrelated to the Koster Insurance, although Koster would cover 12 or 15 mental health visits outside of the PCC.
• **How might a leave of absence affect my immigration status?**
  If you are not a U.S. citizen, please contact the International Student & Scholar Services office for information.