

Instructions - Leave of Absence (LoA)

Students not planning on enrolling in courses on a specific semester (but planning to return to the program later on) must request a Leave of Absence (LoA). If you are planning on permanently withdrawing from the program, you should check the instructions for Permanent Withdraw from the program.

The SPS website outlines the different types of absences (medical, voluntary, military), and the requirements and limits of each option. You can read about the different options here: <https://sps.columbia.edu/students/student-advising/academic-policies-procedures/leaves-absence>

To request a leave of absence, please follow the below steps

1. Download and complete your portion of the LoA form [here](https://sps.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/2019-11/LeaveofAbsenceRequestForm.pdf):
<https://sps.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/2019-11/LeaveofAbsenceRequestForm.pdf>
2. [Upload signed form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdcglw2Qtg8zj5n619vCOorwPqjpQ4-fVYnNusMEZU_Zw5UTg/viewform?usp=sf_link) here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdcglw2Qtg8zj5n619vCOorwPqjpQ4-fVYnNusMEZU_Zw5UTg/viewform?usp=sf_link

Once the program office receives the request, they will collect the Academic Director and Advisor signatures and submit the request to SPS Student Affairs on your behalf.

3. To return to campus on the semester after your leave, you need to formally request your return according to the timeline and policies outlined here: <https://sps.columbia.edu/students/student-advising/academic-policies-procedures/leaves-absence/returning-leave-absence>

Instructions – Permanent Withdrawal

Withdrawal from a term in progress may have serious financial and academic consequences, and thus students should reach out to the program to make an informed decision. All withdrawals are noted on a student's transcript. A student should select this option if they do not intend returning to SPS within the timeframes outlined for Voluntary/Medical/Military Leaves. If this option is selected, students will be required to re-apply to their academic program if they decide to return to SPS in the future.

To request a leave of absence, please follow the below steps

1. Read the information on the SPS website regarding permanent withdrawals here:
<https://sps.columbia.edu/students/student-advising/academic-policies-procedures/withdrawing#:~:text=Complete%20this%20Notice%20of%20Withdrawal,is%20applied%20to%20all%20withdrawals>.
2. Notify the program here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdcglw2Qtg8zj5n619vCOorwPqjpQ4-fVYnNusMEZU_Zw5UTg/viewform?usp=sf_link
3. Download and complete your portion of the Notice of Withdrawal [here](https://www.tfaforms.com/373310):
<https://www.tfaforms.com/373310>

A non-refundable, \$75 fee is applied to all withdrawals. Please check your account on Student Services Online (SSOL) (<http://ssol.columbia.edu>) approximately one week after submission to either pay your bill or to request a refund. MS students are not eligible for the partial term withdrawal refund schedules. Master of Science students who wish to add or drop partial term courses must do so during the Change of Program Periods associated with each of those partial terms. If students drop individual, partial terms courses after the partial term Change of Program Periods, they will be responsible for the full tuition of the course.