

Undergraduate Handbook for Leave of Absence

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What is a Leave of Absence?

A leave of absence is a temporary leave from the university, which may be necessary during your undergraduate career.

Students may elect to take a leave of absence for a variety of reasons:

- Medical emergencies
- Family crises or other personal situations
- Financial issues
- Academic difficulties
- Religious missions
- Military service

Typically, a leave of absence is for one semester or one academic year. A leave of absence may be extended by contacting an academic advisor.

Declaring a Leave of Absence communicates to the University that the student is unable to enroll at USC for the current or upcoming term, but plans to continue his/her studies at USC in a future term. Declaring a Leave of Absence also ensures that the student's program of study and access to services remain active.

It is expected that students will not enroll in courses elsewhere during a leave of absence. However, students who wish to enroll in courses outside USC during a leave of absence may consult with an academic advisor to determine if they are eligible for an Exception to Residence.

If a student is withdrawing from courses in the current term, but intends to enroll in the next term, declaring a Leave of Absence is not required.

Declaring a Leave of Absence is also not necessary when a student intends to complete the final requirements for the degree outside of USC and does not plan to register for any additional courses at USC in future.

Types of Leaves

When a student submits the Leave of Absence form, they must select a reason for the leave. Although multiple factors may contribute to the need to take a leave of absence, students are asked to select just one option for the *primary reason* the leave is being taken.

Academic

Academic leaves of absence are related to a student's degree studies. Situations that are considered an academic leave include: taking time off due to major uncertainty, academic disqualification, non-USC study abroad programs, or other unique academic opportunities outside USC. Please note that students enrolled in a USC-affiliated study abroad program are considered currently enrolled at USC and do not require a leave of absence.

Financial

Financial leaves of absence are typically related to a student's ability to pay tuition at USC. Situations that are considered a financial leave include: changes in financial aid awards or an outstanding collections balance that will not be resolved before the next semester begins.

Foreign Aid Service

Foreign aid service leaves of absence are related to a student's participation in a foreign assistance program sponsored by the U.S. Government. Situations that are considered a foreign aid service leave include: work with the Peace Corps or USAID.

Health-related

Health-related leaves of absence indicate that the student is requesting a leave to address personal health concerns. Situations that are considered a health-related leave include: treatment of illness or injury (either temporary or chronic), mental health conditions, and hospitalization. Please note that students who withdraw from all courses in a term for health-related reasons may be able to use their Tuition Refund Insurance to receive a full or partial refund for the withdrawal term.

The University has two types of health-related leaves, a Voluntary Health Leave of Absence and a Mandated Health Leave of Absence. Each student requesting a health-related leave of absence will have access to an additional semester of insurance on the USC Student Health Insurance Plan and will be assigned a Health Leave Coordinator who will administer the leave and support the student through the administrative and logistical issues associated with a leave.

Military Service

Military services leaves of absence are related to a student's obligation for active duty in the military. Situations that are considered a military leave include: call to active duty for any branch of the U.S. military forces, or mandatory conscription service as a citizen of another country, such as South Korea. Additional resources through the USC Registrar and Veterans Certification Office are available for military activation that may occur after registration deadlines for a given term.

Personal/Family

Personal or family leaves of absence are related to various individual interests, concerns, or responsibilities. Situations that are considered a personal or family leave include: attending to a family crisis such as caring for a sick family member, personal travel, and participation in a non-academic program.

Professional Opportunity

Professional opportunity leaves of absence are related to unique prospects for students to supplement their studies with practical experience, usually away from Los Angeles. Situations that are considered a professional opportunity leave include: selective internship programs (such

as the Disney College Program), participation in competitive sports (such as Olympic training or the NFL draft), and opportunities in the performing arts.

Religious Mission

Religious mission leaves of absence are related to a student's full-time service in a church ministry or other religious-affiliated cause, usually away from Los Angeles. A religious mission leave may be international or domestic.

