Parental Leave Policy for Supported Graduate Students

If a supported graduate student or a supported student’s spouse or eligible partner\(^1\)

- gives birth to a child and becomes the child’s legal guardian or
- adopts a child under six years of age

then the graduate student (female or male) may request a parental leave of absence with modified duties for one semester for care-giving leave during a semester within 12 months of the child’s arrival. Care-giving leave means the student provides the majority of child contact hours during the student’s regular academic working hours for a period of at least 15 weeks. Typically, only one semester of leave will be granted per child even if there are two graduate students in the department who could claim parental leave for the child. In most cases, this benefit will be granted at most twice for any supported graduate student.

During this leave of absence, the student will have modified assigned duties. Typically, there will be no teaching requirement during the period of absence. Students may still conduct research and take classes, including reading classes, but will not necessarily be expected to work at the same pace for research projects. It is important that students take at least 3 credits during this semester to maintain their full time status. During this semester, the student will still receive the normal TA stipend, insurance and their tuition costs for 3 credits will be covered by the department if the student does not use their tuition benefit.

If a student desires, the deadlines to meet various departmental requirements (such as passing qualifying exams) will be extended by one semester upon request.

Requests for parental leave should be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator and will be reviewed by the Chair, Associate Chair, and Director of Graduate Studies. A request for a parental leave of absence with modified duties should normally be made no fewer than three months prior to the expected arrival of the child. It is necessary to make this request in advance so that the particular arrangements of the leave can be planned. The request should specify what duties / research the student is planning on performing.

Students who experience a medical condition associated with their pregnancy and need accommodations recommended by their medical provider should contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator, who will work with the student, cognizant faculty, and administration to determine what accommodations are reasonable and effective.

For more complicated situations, the department will try to proceed in a way similar to the rules for parental leave with modified duties for faculty.

http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-315.php

\(^1\) as defined as an eligible partner through Human Resources