



William & Mary  
Graduate Arts & Sciences

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

September 16, 2024

To: Christopher Carone  
Vice Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences  
Chair, Committee on Graduate Studies

From: Trey Mayo  
Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences

Re: Proposed Revisions to the Medical LOA/Withdrawal Process

**Rationale:**

This document outlines proposed revisions to the medical withdrawal process for Graduate A&S students. In summer 2024, the Medical Review Committee was disbanded based on conversations with the former Dean of Students, University Counsel, and other parties. It was also decided that the "WM" grade denoting a medical withdrawal would no longer be used and instead a grade of "W" would be awarded based on best practices. Given the dissolution of the Dean of Students office and the Medical Review Committee, revisions are needed to current language and practices with regards to medical withdrawals for Graduate A&S students.

**Medical Withdrawal Process for Graduate A&S Students Moving Forward**

Should a Graduate A&S student need to seek medical withdrawal for a semester, they will complete the Student Withdrawal from Program form. The philosophical approach here is that a withdrawal is a withdrawal with no caveats attached to it, and a leave of absence is a leave of absence.

The Office of Graduate Studies will record the approved withdrawal in the student's folder and in Banner. However, supporting documentation from medical professionals will neither be required nor retained if submitted by the student. Final grades earned in the semester of a medical withdrawal will be converted to "W".

## Revisions to 25-26 Graduate A&S Catalog

### Leaves of Absence/Withdrawals

Students may request ~~either a medical or non-medical~~ leave of absence for either one semester or one year. A leave of absence may not exceed one year and may not be repeated. Under extraordinary circumstances, a student may petition the Arts & Sciences Committee on Graduate Studies for an exception. If a student does not return to their graduate program after their approved leave, the student will be suspended from their graduate program by the Vice Dean for Research and Graduate Studies. However, students may petition the Vice Dean for Research and Graduate Studies for readmission to their graduate program when ready to return. Students should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies for their program in advance of submitting a request to determine the best course of action for them under the circumstances. If a student is receiving financial aid (e.g., a Graduate Assistantship or a Research Assistantship), the student should consult with both their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies for their program regarding their eligibility for financial aid upon return from an approved leave.

~~Medical leaves are handled by the Dean of Students Office, which also handles medical withdrawals. Students must submit a petition to the Dean of Students Office for consideration by the Medical Review Committee. Documentation from a health care provider is required to support the request and should be submitted directly to the Dean of Students Office. Readmission after a medical leave of absence or a medical withdrawal also requires clearance from the Medical Review Committee, as well as permission from both the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies and the student's academic program. Note that the medical leave, medical withdrawal, and medical clearance policies and forms for graduate students differ from those for undergraduate students.~~

~~Non-medical~~ Leaves of absence are handled by the Office of Graduate Studies. To request a ~~non-medical~~ leave of absence, a student must submit a ~~Non-Medical~~ Leave of Absence form, which must be approved by the student's advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies for their program, and the ~~Assistant~~Vice Dean of for Research and Graduate Studies. To request a ~~non-medical~~ withdrawal, a student must submit a Student Withdrawal from Program form, which must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies for the student's program and the ~~ViceAssistant~~Vice Dean ~~of for Research and~~ Graduate Studies.

Students approved for a leave of absence, ~~whether medical or non-medical~~, will have their time-to-degree completion clock suspended for the duration of the approved leave period (i.e., for either one semester or one year). Upon return from approved leave, the student's time-to-degree completion clock will resume. While on an approved leave of absence, students remain in good academic standing, but are not registered for courses or for continuous enrollment status. If you are a Virginia resident, you must submit an Application to determine Physical Residency and In-State Tuition Eligibility before you return to classes prior to registration, even if you had previously submitted this application.

Students who wish to return to continue their graduate studies after a leave of absence must submit a Reactivation Form to the Office of Graduate Studies.

**(End of Catalog Revisions)**

**Petition:**

The A&S Committee on Graduate Studies is hereby petitioned to approve the proposed revisions to the Graduate Course Catalog to bring it in to alignment with the new University-wide practices for handling medical withdrawals and leaves of absence.

**Resources Needed:**

No new personnel or financial resources will be needed to implement this petition. After the catalog changes are approved, all related OGS forms and web pages will be created or updated accordingly.