Filing for a Leave of Absence

What you need to know

Filing a leave of absence for undergraduates is primarily a declaration process – that is, there is not an approval or denial given. Please note, that this is not the case for graduate students at USC. Graduate students must apply for a leave of absence within the initial add/drop period of the term that the leave will begin. Undergraduate students simply inform the University and all necessary departments regarding their intended leave. However, extended leaves may impact the availability of academic programs and courses.

The following three pages contain a checklist of each department which a student may need to contact in order to withdraw and take a leave of absence from USC.

The list is grouped into four areas:

• Registration / Academic Progress

These departments are related to your registration in courses and your degree requirements.

• Financial Accounts

These departments are related to your tuition and fees, student account balance, and financial aid, if applicable.

• Campus Services

These departments are related to various services of the university such as USCard or Transportation/Parking.

• Other Important Contacts

These departments are related to specific student situations where additional contacts are necessary but that do not apply to all students, such as International students or first-semester students.

Please note that several items on the checklist are recommended for all students, while others may or may not apply to the individual student's situation. If a student has questions regarding which items are required, they should contact the academic advisor for their major for clarification. All students are expected to make contact with their academic advisor and submit the Leave of Absence form (contained in the last page of this handbook).

Guidelines for Withdrawal

Students wishing to withdraw from the university are responsible for making contact with all applicable offices/departments to ensure closure in all areas. Departments below may require action that differs from information in "Comments" section. It may also be necessary to consult additional offices, not listed here, to complete the withdrawal process.

<u>NOTE:</u> Students leaving USC in the first semester of enrollment will *not* be eligible for a leave of absence and must contact the Office of Admission. Continuing students requesting a leave of absence must visit an advisor in their academic unit to complete the appropriate paperwork.

	PROCESS	APPLIES TO	DEPARTMENT	COMMENTS	
REGISTRATION / ACADEMIC PROGRESS	Cancel course registration for the current and/or next term Determine eligibility for Tuition Refund Insurance	All students	Registrar One-Stop Center UPC – JHH 106 (213) 740-8500 Fax: (213) 821-3724 onestop@usc.edu	Drop to zero units for the current and/or next term on Web Registration, by email, in person, or by fax. Obtain registration confirmation reflecting change of status. If Tuition Refund Insurance was purchased for the current semester, and vou are withdrawing due to a medical emergency, request a Tuition Refund Insurance claim form. Note: Student Affairs may withdraw a student with written permission from that student, or can accept a parent's request if the student is hospitalized and/or unable to do so on their own, due to medical reasons.	
	Update your contact information	All students	Registrar One-Stop Center- UPC – JHH 106 (213) 740-8500 onestop@usc.edu	Ensure your current mailing address and phone number are updated. Contact information may be updated in person at JHH 106 or on the web through OASIS. Select "Change of Address" from the "Other Services" heading on the OASIS menu.	
	Inform your academic department	All students	Major Department (Academic Unit) Contact information varies for each major	Meet with your academic advisor to inform them of withdrawal and discuss remaining degree requirements. If you have not yet declared a major, you must contact an advisor in Academic Counseling Services located in STU 300, or by calling (213) 740-1741.	
	View and resolve holds on your account	All students	Restriction/Hold Department Contact information varies for each hold	Check for specific restrictions/holds on your student account via OASIS. Select "Restrictions" from the "Course Information" heading on the OASIS menu.	
	Check transfer eligibility	Students who plan to take courses away from USC	Degree Progress (<i>Transfer Credit</i>) UPC – JHH 106 (213) 740-7070 Fax: (213) 821-3757	Courses completed during the fall or spring semester at institutions other than USC, <u>DO NOT</u> transfer back to USC. Check with this office (or your academic advisor) to ensure that courses taken during summer session at other institutions are eligible for transfer. https://arr.usc.edu/services/articulation	
	Verify your academic standing	Students on academic probation or disqualified	Academic Review and Retention UPC – FIG 107 (213) 740-1196 Fax: (213) 821-0243	If applicable, students on academic probation or disqualification should meet with an Academic Review Counselor to discuss current academic standing and for assistance in canceling registration. https://arr.usc.edu/services/academicreview	

