**Leave of Absence**: Graduate students may request a leave of absence from a program through a written statement to their program director who will forward the request to the Associate Dean for Graduate Education for processing. Leaves of absence must be requested and approved before or during the first term of leave. Requests for retroactive leaves of absence will not be approved.

Graduate students with approved leaves of absence are exempted from continuous enrollment requirements for the LOA period. Students should note that while leaves of absence temporarily suspend continuous enrollment requirements, they do not extend time limits for completion of degrees.

The leave of absence prevents registration for the approved leave of absence period. If the student wishes to return to academic study before the end of the approved leave of absence period, they should notify the appropriate school or college to request that the leave of absence be shortened and the registration hold removed.

Because curricular and course content changes may occur and a student’s progress toward a degree may be adversely affected by an extended absence, the School of Medicine may impose specific limits to the length of time allowed for absences. Extended leaves of absence may also impact financial aid; students should consult the Office of Financial Aid to understand the potential impact of a leave of absence. If there is a delay in return beyond the approved time period without written consent of the Associate Dean for Graduate Education, the student may be required to reapply for admission.

**Leave of Absence Reinstatement Process**: The Associate Dean for Graduate Education or the relevant Program may establish specific requirements for reinstatement if the circumstances of the student’s LOA warrant it. The goal of such conditions is to prepare the student for a successful return to the university; for example, a student may be asked to complete preapproved course work at an outside institution in order to demonstrate readiness to return to rigorous academic work or to participate in a reinstatement consultation with Student Accessibility and Educational Opportunity, Division for Academic Success, University Student Health Services, or University Counseling Services, to facilitate a successful return. In the absence of these conditions or if the student meets these conditions, the student will be eligible to re-enroll the semester following the approved LOA. Additionally, students on leave are can request to be reinstated before the end of their approved leave period by contacting their Program or the Associate Dean for Graduate Education.

Adapted from the VCU Bulletin. Students should see the VCU Bulletin for additional information.

Approved by the School of Medicine Graduate Programs Committee: pending