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. Click here for more information, https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/student-health/student-health-insurance-plan-faq.

  Once you have met eligibility requirements for student insurance and you purchased the plan at the beginning of the academic year, given you have attended classes for 30 days, on the 31st day you are no longer eligible for campus services, but you are still covered by your plan. To find a doctor, click on this link https://www.gallagherstudent.com/students/student-home.php?idField=1015 and select "find a doc" in the left hand column.

• May I still use the services of the Psychological & Counseling Center?
  Students on a medical leave of absence should seek a transition plan with their provider. Your student health insurance does not cover campus services while you are on leave. But you are still covered by your plan and you may choose other doctors, including behavioral specialists in your network. Click on the “find a doctor” link above.
• 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.