UPC – University Park Campus

HSC – Health Sciences Campus

	PROCESS APPLIES TO DEPARTMENT COMMENTS		CHECK WHEN COMPLETE		
NTS	Inform Financial Aid of your leave	Students who receive scholarships, grants, loans, etc.)	Office of Financial Aid UPC – JHH Lobby (213) 740-4444 HSC – KAM B28 (323) 442-1016 www.usc.edu/contactfao	For more information, refer to "Withdrawal Implications for Recipients of Financial Aid" in the <u>USC Catalogue</u> . You may also consider meeting with a financial aid counselor to discuss your situation and the effects of withdrawal on present and future financial status, as well as loan deferment. For the Federal Perkins loan , please call Student Financial Services at (213) 740-4077 or visit their office at PSB 115 (UPC).	
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS	Check your student account balance and collections status Make arrangements to settle your student account	All students	Cashier's Office UPC – STU 106 (213) 740-7471 HSC – SRH 101B (323) 442-3040 Collections UPC – PSB 115 (213) 740-9087	Once you have dropped your classes, check OASIS or contact the Cashier's Office to see if you have an existing balance on your student account. If so, you are responsible for reconciling your account by paying off the existing balance. If you have a credit on your student account, the Cashier's office can process a refund. https://sfs.usc.edu/epay/ If you are unable to pay off the existing balance, arrange a payment plan with Collections.	
FIN			Student Financial Services – UPC – PSB 100 (213) 740-4077	If applicable, students with the USC Payment Plan or Tuition Prepayment Plan should contact this office. You may also check on their website: https://sfs.usc.edu/.	
CAMPUS SERVICES	Cancel your USC Housing Contract	Students residing in USC Housing	USC Housing (housing@usc.edu) UPC – PSX 130 (213) 740-2546 HSC – Seaver (323) 442-1576	If applicable, take confirmation of withdrawal to the Housing Office to cancel the contract. Keys must be returned at the local Customer Service Center (CRC) of the student's building. For a specific CRC location, check housing contract or visit: http://housing.usc.edu/	
	Close or suspend discretionary spending on your USCard	All students	USCard (<u>uscard@usc.edu</u>) UPC – PSX (213) 740-8709 HSC – Seaver Residence Hall (323) 442-2110	Contact USCard regarding Discretionary and Dining Dollar accounts. If applicable, close out all discretionary accounts, as well as those for copying/printing; show confirmation of withdrawal to cancel meal plan.	
	Cancel your Parking Permit	Students who have a parking permit or rideshare subsidy	Transportation Services UPC – McCarthy Way Structure (213) 740-3575 HSC – KAM 120 (323) 442-1201	Contact Transportation Services (McCarthy Way Structure, formerly PSX) regarding permits, parking, and other transportation related questions. If applicable, return parking permit for pro-rated refund and clear any outstanding fees. http://transnet.usc.edu/	
	Check student health insurance status	All students	Engemann Student Health Center – ESH Lower Level (213) 740-9355	Check status of student health insurance. A one-semester only Leave of Absence plan is available. For questions, please e-mail: eshcins@usc.edu https://engemannshc.usc.edu/insurance/enrollment/	
	Return items to the Library	Students with items on loan from a USC Library	Libraries Contact information varies for each library	If applicable, return all outstanding books and library materials, and pay any outstanding fines. https://libraries.usc.edu/	

