



Taking a Leave of Absence or Withdrawing from UNC Charlotte

Overview

1. Fulltime enrollment is a requirement for maintaining valid F-1 or J-1 student status in the U.S. Therefore, withdrawal from all classes has serious implications unless it qualifies under one of the few [exceptions to fulltime enrollment](#).
2. A leave of absence may be allowed as long as students submit the request PRIOR TO withdrawing from courses, exit the US immediately, or are otherwise able to maintain valid immigration status during this period of time. It is important to first discuss this with an advisor in the ISSO as this is a detail-oriented process that can be complex to understand.
3. If you decide to either take a leave of absence or withdraw from UNC Charlotte with no intention of returning, please submit the form below and use the checklist as you prepare for your departure. You must submit this form to the ISSO *prior to your departure from the U.S.* Failure to do so may result in negative immigration repercussions upon your re-entry.

Checklist for Withdrawal from UNC Charlotte

- Notify an advisor in the ISSO of your withdrawal regarding immigration implications and submit the section below. You must exit the U.S. within 10 days of withdrawal or be otherwise able to maintain valid immigration status during this period of time.
- Communicate with the [Withdrawal Advisor](#) in the Dean of Students Office before withdrawing from all coursework.
- Notify your academic advisor or program director.
- If you are a graduate student, you must submit a '[Graduate Academic Petition](#)' for a 'Leave of Absence' if you wish to hold your matriculation for one year.

Note: Students who have been academically suspended are not eligible for a Leave of Absence through the Graduate School, however for immigration purposes, you must exit the U.S. if you are ineligible to enroll.

- If you are an exchange student, check with ISSO to be sure your transcript will be mailed to your program coordinator.
- If living on campus you must submit a request for termination of the contract. The cancellation form can be found online at: www.housing.uncc.edu. Any housing deposit refunds will be mailed to your home address or applied directly to your bank account if you have that set-up in 'My UNC Charlotte'.
- If you have a meal plan, cancel it.
- Check your student account and pay any unpaid balance (meal plan, housing, health center charges, etc.).
- Update your permanent & home address in 'My UNC Charlotte'.
- Submit your application for [Taking an Immigration Leave of Absence or Withdrawing from UNC Charlotte](#)

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Returning from a Leave of Absence: Next Steps

	REACTIVATING your OLD SEVIS record	Obtaining a NEW SEVIS Record
Eligibility criteria	The ISSO can reactivate your OLD SEVIS record if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You requested a Leave of Absence before you stopped attending class 2. Leave of Absence LESS than 5 months - if the number of months between the date you were approved for a leave of absence and the start date of the semester you plan to return is less than 5 months (150 days) 	If you do not meet the criteria for reactivating your old SEVIS record, the ISSO will create a new SEVIS record for you.
Notify ISSO that you are returning	Complete the Returning from a Leave of Absence application .	
Do you need a new I-20?	<p>Keep current I-20 if unexpired and signed for travel – As long as your I-20 has been signed for travel in the past 12 months and it will be valid (unexpired) at the time of re-entry, you may re-enter on your current I-20.</p> <p>If I-20 will expire before re-entering, request a program extension. Your academic advisor will use the recommendation form to tell us when you should graduate. If your expected graduation date is past the end date of your current I-20, we will extend your I-20 and provide you with an updated copy.</p> <p>If you only need a travel signature – If your I-20 hasn't been signed within 12 months of re-entry, email intlssso@uncc.edu and let us know. We will reprint, sign, and send you your updated I-20.</p>	New I-20 needed - ISSO will issue you a new I20 after we receive your completed application.
Do I have to pay the SEVIS I-901 fee?	No - You DO NOT need to pay the I-901 fee again.	Yes - You must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee based on your new SEVIS ID number before you reenter the U.S.
Do I need a new F-1 visa?	<p>If F-1 visa is not expired, no new F-1 visa needed - You may use your current F-1 visa as long as it will be valid (unexpired) by the time you re-enter the U.S.</p> <p>New F-1 visa required if your old visa will expire before you re-enter - If your F-1 visa is expired, you will need to obtain a new F-1 visa before you re-enter the U.S. See ISSO's instructions for obtaining an F-1 visa.</p>	
How early can I re-enter the U.S.?	Up to 60 days - You may enter the U.S. up to 60 days before you resume classes.	Up to 30 days - You may enter the U.S. up to 30 days before the start date listed on your new I-20.
What documents do I show when I re-enter the U.S.?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexpired passport valid at least 6 months after date of entry • Unexpired visa • Unexpired I-20 	
Do I need to tell the ISSO when I re-enter the U.S. after my leave of absence?	Yes! Complete immigration check-in within the first week of class. THIS STEP IS crucial. If you do not check in, we cannot activate your SEVIS record, which will carry serious immigration consequences!	