

LEAVE OF ABSENCE, MEDICAL LEAVE AND VACATION POLICIES

The following policies are applicable to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs with international students enrolled under F visas.

Leave of Absence Policy:

A leave of absence (LOA) is a temporary break in study during which time an international F student must be out of the United States, but considered to be continuously enrolled. The institution's leave of absence policy must be published in the institution's student handbook and must comply with the following requirements:

1. A student must submit a written request for a leave of absence in advance of the beginning date of the leave of absence, unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from doing so. If a student does not request a leave of absence within a timeframe consistent with the institution's consecutive absence policy, s/he must be withdrawn.
2. The institution must document its decision relative to the leave of absence request in accordance with its published policy.
3. The institution must not assess the student any additional charges as a result of the leave of absence.
4. The length and frequency of leaves of absence must not impede student progress and must be reasonable within the context of the institution's curriculum.
5. The leave of absence must not exceed five months, consistent with federal requirements.
6. The institution must have a written policy consistent with sound educational practice for assessing a student's language proficiency upon the student's reentry to the language program.
7. An institution must establish a leave of absence (temporary break in study) policy that is in compliance with federal regulations. Federal or state regulations may differ from ACCET policy, and if stricter, take precedence.

Medical Leave (Reduced Course Load) Policy:

A medical leave is a temporary break in study for documented medical purposes during which time an international F student remains in the United States and is considered to be continuously enrolled with a reduced course load, consistent with federal regulations. The institution's medical leave (reduced course load) policy must be published in the institution's student handbook and must comply with the following requirements:

1. A student must submit a written request for the medical leave (reduced course load) along with required supporting medical documentation in advance of the beginning date of the leave, unless

unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from doing so. If a student does not request a medical leave within a timeframe consistent with the institution's consecutive absence policy, s/he must be withdrawn.

2. The institution must document its decision relative to the medical leave request in accordance with its published policy.
3. The institution must not assess the student any additional charges as a result of the medical leave.
4. The length and frequency of the medical leave must not impede student progress and must be reasonable within the context of the institution's curriculum.
5. The institution must have a written policy consistent with sound educational practice for assessing a student's language proficiency upon the student's reentry to the language program.
6. An institution must establish a medical leave (reduction in course load) policy that is in compliance with federal regulations. Federal or state regulations may differ from ACCET policy, and if stricter, take precedence.

Vacation Policy:

An international F student may be granted a vacation, which is a temporary break in the student's attendance during which s/he is considered to be continuously enrolled. The vacation policy of the institution must be published in the student handbook and must comply with the following requirements:

1. The length and frequency of vacation(s) and school breaks must not impede student progress and must be: (a) reasonable within the context of the institution's curriculum; (b) consistent with sound educational practice; (c) reasonable relative to the period of study completed by the student; and (d) consistent with the institution's published policy.
2. A vacation may only be granted after a student completes an extended period of study (at least 12 consecutive weeks of attendance). A vacation only occurs at the completion of a student's term or session.
3. The student must request a vacation in writing in advance of the beginning date of the vacation and attest to understanding the procedures and implications for returning or failing to return to his/her course of study following the vacation.
4. The institution must have a reasonable expectation of the student's return within the timeframe of the vacation as requested.
5. The institution must document its decision relative to the vacation request in accordance with its published policy.
6. The institution must not assess the student any additional charges as a result of the vacation nor charge tuition for the vacation period.

7. The institution must have a written policy consistent with sound educational practice for assessing a student's language proficiency upon the student's reentry to the language program.
8. An institution must establish a vacation policy that is in compliance with federal regulations. Federal regulations, including those of the Student Exchange Visitors Program (SEVP) may differ from ACCET policy, and if stricter, take precedence.