UPC – University Park Campus

	PROCESS	APPLIES TO	DEPARTMENT	COMMENTS	
OTHER IMPORTANT CONTACTS	Confirm Visa status with OIS	All International Students	Office for International Services (OIS) UPC – PSD 101 (213) 740-2666 ois@usc.edu	Applicable for international students only. International students must maintain full-time enrollment to remain in the United States. Verify your current Visa type and status with OIS to determine if you are required to return to your home country. http://ois.usc.edu/	
	Defer your Admission	Students withdrawing from *all* classes in the first semester at USC	Office of Admission – UPC – Admission Center TCC 202 (213) 740-1111 Fax: (213) 821-0200	If you are withdrawing during your first semester and wish to return at a later date, contact the Office of Admission. Although you are not eligible for a Leave of Absence, admission deferrals are allowable in many situations. https://admission.usc.edu/admitted-students/academic-policies	
	Inform your on- campus supervisor	Students employed on campus (work- study, research, etc.)	Campus Employer Contact information varies for each office	If applicable, ensure that your campus employer or research supervisor has been given notice and has a forwarding address for your final paycheck.	
	Check in with DSP	Students who may have a disability that affects their studies at USC	Disability Services and Programs (DSP) UPC – GFS 120 (213) 740-0776 ability@usc.edu	If you have a disability or believe that your reason for requesting a leave of absence may qualify you as having a disability, please contact Disability Services and Programs (DSP) to assist you with the leave of absence process http://dsp.usc.edu	
	Complete a Voluntary Health Leave Contract	Students taking a leave for any health-related issue	USC Support and Advocacy UPC – STU 201 (213) 821-4710	In addition to working with the academic advisors in their major department, students taking a leave of absence for health-related issues must work with a Health Leave Coordinator to initiate their leave request and to create an individualized health leave plan.	

Financial Aid

USC's Financial Aid Office will assist you with the financial aspects of taking a leave from the university. Contact them directly and provide a copy of your leave of absence form.

USC Financial Aid Office (213) 740-4444, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. M-F) www.usc.edu/contactfao

Financial aid application deadlines are posted the December proceeding the academic year of your expected return at www.usc.edu/financialaid.

Please read the following points carefully as they may apply to you:

• Withdrawal During the Drop/Add Period:

If you withdraw during the published drop/add period for a semester, you may be eligible for a 100 percent refund of tuition. All financial aid funds must be returned to their respective programs. If you were given financial aid funds for other expenses, you will be expected to return those funds to the university.

• Tuition Refund Insurance:

If you withdraw from *all* classes after the drop/add period due to illness, injury, or mental health and are participating in the Tuition Refund Plan (TRP), you may be able to file a claim for a refund. To file a claim contact the Registrar One Stop Center by email or by phone at (213) 740-8500. Learn more:

https://arr.usc.edu/services/registration/tuitionrefund.html

• Return of Title IV Funds:

If you are a recipient of Title IV federal student aid (Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Direct Stafford Loan, Federal Direct Parent or Graduate PLUS Loan, Federal Pell Grant, and Federal SEOG Grant) and you withdraw from all classes after the drop/add period, you may need to repay a portion of these funds. Learn more: http://catalogue.usc.edu/. Click on Undergraduate Education, then on Financial Aid for Undergraduate Students. Refer to the "Withdrawal Implications for Recipients of Financial Aid" section.

• Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP):

If you withdraw from classes your Satisfactory Academic Progress may be impacted. To be eligible for federal, state and university financial aid, you are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress toward your degree objective. Learn more: http://catalogue.usc.edu. Click on Undergraduate Education, then on Financial Aid for Undergraduate Students. Refer to the "Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy" section.

Student Loans

If you have taken out student loans, notify your lender(s) of your leave of absence. Ask each lender how your leave of absence will affect your grace period and repayment. If you are not in repayment and depending on your loan, you may be expected to enter repayment immediately or after the expiration of the grace period. If you receive loan billing statements, do **not** ignore them. Call the lender to inquire about deferment and forbearance possibilities. Keep copies of all correspondence and records of all telephone conversations you have with your lenders. If you are not sure who your lender is, call the Financial Aid Office to get that information. This information can also be found online at www.nslds.ed.gov. The Financial Aid Office will determine if you need to complete an exit loan counseling session.

Work-Study

If you have work-study, notify your employer with the date your leave of absence begins. You can no longer earn money through the Federal Work-Study Program (1) past the date of your official leave of absence or (2) if you drop below half-time enrollment (less than 6 units).

