

Instructions for Taking a Non-Medical Leave of Absence:

1. Make an appointment with an ISSI advisor to discuss how the leave will impact your SEVIS status and future eligibility for SEVIS benefits.
2. Make official arrangements for taking a leave of absence with your academic advisor at your College (for undergraduate students and all College of Professional Studies students) or your Graduate School office (for graduate students) and have them sign this form.
3. Make an appointment at the ISSI and bring this form signed by your academic advisor or Graduate School and your most recent I-20 to your appointment. Discuss any questions that you may still have with the ISSI advisor.
4. Have the ISSI advisor sign page 3 of your I-20.
5. The ISSI will terminate your SEVIS record for authorized early withdrawal.
6. You must depart from the U.S. within 15 days of the SEVIS termination as required by federal government regulations.

Instructions for Returning from a Non-Medical Leave of Absence of Less than 5 Months Absence from the U.S. (Excluding Vacation Time Occurring Directly Before or After the Leave of Absence Not to Exceed 8 Months)

1. Contact your College/Graduate School to let them know that you intend to return.
2. Scan and email or fax (617-373-8788) the **ISSI Form 116 – Return from Non-Medical Leave of Absence Form** available at www.northeastern.neu.edu/issi/ to the ISSI **at least 30 days prior to your return to the U.S.** to resume studies (at least 60 days prior to your appointment for a visa interview if your current visa stamp will be expired before the date of your planned re-entry to the U.S.).
3. Please note that you can return to the U.S. only within the 30 days prior to the start date of the academic term when you will be resuming your studies. Federal government regulations do not allow an earlier re-entry to the U.S.
4. The ISSI will request that SEVIS reactivate your SEVIS record.
5. The ISSI will email you when SEVIS has reactivated your SEVIS record so that you will know that you are eligible to either re-enter the U.S. and to apply for a new F-1 visa if your current visa will be expired prior to your planned date of re-entry to the U.S.
6. You should use the same I-20 that you used before you took a leave of absence.
7. Please remember that SEVIS decides whether or not to reactivate your SEVIS record after the ISSI has requested reactivation. If for any reason SEVIS decides that you are ineligible for reactivation of your SEVIS record or if SEVIS does not reactivate your SEVIS record in sufficient time for you to re-enter the U.S. (or obtain a new visa for those students whose F-1 visa stamp is expired) to resume your studies in the designated academic term, you may need to postpone your re-entry to the U.S. to the next appropriate academic term. Additionally, if your absence from the U.S. has been extended to 5 months or more due to this delay, you will need to follow procedures for re-entry for students who have been out of the U.S. for 5 months or more.

Instructions for Returning from a Non-Medical Leave of Absence of More than 5 months Absence from the U.S. (Excluding Vacation Time Occurring Directly Before or After the Leave of Absence Not to Exceed 8 Months)

1. You will need to contact your College/Graduate School and the ISSI at least a few months prior to your planned return date to initiate the process for issuance of a new initial I-20.
2. You will need to provide an original Declaration and Certification of Finance Form (DCF) to the ISSI as part of this procedure.
3. When the ISSI receives your DCF and the documents listed on the DCF, the ISSI will issue a new initial I-20 and mail it to you.
4. Upon receipt of the new initial I-20, you will need to pay the SEVIS fee.
5. Then you will need to apply for and obtain a new F-1 visa stamp.
6. You may not return to the U.S. earlier than 30 days prior to the start date of your academic term.
7. Upon return to the U.S., you must go to the ISSI to complete immigration clearance.
8. Please note that returning to the U.S. with an initial I-20 may impact your eligibility for co-op (curricular practical training) or OPT (optional practical training).