Oakland University

GRADUATE COUNCIL

**Policy Effective Term – Fall 2005**

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LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY – DOCTORAL STUDENTS

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The “Continuous Enrollment Policy” for doctoral students requires continuous registration for at least one credit hour each semester in the academic year (Fall and Winter) to maintain an active doctoral student status. Oakland University recognizes a variety of circumstances may require a doctoral student to interrupt progress toward a graduate degree. Doctoral students, temporarily unable to continue their programs, may request a “Leave of Absence” for a total of two semesters (consecutive or non-consecutive) throughout the duration of their program.

**REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Doctoral students, who are considering a **Leave of Absence**, should seek immediate guidance from their advisor or doctoral committee chairperson. The request should be made in advance of the anticipated leave or as soon as possible after commencement of an emergency leave. Requests for **Leave of Absence** will not be granted retroactively. Students who are absent beyond the end of an approved Leave of Absence will be required to apply for readmission to the program.

A student granted a leave of absence will have his or her time-to-completion of degree extended by the amount of time granted in the leave of absence (two semesters maximum). A student on official “Leave of Absence” is exempted from the requirements set forth in the “Continuous Enrollment Policy.” While in this status, students are NOT entitled to any services from the university, including demands upon faculty or advisor time, or receipt of fellowship, assistantship, or financial aid during their authorized leave.

**Recipients of Financial Aid**

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the proposed leave is compatible with the regulations of any granting agency from which funding would normally be received during the leave period and that such agencies are informed of the proposed leave. Students on student loan or financial aid programs should determine the consequences that such a leave may have on their repayment status.

**Graduate Assistantships**

Doctoral students, with an assistantship or fellowship appointment, granted a “Leave of

Absence” will have his or her stipend suspended during the period of the authorized leave.

Whenever possible, reappointment will be offered to the student upon his or her return from leave. **Reappointments are NOT automatic or guaranteed to the student.**

**International Doctoral Students**

International students are advised to consult first with the Office of International Students Services regarding their immigration status during a proposed leave.

**Active Duty**

A leave of absence may be granted for military duty. Graduate students who are called to active military duty must submit the Leave of Absence request prior to their departure from campus.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

1. The **Leave of Absence** form is to be completed and signed by the doctoral student;
2. A letter of explanation detailing the circumstances surrounding the request AND
3. A current approved Plan of Study

**APPROVAL PROCESS**

1. The doctoral student submits the completed request to their advisor or doctoral committee chairperson for review.
2. The advisor or doctoral committee chairperson will enter a recommendation, sign the request and submit to the School or College graduate committee (when applicable) for review and signature before forwarding to the Academic Dean or Dean’s representative.
3. The Academic Dean or the Dean’s representative will review and sign before forwarding to Graduate Study and Lifelong Learning for approval.
4. Graduate Study and Lifelong Learning will notify the student of final decision. Students who request a **Leave of Absence** after the beginning of the semester are subject to the tuition refund policy. The tuition refund schedule is applied on the date the **Leave of Absence** is received by Graduate Study and Lifelong Learning.