Cal Grants

If you are enrolled in less than 12 units, you must request a leave of absence from the Cal Grant program. A leave of absence may be requested by calling toll free at 888-CA-GRANT (888-224-7268) or by visiting Web-Grants for Students: https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/logon.asp

USC Scholarships

Upon receiving notice of your leave of absence, the Financial Aid Office will put any USC Scholarships you have been awarded on hold. (The USC Merit Scholarships include the Mork Family, Stamps Leadership, Trustee, Presidential, National Merit Finalist Presidential, International Freshman Academic, USC Associates, Deans, International Freshman Deans, Leadership, and Transfer Merit Scholarships). Your scholarship will be on hold for the time period your academic department has approved for your leave of absence. You must contact the Financial Aid Office before you return to USC in order to reinstate your scholarship. Please note that all USC Merit Scholarships are limited to a total of 8 semesters of eligibility (10 semesters for students in the five-year Architecture program).

If you have received scholarships from any other USC organization or academic department, you must contact that organization or department to discuss the status of your award and inquire about reapplication requirements.

Returning to USC

Non-USC Scholarships

If you are a recipient of any non-USC scholarships, notify the awarding agency in writing about your leave of absence. Include the reason for your leave of absence and your anticipated date of return. Be sure to notify the awarding agency before you return to USC if they agree to reinstate your scholarship. Recipients of the National Merit Scholarship should contact the National Merit Scholarship Corporation at (847) 866-5100 to request a leave of absence form.

Returning in the Spring Semester

If your leave of absence occurs during the fall semester and you plan to return in the spring of the same academic year, you should complete the financial aid application process so that we can process financial aid for you for the spring semester. This includes responding to requests for additional information. If you have already received financial aid for the academic year, and you notified the Financial Aid Office about your planned leave of absence, the Financial Aid Office will revise your financial aid eligibility, if needed.

Returning in a Future Academic Year

If you will not be returning to USC until a future academic year (fall or spring), plan ahead for your return. You must meet all financial aid deadlines for the academic year of your expected return. Financial aid deadlines are posted the December proceeding the academic year of your expected return at https://financialaid.usc.edu/. You must also continue to satisfy all financial aid general eligibility requirements. For example, you must not default on any student loan while you are on your leave of absence. Contact the Financial Aid Office at www.usc.edu/contactfao if you have questions about returning.

Residence Requirements

USC residence requirements are university guidelines for courses that must be taken at USC. Leaves of absence are generally declared to give students time to deal with personal, family, financial, and/or medical emergencies; NOT as a means to circumvent the university's residence requirements. Students should not plan to take courses at another institution during a leave of absence.

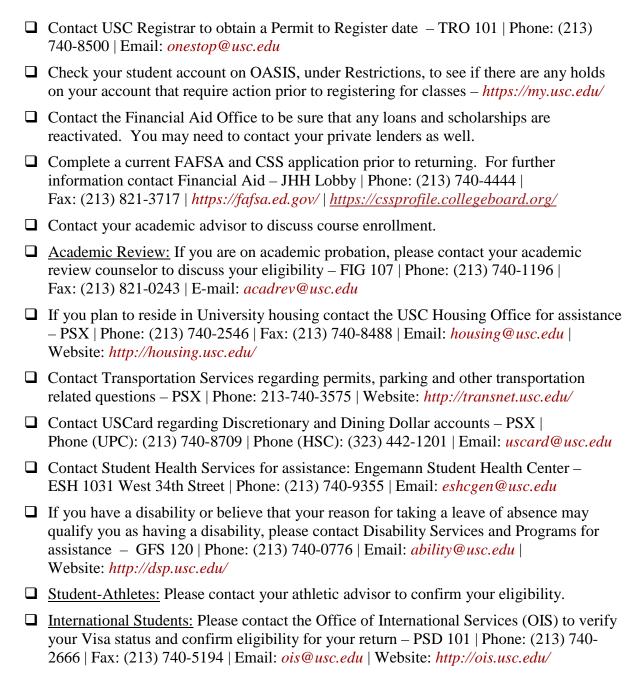
University Guidelines for Residence Requirements at USC

The following applies to all students beginning their undergraduate studies at USC:

- A minimum of 64 total units toward the bachelor's degree must be earned in residence at USC.
- All upper-division units required for the major and minor must be earned in residence at USC.
- Architecture students and Engineering "3-2" Program students should contact their academic advisors for specific residence requirements in those programs.
- Once a student achieves junior standing (64 total units completed), no more than 8 units may be completed in transfer (not to exceed 64 total transfer units).

