JCBS Policy on Vacations, Holidays and Leave of Absence for Full-time Ph.D. Students Receiving a Stipend

These policies are stated to provide guidance to both students and their faculty thesis advisors. Fellowships are awarded to eligible full-time graduate students as a means of financial support for graduate study. Graduate study involves active participation in academic studies, as well as in laboratory research and teaching. The fellowship is contingent upon maintaining active, full-time status in good standing and ongoing participation in all aspects of the Ph.D. program on a daily basis. Students are expected to devote their full-time attention to their studies with a high level of professionalism. It is thus expected that absences will be discussed with and approved by the thesis advisor in accordance with the policies below. Students receiving funding from external sources, such as government or foundation grants, are further subject to the benefits and restrictions established by the funding source. International students should also consult with the Office of International Exchange Services for any additional applicable restrictions based upon their visa status.

Vacations and Holidays

Fellowships awarded to Ph.D. students include a stipend that is provided to offset the cost of living expenses and is provided to all Ph.D. students registered for full-time study. Ph.D. students are expected to devote their full attention to their academic studies and research. Ph.D. students are allowed ten days of vacation in any one year in addition to the standard University holidays. Vacation and holiday leaves do not accrue year to year.

Leave of Absence

A student in good standing asking for a leave of absence from the College is required to submit a written request to the director of the graduate program indicating the effective start and end dates and reasons for the leave. The student should also request a letter of support for the leave from their research advisor and their program director. The student should forward the request, accompanied by the above letter(s), to the Dean’s office for final approval. The student will receive a written confirmation or denial of the request for a leave. Students receiving fellowship support from an outside agency such as an NRSA fellowship from the NIH must also request permission for a leave of absence from the sponsoring agency in accordance with their rules and regulations.

By a prescribed date, as noted in the confirmation letter, the student must notify their research advisor, program director, the Dean’s office and the University Registrar of his/her intention to return to graduate study. A leave of absence may be granted for a maximum of one year. The student, however, may return to graduate study prior to the designated end of the leave, provided due notice is given to, and approval obtained from, the student’s research advisor, program
director, the Dean, and to the University Registrar. Throughout the leave period, it is the student’s responsibility to stay in touch with and keep their advisor, program director, and the dean’s office informed of their status and intent to return from their leave of absence. If the student does not return to graduate study by the end of the leave, the student may be administratively withdrawn by the college from his/her graduate program. A leave will not be granted to students with outstanding financial obligations to the University.

For medical leaves of absence, students must proceed through University Health Services which will notify the Office of the Dean of its recommendation regarding a medical leave. No medical leaves will be reviewed or received without the endorsement of the Director of University Health Services, or other physicians designated by the Director of University Health Services.

Medical leaves will be of up to one year’s duration. A leave of more than one year’s duration will be granted only under the most extraordinary of circumstances and after review by the Office of the Dean. Prior to reentry, which may be applied for prior to the one year anniversary, appropriate medical screening will be arranged by the Director of University Health Services with consultation, if necessary, to provide assurance of the student’s fitness to return to graduate study.

**Paid Leave of Absence**

Students receiving fellowship awards are permitted up to fifteen calendar days of sick leave per year during which time their stipends will be continued. Students are also permitted up to thirty calendar days of parental leave in instances of the birth or legal adoption of a child. Where appropriate, these two paid leave periods may be combined for a maximum of 45 days of paid leave of absence. Parental leave is available to either parent. These periods for paid leaves of absence do not accrue year to year.

**Unpaid Leave of Absence**

Students who require an extended leave of absence from their graduate study, beyond the maximum 15 days of sick leave and/or 30 days of parental leave, must request approval from their research advisor, program director, and the Dean, for an unpaid leave of absence, for a maximum period of one year, as described above.