Reduced Course Load or Leave of Absence due to Temporary Illness or Medical Condition

Instructions for International Students in F-1 and J-1 Status

Procedure:

1. **See your doctor at the time you become ill or develop a medical condition.**
2. Ask your doctor for a written recommendation for either full medical leave of absence or a reduced course load. By law, the recommendation must contain the doctor's **license number**. A recommendation may come from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or licensed clinical psychologist. A new doctor's recommendation is required for each term or semester you are requesting a reduced course load or leave of absence. (If you are outside of the U.S. at the time you become ill or develop a medical condition and will be remaining outside of the U.S. during your treatment and recovery, you may take a Leave of Absence for up to one year by requesting the form be mailed or faxed to you. You will need a new I-20 or DS-2019 form to return to the U.B. at a later date.)
3. Mail or bring the **original** doctor's recommendation letter to the International Affairs Office **no later than the start of the semester or the date you withdraw from classes.**
4. For full medical leave of absence: Complete a Leave of Absence Form with the U.B. Registrar's Office. This form must be signed by your academic advisor and the International Office before being submitted back to the Registrar.
5. The International Office will write you a letter confirming receipt of the doctor's letter and will notify the U.S. Immigration Service of your authorized medical leave or reduced course load. A confidential copy of your doctor's letter will be sent to the U.B. Health Center.
6. As required by the U.B. Health Center, obtain a letter from your doctor to allow you to return to full time study before resuming classes. Bring or mail this letter to the International Office.

Caution!

Submit a doctor's recommendation for medical leave of absence or part time study **each semester** as needed.

A student may be authorized for a reduced course load for a reason of illness or medical condition on more than one occasion while pursuing a course of study. However, in no case may the total accumulated authorization for medical leave or part time study exceed **12 months year per program level** (language training, bachelor's, master's, doctorate).

Failure to be properly authorized for medical leave or reduced course load will violate your legal stay in the U.S. and may subject you to severe penalties.

Please contact an advisor at the International Affairs Office if you have questions about this procedure or your legal obligations:

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Bridgeport, CT 06601  
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