

Leave of Absence

Returning to EMU after taking a semester or more of leave

The Leave of Absence procedure depends on how long you are out of the United States (between the date you leave and your expected return to the United States). Please reference the procedure in accordance to whether you will be out of the U.S. for less than 5 months or more than 5 months.

For a leave less than 5 months

The process of obtaining an I-20 for a leave less than 5 months can take about 1 month. Please note that U.S. government procedures frequently change and we cannot guarantee your SEVIS reactivation will be successful.

You are allowed to return to United States with the same SEVIS number and unexpired F-1 visa as long as you are not out of the U.S. for more than 5 months. You **must begin classes at EMU within 30 days of your return to the United States**. The OISS may contact the U.S. government to **reactivate your SEVIS record no more than 60 days before your flight back to the United States or a visa appointment, whichever is earlier**.

Before you leave:

- **Drop your classes and pay any fees.** You may not receive a refund of your tuition; see the Student Business Services calendar at www.emich.edu/registrar/calendars/datesanddeadlines. You are responsible for any costs associated with your class withdrawal.

After you arrive home:

- Email your **boarding pass** to the OISS after you return home. OISS will keep this in your records to confirm your leave is less than 5 months. Keep the original as your proof of travel dates, if asked for upon re-entry to the United States.

Before you return to EMU:

- **Register full-time for classes** at EMU that begin no more than 60 days after your return (18 credits for Intensive English, 12 for undergraduates, 8 for graduates)
- **Email the following to the OISS:**
 - Your **flight itinerary back to the United States**, from the airline. We recommend you arrive no more than 2 weeks before the start of the next term to allow enough time for processing your new I-20.
 - Your **visa** appointment confirmation from the U.S. Embassy, if your visa is or will be expired on the date of your return
 - Your **class schedule**, from your my.emich account
- After receipt of the above items, OISS will contact the U.S. government to **reactivate your I-20**. *OISS can request reactivation up to, but no more than, 60 days prior to your arrival back to the United States. The U.S. government can take 2 - 4 weeks for reactivation, so plan accordingly.*
- **Pay for the I-20 shipping using EShip Global.** See <http://www.emich.edu/oiss/shipping.html> for more information. OISS will mail you a new I-20 with travel signature once your SEVIS record has been reactivated.

You cannot travel to the United States until your SEVIS record is reactivated and you receive a new I-20 with travel signature!

For a leave more than 5 months

The process of obtaining an I-20 for a leave more than 5 months can take 2-3 months.
Please plan according!

You are only allowed to be out of the United States for 5 months, while keeping the same SEVIS number and visa. If you are out of the United States for longer than 5 months, EMU needs to create a new SEVIS record for you and issue you an I-20 with a different SEVIS number. Please follow the procedures below to obtain a new I-20 and F-1 visa.

Before you leave:

- **Drop your classes**, if currently registered.
You may not receive a refund of your tuition or fees; see Student Business Services calendar at <http://www.emich.edu/registrar/calendars/datesanddeadlines.php>. You are responsible for any costs associated with your class withdrawal.

After you arrive home:

- **Email your boarding pass** to the OISS after you return home.

Before you return to EMU:

- You will need to **obtain a new I-20 from International Admissions**. Their website is <http://www.emich.edu/international>. Please keep in mind that you may be required to submit a new financial statement of responsibility and an affidavit of support. Once you receive your new I-20, **email the OISS to remove your class registration hold**.
- You will need to pay the **SEVIS fee** again. See more information at <https://fmjfee.com/>
- Obtain a **new F-1 visa**. Visit your nearest U.S. Embassy's website for details on how to apply.
- If you have been away from EMU for **more than 2 years**, you must also complete and submit a re-enrollment form which can be found at www.emich.edu/registrar under the "Forms Library" link. You can fax the completed form to Registration and Registration at **734-487-6808** or send as an email attachment to records_and_registration@emich.edu.

Reminders:

- After a leave of more than 5 months, you will **not be eligible for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) or Optional Practical Training (OPT)** until you have been **enrolled for 8 months full-time**.
- You can **arrive up to, but no more than, 30 days** prior to the start date of your new I-20.