

Voluntary Leave of Absence (LOA) Process– Student Guide to Considering a LOA

Policy D02.1 can be found in RIT Policies and Procedures:

A voluntary leave of absence (LOA) may be requested by a full-time, degree-seeking student to provide assurance that the student can retain their active student status and complete all curriculum requirements in place at the time of original matriculation to his/her program of study. All voluntary leave of absence requests must be approved or denied by the student's primary academic unit head or designee.

Purpose of a voluntary LOA:

A LOA allows a student to take up to three terms (including summer, excluding intersession) away from the university while maintaining matriculated status in their program of study.

Considering a Leave of Absence:

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 their financial aid package.

- Do you need to leave the university immediately, or can you finish the term and begin your leave 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).
- If you are an international student, please be aware that taking a LOA can affect your immigration status. You should gain approval from [International Student Services](#) PRIOR to meeting with your advisor to complete the *Leave of Absence Request* form.
- If you receive financial aid, meet with the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to discuss how an LOA may impact your financial aid package, your student account, and your loan repayment schedule regardless of the type of the LOA you are requesting. You will be responsible for tuition according to the [RIT Refund Policy](#).
- 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.
- 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](#).

Requesting a Leave of Absence:

- Set up a meeting with your primary academic advisor to discuss the reason(s) you are considering a LOA as well as other possible options.
- If applicable, determine the appropriate type of LOA request with your advisor; planned or immediate.
- Complete the *Leave of Absence Request* form with your academic advisor.
- Develop a re-entry plan with your academic advisor that 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* form and the re-entry form. Your advisor will sign both forms as well and submit the *Leave of Absence Request* form to the primary academic unit for consideration. (Completing this form does not mean your request is approved.)
- If you are requesting an immediate LOA, continue to attend classes until you are informed of the decision by your academic unit.***