



# RETURN

## Following a Leave of Absence

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The return process is a supportive process designed to assess your readiness to re-enroll at Swarthmore following a leave of absence and to help ensure that you have good plans in place should you re-enroll. The vast majority of students successfully complete the return process, which is also known as “readmission.”

### STEP 1

#### Leave/Return request e-form

Complete the required Leave/Return e-form in mySwarthmore student e-forms.

The e-form asks you to describe:

- What you have done while away (e.g. tend to health, job experience)
- What led to any difficulties during previous semesters and what you have done to address those difficulties
- What steps you will take to help ensure your success when you return
- Your progress in meeting any conditions of return that were provided to you when you went on a leave of absence. For example, some students on a required academic leave are required to successfully complete courses at another college or university in order to be eligible for return.

After reviewing your e-form, Dean Derickson will advise you on next steps. You are not permitted to return unless Dean Derickson has told you in writing that you are approved to return.

#### Deadlines

- November 15 for a Spring semester return
- July 1 for Fall return. Before April 1 is recommended, if possible, because course registration for the Fall typically occurs in April.
- Note: Any Incomplete grades should be resolved *before* you request return.

**Communication is key.** You must regularly read and respond to your Swarthmore email account. If you have questions during this process, please contact Dean Liz Derickson (610-328-8475, [ederick1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:ederick1@swarthmore.edu)) or her supervisor Dean Tomoko Sakomura (610-328-8119, [tsakomu1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:tsakomu1@swarthmore.edu)).

Please read the general information on our Taking Time Off website:  
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/academic-advising-support/taking-time>



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### NEXT STEPS

**Health re-entry conversation** – If applicable and advised to do so: contact Counseling and Psychological Services ([caps@swarthmore.edu](mailto:caps@swarthmore.edu), 610-328-8059) and/or the Director of Student Health and Wellness Services (Casey Anderson, 610-328-8058) to arrange a re-entry consultation and provide documentation. The consultation is often done by phone or Zoom.

**Request disability accommodations** - If applicable: Contact Student Disability Services if you plan to request disability accommodations ([studentdisabilityservices@swarthmore.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@swarthmore.edu)).

**Resolve incomplete grades** – If you have unresolved grades of “INC” (Incomplete), “IP” (In Progress) or “NR” (Not Recorded) when you apply to return, your return will likely be conditional pending the resolution to those issues. If you have any grades of “INC” (Incomplete) or “IP” (In Progress) on your academic record, contact appropriate professors to discuss resolution of this issue. All completed coursework for INC classes must be submitted to the relevant course professor for review and the grade converted to a letter grade, which can sometimes be NC (No Credit) if major work is outstanding.

**Transfer credit** – If you are applying to earn Swarthmore credit for course(s) completed during your time away, contact the Department Chair of any applicable academic department to discuss the process. On the Swarthmore [Off-Campus Study website](#), review the policy on transfer credit and credit earned elsewhere. Prior to being taken, proposed courses at other institutions must be pre-approved by the Swarthmore department where the courses would be taught if they were taught at Swarthmore.

**Write an academic plan & register for courses** – Consult with your academic advisor(s) and register for courses via the process described on the Registrar’s website. Juniors and seniors: Write a plan for completing your graduation requirements, including divisional and writing requirements, PE requirement, academic major, etc. The return request e-form invites you to draft this academic plan.

**Resolve conduct allegations** – If applicable, resolve pending allegations through the student conduct process. Conduct allegations typically must be resolved before a return decision can be reached. If you have questions about student conduct concerns, please contact Dean Nathan Miller ([nmiller2@swarthmore.edu](mailto:nmiller2@swarthmore.edu)).

**Request housing and meal plan** – Contact the Office of Student Engagement ([housing@swarthmore.edu](mailto:housing@swarthmore.edu)) to request on-campus housing or to declare off-campus housing and meal plans.



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### NEXT STEPS, continued

**Seek advice specific to international, DACA or undocumented students** – If applicable, contact Assistant Dean and Director of the International Student Center Jennifer Marks-Gold (jgold12@swarthmore.edu).

**Request Financial Aid** – Contact staff in the Financial Aid Office, if applicable, to discuss intended return and apply for aid (finaid@swarthmore.edu, 610-328-8358).

**Resolve outstanding financial obligations** – Students who have not satisfied their financial obligations are not permitted to return to campus, attend any classes, live in campus housing, nor have a meal plan. If you have questions about student accounts, please contact Student Accounts Manager Linda Weindel (lweinde1@swarthmore.edu).

**DEAN RE-ENTRY CONVERSATION** (typically the last step in the overall process): If advised to do so, contact Dean Derickson to schedule a re-entry Zoom interview.

**FINISHING THE RETURN PROCESS** You should *complete* the return process by August 1 for a Fall semester return and December 15 for a January term or Spring semester return.

Return decisions are typically made by Dean Derickson, Dean of Students Tomoko Sakomura and your assigned dean – in consultation as needed with the Directors of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and Student Health and Wellness. The vast majority of students successfully complete the return process and are approved for return.

If you do not meet the conditions of return by the relevant deadlines, then any conditional return approval that you have received will likely be rescinded. You will be notified in writing of return decisions.

**APPEALS** If you wish to appeal a return decision, you must provide a written appeal to Vice President for Student Affairs Jim Terhune (jterhun1@swarthmore.edu) or his designee within 5 business days of the decision. Grounds for appeals are: 1) New evidence that could affect the return decision that was unavailable at the time of the decision; 2) Procedural errors that had a material impact on the outcome of the return process. Replies to return appeals will be provided within 5 business days.