In the event that there is a compelling need to pursue coursework at another institution during your leave, you must secure the necessary approvals IN ADVANCE in order to be eligible for transfer credit. Please contact your academic advisor before taking courses during a fall or spring term outside of USC, and request pre-approval in advance for summer courses through OASIS, which can be access through myUSC: https://my.usc.edw.

Returning to USC



LOA Process for Graduate Students

Revised January 2014

For domestic students, the academic advisor in the department/school enters the leave of absence in GRAD.INFO, one semester at a time, for up to four semesters (fall and spring). Different departments/schools have different procedures and forms, but all academic units are expected to keep a departmental record of the approval from either the student's committee chair, and/or department's chair or director of graduate studies.

A student who has had four semesters of LOA and requests another must appeal to the Graduate School via a "Graduate School petition" generated by the academic advisor using the Graduate School online petition process. Once the form is signed by the student, his/her committee chair, the department chair/graduate director and the Dean, it is submitted to the Graduate School for final approval.

The LOA must be entered no later than the drop/add deadline of the LOA semester. Retroactive LOAs are not permitted. A student who fails to enroll and does not get an LOA approved by the drop/add deadline must request readmission for a later term. The department may enter the READMIT in GRAD.INFO as long as the student's GPA is above 3.0 and the student has been enrolled within the last two years.

Special Note: International students must obtain approval from the Office of International Services as well as from the department, Dean and the Graduate School. When the OIS form is signed by the immigration advisor, the student or department sends the paperwork to Degree Progress, where the LOA is entered in SIS.



Undergraduate Leave of Absence Form

Notification to students:

- Please note: It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to cancel/withdraw your enrollment for the current and/or upcoming term
- International students must also file for a Leave of Absence with the Office of International Services (OIS)
- » Scholarship recipients planning to renew their award upon return must contact the department that administers their scholarship.
- Carefully review Residence Requirements regarding coursework taken outside USC

" Carefully review Residence Requirem	ients regarding course	WOLK taken outside USC	
Who is completing this form?	t requesting leave	☐ Parent/Family member	☐ Academic Advisor
Is this leave an extension of an existing leav	e?	No	
Have you had a previous leave?	☐ No Term(s)	of previous leave (if applicable)	::
Student Information		Today's	Date
Last Name	First Name	USC	ID#
Major		Class Level	
Where can we reach you during your	· leave?		
Mailing Street Address			
Mailing City, State, Zip, Country			
Phone	Email		
Primary Reason for Leave of Abse			_
	gn Aid Service th-related	☐ Military Service☐ Personal / Family	Religious MissionProfessional Opportunity
In which term will your leave begin?			
Are you withdrawing from courses after We			
Expected term of return (which term do you	plan to next take course	es at USC?)	
☐ I have carefully read, understood, an	d followed the stens ar	nd quidelines in the Leave of A	shsence Handbook/Website
Student Signature	_		Absence Handbook Website
Academic Advisor Review and Approval:			
Signature_	•	Date	
Academic Dean Review and Approval (if	•		
		Data	
Signature Please email or fax to:	Dept	Date	
Office of Undergraduate Programs ATTN: Leave of Absence – STU 300	Department Use On	nly Received	d by
University of Southern California Los Angeles, CA 90089-0896	LOA01		Information sent to Financial Aid
Phone: 213-740-1741 Fax: 213-740-9757	APA.U.LOA		Information sent to OIS

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