



DOMINICAN SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY & THEOLOGY

AT THE GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION

POLICY ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology (DSPT) is required to report to various accrediting, lending, and professional organizations each year regarding the number of students and their formal status. This requirement is a wise one, since as an institution we need to know the status of students in order to provide ongoing services and guidance adequately to all active students, and in order to encourage and help students to finish their programs within a reasonable length of time. The following policy helps to ensure accurate and responsible mutual communication through the course of the program. It is also designed to ensure justice: that is, to ensure that students are paying equal fees for equal services. We cannot ask some of the students to bear the financial burdens for others.

At the beginning of each semester all DSPT students in degree programs must do one of the following: a) register full-time, b) submit a written petition for a leave of absence, c) submit a written petition for part-time status, or d) submit a written petition to withdraw from the program.

Leave of Absence

Students who are unable to continue academic work must request a leave of absence on the grounds of personal, medical, or financial exigency. The *Petition for a Leave of Absence From Program* form is available at http://www.dspt.edu/docs/student_services/registrar.asp, or may be obtained from the DSPT Registrar. The request should specify the reasons for the leave so that the Academic Dean can determine if the leave is warranted. The Dean will communicate the decision in writing.

Students will not be granted more than four semesters of leave, nor more than two consecutively, in the course of their degree programs. Accrediting agencies require institutions to enforce a reasonable continuity in the program. Leaves of absence taken once matriculation in a degree program has begun **do** count toward the total years allowed in the program.

Leave of absence requires a \$100 administrative fee per semester. Students petitioning after the general registration deadline are also liable for the late registration fee. This is an incentive for students to get information in on time for our required enrollment reports.

Leave of absence entails a break in all academic work including library privileges, coursework, examinations, thesis work and interaction with faculty. It is not appropriate to take a leave of absence to work on a thesis.

Students are advised to consult with the GTU Financial Aid officer about whether a leave is the best financial decision. Students with educational loans need to understand how a leave may affect the deferment of payment. Payments on all state and federal loans may go into repayment within six months.

Withdrawal from Program

Withdrawal from a DSPT program is intended to be an irreversible decision, which formally severs the relationship between the student and DSPT. All committees are dissolved, and faculty are under no obligation to continue any working relationship with the student. There are two types of withdrawal: 1) student-initiated withdrawal; or b) administrative withdrawal.

Students may choose to withdraw from a program by completing the DSPT *Petition to Withdraw From School* form available at http://www.dspt.edu/docs/student_services/registrar.asp, or from the DSPT Registrar. The request should specify the reasons for the withdrawal. Students who fail to register, request a leave, or formally withdraw from the program will be administratively withdrawn.

Administrative Withdrawal and Termination of Program

Students who fail to register, request a leave, or formally withdraw from the program by the end of late registration will be administratively withdrawn from their program. A student who has been administratively terminated may petition for reinstatement within two years. This process will be the same as for withdrawn students.

Request for Reinstatement

Students who have withdrawn or have been withdrawn from a degree program may petition for reinstatement within two years. Such petitions are extraordinary; there is no guarantee of a right to re-enter.

- a) The faculty committee will have been formally dissolved; faculty are under no obligation to return to the committee.
- b) Language exams passed more than seven years prior to reinstatement will have to be re-validated; the process of re-validation is determined by the Academic Dean.
- c) In questions of protocol, it will be assumed that the reinstated student will be bound by the catalogue and policies current at the time of reinstatement.
- d) Students will be liable for the administrative leave of absence fee for the period of inactivity if reinstated.

Two years after having withdrawn or been withdrawn, students requesting re-admission have to reapply through the admissions process. They would normally be required to redo or re-certify all work more than seven years old.

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