LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Contact the Director of Graduate Studies for a leave of absence request. These are considered on a case-by-case basis and must be justified by exceptional circumstances.

Sick Leave
Graduate assistants are entitled to paid sick leave, not to exceed two weeks (10 days) consecutive pay for absences caused by occasional or serious illness or injury to themselves, their dependent child, or the dependent child of a registered same sex domestic partner. In the case of repeated absences due to illness, the responsible administrator/supervisor may request a healthcare provider’s certification verifying the inability to work. For GAs on an hourly pay appointment, sick leave shall be unpaid except in the following circumstances: (1) work hours are fixed on a weekly basis, and the sick day falls on the day of the week normally scheduled for work; OR (2) the work schedule is variable with sick pay prorated for the work week.

Parental Leave
Graduate assistants may be eligible for parental leave, paid or unpaid. Refer to the Administrative Policy: Parental Leaves for Academic Employees and Family & Medical - FMLA Leave. https://policy.umn.edu/hr/parentalleave

FMLA
Graduate assistants generally do not meet the minimum eligibility requirements (average 60 percent appointment) for FMLA. If a graduate assistant meets the FMLA requirements, they may be eligible for up to twelve weeks’ absence during a fiscal year for reasons of:
1. the employee’s own serious health condition;
2. the serious health condition of an employee’s immediate family member; or
3. caring for a newborn or newly-placed adopted child or foster child.


Bereavement Leave
Graduate assistants are provided, at the discretion of the department, up to three workdays paid bereavement leave upon death of an immediate family member. This leave is granted for purposes of (1) attending the funeral services, ceremonies, and/or interment; (2) making necessary arrangement; (3) travel related to the death; and (4) bereavement time. Responsible administrators/supervisors are encouraged to make special arrangement to accommodate granting of leave.

Vacation Leave
Graduate assistants do not receive paid vacation leave.

For the following leaves, please refer to the Administrative Policy: Military, Court and Civic Duty Leaves. https://policy.umn.edu/hr/milcourtcivicleave

Military Leave
Graduate assistants are entitled to fifteen days leave in a calendar year for active military duty; such leave falling within a paid appointment period shall be with pay. Verification of notice to report for duty (including dates of leave) shall be provided to the responsible administrator/supervisor. Refer to the Administrative Policy: Military, Court, and Civic Duty Leaves.

Jury Duty
Graduate assistants are entitled to paid leave for jury duty. A copy of the court notice shall be provided to the responsible administrator/supervisor. If released early from jury duty by the court administrator, the GA shall return to work.

Voting Leave
Graduate assistants are eligible for a paid leave of absence to vote in any state-wide general election or state-wide primary election, or in any election to fill a vacancy in the office of a United States senator or representative during the morning of the election day.

GRIEVANCES

Grievances related to graduate study are limited to non-academic matters: i.e. decisions or judgments concerning a student’s scholastic performance are not considered grievable. The grievance procedure follows the guidelines established by the University. Information on the procedures in filing a grievance can be obtained by contacting the Departmental Grievance Officer.

To initiate formal grievance procedures, graduate students should contact the thesis advisor, the head of the Departmental Grievance committee, the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Head, whichever is more appropriate. If the issue cannot be resolved informally through this mechanism, the student should contact the Student Conflict Resolution Center, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action or the Graduate School Grievance Committee. Normally formal grievance claims need to be submitted in writing within 30 working days after the action occurred or commenced.

The Minor in LAAS

The minor in LAAS for doctoral students requires a minimum of 12 graduate level credits of regular course work (not special problems) in Land and Atmospheric Science. The minor in LAAS for master’s students requires a minimum of 9 graduate level credits in LAAS. All courses for use in the minor must be taken using the A-F grading system, unless approved by the Graduate Advisory Committee, or if they are offered on an S-N basis only. All students seeking a minor in LAAS must take LAAS 5050, Integrated Topics in Land & Atmospheric Science (3 cr). The remaining 9 or 6 credits for the doctoral or master’s minor, respectively, must come from other graduate-level LAAS courses. Courses for use in the minor must be selected with the consultation of the Land and Atmospheric Science graduate faculty member serving as the minor adviser and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.
COUNCIL OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

The Council of Graduate Students (COGS) is the official governing body representing graduate students at the university. The COGS provides opportunities for graduate students to participate actively in University administrative and policy decisions. Graduate students in each degree-granting program are entitled to elect one representative to serve on COGS, which also recruits student representatives for the Graduate School Policy and Review Councils, the University Senate, and many College of Liberal Arts and University-wide committees.

In addition, COGS provides ombudsman services for graduate students and disseminates information, primarily through the Gradletter and through general meetings held twice per semester. Information on housing University governance, and grievance procedures is available from the COGS office.

Students may contact COGS at 322 Johnston Hall, University of Minnesota, 101 Pleasant Street S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455 (612-626-1612) or online at http://www.cogs.umn.edu/.

Graduate Student Participation in Departmental Activities

A majority of the departmental committees includes at least one voting graduate student member who participates in making policies. Graduate student representatives are elected by graduate students from among volunteers wishing to serve on the different committees. Student committee members report directly to the Graduate Club chair, which in turn, is the communication link with the department graduate student body. In addition, the Graduate Club chair of COGS representative attends all departmental meetings in an official capacity. In addition, students organize social activities, give seminars, teach and instruct.

GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESS EVALUATION REPORT

Graduate students will be provided with (at minimum) an annual written evaluation of his or her academic progress as measured against the published performance expectations of the graduate degree program and The Graduate School. The annual review should occur during Spring semester and should be conducted during a meeting with the advisor(s) and the student’s Advisory Committee. The evaluation should include a review of academic performance, timeliness in meeting Program and Graduate School guidelines for submitting course programs, thesis proposals, etc., satisfactory progress on thesis research, professional development, and adequate performance of assistantship activities. Students will receive an email in early spring with a secure link to fill in academic progress and personal achievements. The information will be available for your advisor/s to review and comment before being polled by the college for information that helps provide funding for our program in the future.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

See Intellectual Property Web Site, University of Minnesota Fostering Integrity in Research, Scholarship and Teaching http://www.research.umn.edu/ethics/policies/Intellectual_Property.htm