



Personal and Medical Leave of Absence Student Guide

Planning for a Leave of Absence

Please read this document in full. In order to prepare appropriately for a leave of absence from DU/GSSW, students are encouraged to ensure that all implications are considered in advance. Students are also encouraged to reach out to their respective financial aid contact, listed below, and to discuss any part-time academic planning interest with their designated advisor(s). Additional considerations are listed below.

- **Withdrawal considerations:** Review the DU Registrar's [Withdrawal From DU](#) site, the Graduate Bulletin's [Student Withdrawal from the University](#), and [Things to Consider Prior to Withdrawing](#) resources.
 - If withdrawing after the tuition refund period, DU has a [tuition refund appeal policy](#) for qualifying students.
- **Financial Aid contact for Denver Campus, Four Corners, and Western Colorado students:** Victoria Veres, Associate Director of Enrollment and Financial Aid at 303-871-2779 or Victoria.Veres@du.edu
- **Financial Aid contact for MSW@Denver students:** The University of Denver Office of Financial Aid at finaid@du.edu or 303-871-4020.
 - **Important Note:** Students should be clear about the impact of withdrawal on loan repayment requirements as well as scholarships, teaching assistantships, and other forms of University aid. It is the student's responsibility to contact the appropriate financial aid office above to verify all implications before taking a leave of absence.
- **Do you have the DU student health insurance (applies to Denver Campus students only)?** If so, please reach out to the [DU Health and Counseling Center](#) to identify if there will be coverage changes due to taking a leave. Contact information: insurance@hcc.du.edu or 303-871-2205.
- **Are you in a field internship?** If so, please consult with your Field Liaison prior to withdrawing from field internship to discuss the best way to approach a leave with your agency. If you withdraw from field credits during a term, you may risk losing your field hours for that term. Students cannot take a leave of absence and continue in field internship, as a leave of absence is a full withdrawal from a current or future term.
- **Are you thinking about taking a leave while in the middle or end of a term?** Have you considered the option of [Incompletes](#) or a combination of course drops and Incompletes to finish the term out? This option requires meeting the eligibility criteria established by DU and instructor discretion for each individual course. It is the student's responsibility to initiate these conversations and to be aware of all DU deadlines and withdrawal timelines (e.g., [Academic, Registration, and Billing Calendar](#) and [GSSW Student Resource Portal - Registrar Calendars](#)).

Taking a Leave of Absence – Which Type and How to Proceed?

There are two different types of leave of absence: [personal leave](#) and [medical leave](#).

Types of Leaves:

- **Personal Leave of Absence Policy:** A graduate student may withdraw from the University temporarily or permanently for non-medical reasons. Students do not need to meet eligibility criteria for this type of leave. A personal leave does not “stop the clock” on the [Time Limit for Completion of the Degree](#). Students apply for this leave through MyDU (see the process outlined below) and requests are processed through the DU Registrar.
- **Medical Leave of Absence and Medical Reentry Policies:** A medical leave of absence may be requested for serious mental and/or physical conditions that prevent a student from functioning successfully or safely as a member of the University community. This leave is managed through the [DU Office of Student Outreach and Support](#), sos@du.edu. Students should review the policy linked above, which lists steps, qualifications, and medical documentation requirements. The mandatory application can be found here: [Application for Medical Leave of Absence](#). As a reminder, students **do not** send this application or any medical documentation to the Graduate School of Social Work; instead, students seeking a medical leave must work directly with the DU Office of Student Outreach and Support. A medical leave does “stop the clock” on the [Time Limit for Completion of the Degree](#).

- **Withdrawing and taking a leave:** Students who intend to take a leave for a future term must not register during the term in question. Students who are currently enrolled during the quarter in which they intend to begin a leave of absence must first withdraw officially from all courses before proceeding. Students who fail to withdraw may be liable for full tuition and fee charges, and a failing grade may be recorded for every course for which the student is registered. Per DU policy, if after a certain part of the term (generally after week 6), students must receive written approval from instructors via the [add/drop form](#) to withdraw from their given course(s), if required per established deadlines. Students must send this documentation to the DU Registrar (Registrar@du.edu) within the stipulated timelines. Important dates for add/drop, instructor drop approval dates, tuition refund percentages, and registration can be found at [DU Registrar Academic, Registration, and Billing Calendar](#) and the [GSSW Student Resource Portal - Registrar Calendars](#).
 - **To withdraw and submit a leave request:** Students can complete withdraw and leave of absence requests via [MyDU](#) > **Student Resources (on left side)** > **Records and Requests** > **Withdraw from DU**. During the withdraw process, you will be prompted to provide additional information for the leave as applicable. A step-by-step guide for withdrawing and requesting leave can be found under “Leave of Absence” at the [GSSW Student Resource Portal-Student Resources Tab](#)

Please reach out to your Student Support Advisor, Faculty Advisor, or GSSW.Advising@du.edu with questions.

Returning from Personal Leave

1. **First step:** Contact the GSSW Office of Academic Affairs at gsswacademicaffairs@du.edu to initiate a return from a [Personal Leave of Absence](#). Please include your name, student ID number, and specify the intended term (quarter and year) of reentry.
2. **Second Step:** Students may be asked to participate in a reentry meeting with key departments prior to registration.
3. **Note:** If the leave was longer/shorter than originally requested or if you did not complete the formal leave process, it is possible that additional forms and/or considerations will be required prior to an allowed return.

Important Field notes – Please read:

- If you were looking for an internship or went on leave while in field internship, you may be required to participate in a reentry meeting before reentering field internship.
- If you plan to begin field internship in your term of reentry, you must initiate outreach to your respective field contact at least **8 to 10 weeks** prior to the start of the intended term of reentry to account for reentry meeting scheduling and placement timeline needs. **Failure to do so could result in a delay of placement.**
 - **MSW@Denver students:** Contact the Placement Team at fieldplacement@onlinemsw.du.edu.
 - **Students who completed a field exceptions form and/or expedited an internship:** You will need to talk with your Placement Specialist about completing a new field exceptions form. If you previously expedited your field hours, you will need to talk with your Placement Specialist about the possibility of expediting your hours in your new placement or in your continuing placement and will need to complete a new field exceptions form.
 - **Students who selected Virtual Field Experience + One Agency Placement:** You will be asked to complete another VFX selection form prior to your return. If you completed VFX I, course selection for VFX II may be limited and you may have a different instructor.
 - **Denver Campus students:** Contact field@du.edu
 - **Western Colorado and Four Corners students:** Contact the Assistant Director of your program
- Students on a leave for **only one term** and who would start in field in their term of reentry may be asked to delay the start of their internship.

Returning from a Medical Leave

- 1 **First step:** If returning from a medical leave, you must complete the medical reentry process through the [DU Office of Student Outreach and Support](#) prior to returning to your GSSW program. DU Student Outreach and Support can be reached at sos@du.edu. Students are encouraged to review the [Medical Leave of Absence and Medical Reentry Policies](#) information provided by the University of Denver, which outlines the medical leave and reentry process and provides the appropriate forms.
- 2 **Second step:** Once approved for reentry by the DU Office of Student Outreach and Support, you must contact the GSSW Office of Academic Affairs at gsswacademicaffairs@du.edu to initiate a return to GSSW. Please include your name and student ID number and specify the intended term (quarter and year) of reentry.
- 3 **Third Step:** Students may be asked to participate in a reentry meeting with key departments prior to registration.
- 4 **Note:** If the leave was longer/shorter than originally requested or if you did not complete the formal leave process, it is possible that additional forms and/or considerations will be required prior to an allowed return.

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Prepare for the Term

- **Meet with an Advisor:** Denver campus, Western Colorado, and Four Corners advisor assignments can be found through the “Student Profile” on My Student Profile in MyDU. MSW@Denver students may contact their Student Success Advisor or GSSW Professional Advising at GSSW.Advising@du.edu.
 - As stated in the [GSSW Student Handbook](#), students are expected to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at all times. Students who take a leave while under Academic Probation will return under the same academic status. Academic Probation status may also impact some types of financial aid. Please contact the [DU Office of Financial Aid](#) for more information.
- **Contact Field:** Contact your appropriate field representative below to discuss when you will reenter field internship in your academic plan:
 - Denver Campus: contact field@du.edu
 - MSW@Denver: contact your Placement Specialist or fieldplacement@onlinemsw.du.edu
 - Western Colorado and Four Corners: contact the Assistant Director of your program
- **Inform the Office of Financial Aid of your intended return:**
 - Denver Campus, Four Corners, and Western Colorado students: Victoria Veres at Victoria.Veres@du.edu

- MSW@Denver students: [DU Office of Financial Aid](#) at finaid@du.edu or 303-871-4020
- **Check for Holds:** Review MyDU and/or My Student Profile for any active holds on your student account.
 - A registration FAQ can be found at the [GSSW Student Resource Portal - Registration Toolkit](#)
- **Prepare for Registration:**
 - Review the [GSSW Student Resource Portal - Registrar Calendars](#) and [DU Registrar Academic, Registration, and Billing Calendar](#) to find up-to-date academic calendars and registration dates. Review the [GSSW Student Resource Portal](#) for academic planning resources. Students who begin the reentry process after priority registration may have limited course options.

Resources

A full listing of DU student resources by program can also be found at the [GSSW Student Resource Portal - Student Resources tab](#).

- **My SSP (Student Support Program)** is a confidential tele-mental health support service that can offer 24/7 support at no cost to you. My SSP has counselors available who speak Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Arabic, French, and English.
 - Inside the US: 866-743-7732 | International: 001-416-380-6578 | Website: us.myissp.com
 - App: Search “My SSP” on your device’s app store, download, and set up your profile.
 - Click [here](#) to learn more about My SSP
- **DU Student Outreach and Support (SOS):** The [DU Office of Student Outreach and Support](#) offers support in connection to resources, manages the Student Assistance Fund, and oversees the medical leave of absence process. All members of the DU community may activate these services by completing an [SOS referral](#). The SOS office may also be reached at sos@du.edu.
- **The Writing Center:** Ph: 303-871-7456 [Writing Center Website](#)
- **The Research Center:** Ph: 303-871-2905 [Research Center Website](#)
- **Disability Services Program:** Ph: 303-871-3241 [Disability Services Program Website](#)