



MIAMI REGIONAL UNIVERSITY

Catalog Addendum

International Students

F-1 Annual Vacation Policy

2025, Volume X

Purpose

This addendum establishes the institutional framework governing eligibility, authorization, administration, documentation, and monitoring of annual vacation terms for F-1 international students at Miami Regional University (MRU).

This policy is designed to ensure full compliance with applicable federal regulations, including **8 CFR 214.2(f)(5)(iii)** (Annual Vacation) and **8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)** (Full Course of Study), as administered under the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP).

The University adopts a structured, controlled, and auditable process to ensure that students maintain lawful F-1 status while exercising eligibility for an authorized annual vacation.

Policy Statement

Miami Regional University recognizes that F-1 students may be eligible for a period of authorized annual vacation following the successful completion of the equivalent of one academic year of full-time enrollment.

Eligibility for annual vacation is not automatic. All requests must be formally reviewed and approved in advance by a Designated School Official (DSO). Approval is contingent upon the student's continuous compliance with federal immigration regulations, institutional academic requirements, and financial obligations.

The University retains full discretion in evaluating each request. Approval is granted only when all regulatory and institutional conditions have been fully satisfied and documented.

For institutional purposes, Miami Regional University defines an academic year as:

The successful completion of one academic year of full-time enrollment, defined as three (3) consecutive semesters, in accordance with federal regulations.

Only students who have maintained continuous full-time enrollment and have completed this requirement are eligible to request an annual vacation term.

Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for an annual vacation term, an F-1 student must meet the following:

Federal Requirements:

- Have completed one full academic year of full-time enrollment (as defined by the institution)
- Have maintained valid F-1 status without interruption
- Demonstrate intent to resume full-time enrollment in the next required academic term

Institutional Requirements:

- Be in good academic standing (Satisfactory Academic Progress)
- Have no outstanding compliance, disciplinary, or financial obligations

Important:

Meeting federal eligibility requirements does not guarantee approval. Annual vacation is granted at the discretion of the institution.

All requests must be submitted and approved before the start of the requested term. Retroactive approvals are strictly prohibited.

Duration of Annual Vacation

An approved annual vacation term consists of **one (1) academic semester**.

During this period:

- The student is not required to enroll in a full course of study
- The student remains in valid F-1 status
- The vacation may not be used to delay program progression or avoid required enrollment periods

DSO Authorization Requirement

All annual vacation requests require formal review and authorization by a Designated School Official (DSO) before the start of the term.

The DSO will:

- Verify completion of the academic year requirement
- Confirm continuous full-time enrollment history
- Review of the student's SEVIS record for accuracy and compliance

- Evaluate academic standing and intend to continue the program

No annual vacation is valid without documented DSO approval.

SEVIS Reporting and Status

Students approved for an annual vacation:

- Will remain in **Active status in SEVIS**
- Do **not** require Reduced Course Load (RCL) authorization
- Will not have their SEVIS record terminated or inactivated

The annual vacation is documented internally as an authorized period consistent with federal regulations.

Institutional Process and Documentation

To ensure full regulatory compliance and institutional accountability, MRU enforces the following standardized process:

1. Advance Request Submission

The student must submit a completed and signed Vacation Request Form at least one (1) week before the intended vacation term.

Requests must be submitted via the institution's official communication channels (e.g., institutional email or designated student portal), as instructed by the Designated School Official (DSO).

2. DSO Review and Eligibility Verification

The DSO reviews:

- Academic completion of the required enrollment period
- Maintenance of F-1 status
- Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- Program continuation intent

3. Financial Clearance – Bursar Department

The request is routed to the **Bursar Department** to confirm that the student is financially cleared.

No annual vacation request will be approved without confirmation of financial good standing.

4. Leave of Absence (LOA) Documentation (Institutional Use Only)

Upon financial clearance, the student is required to complete and sign the Annual Vacation Authorization Form (processed internally as a Leave of Absence – LOA).

The form must be completed and electronically signed through the institution's approved platform (e.g., Egnyte or equivalent).

Upon completion, the form will be automatically distributed to the appropriate departments, including Academic Affairs, the Registrar's Office, and the Finance Department, for recordkeeping and processing.

Final approval of the annual vacation is granted by the Designated School Official (DSO), in compliance with SEVP requirements.

Important Compliance Clarification:

This LOA is used strictly as an internal institutional documentation tool to record the student's approved annual vacation.

- **It does not constitute a termination of enrollment**
- **It does not represent a change of SEVIS status**
- **It does not replace or override the federal concept of annual vacation**

The student remains in **Active SEVIS status** under authorized annual vacation provisions at all times.

5. System Update

Upon receipt of the fully executed Annual Vacation Authorization Form (processed internally as a Leave of Absence – LOA) via the institution's approved electronic platform, the Registrar's Office updates the student's status in the institutional system as:

Leave of Absence (LA)

This update is performed for internal administrative tracking purposes only and does not affect the student's SEVIS status. Final authorization of the annual vacation is granted by the Designated School Official (DSO), in accordance with SEVP requirements.

6. Tracking, Documentation, and Compliance Controls

Miami Regional University maintains strict oversight and documentation standards through its approved electronic document workflow:

- All Annual Vacation Authorization Forms are electronically signed by the student and formally approved by the Designated School Official (DSO)
- Upon execution, the completed form is automatically distributed via the institution's approved electronic platform (e.g., Egnyte or equivalent) to the relevant departments, including Academic Affairs, the Registrar's Office, and the Finance Department
- The Registrar's Office is responsible for ensuring that each approved case is properly recorded and that the student's status is updated in the institutional system
- All supporting documentation is uploaded, indexed, and maintained in the institution's official student information system and/or designated document management repository, under the student's official record, in accordance with institutional record retention policies
- Vacation dates are accurately tracked to ensure alignment with SEVIS reporting requirements and maintenance of valid F-1 status

Failure to properly document, distribute, or track these records may result in non-compliance with SEVP requirements.

7. Internal Audit and Oversight

The University conducts **periodic internal audits** to ensure:

- Accuracy of approved vacation dates
- Proper documentation and recordkeeping
- Alignment between institutional records and SEVIS requirements

This process ensures continuous compliance and institutional accountability.

8. Return from Annual Vacation

Upon return from an approved annual vacation term:

- The student must report to the Designated School Official (DSO) at or before the start of the next academic term
- The DSO will initiate the Return to Class process by issuing a Return to Class Form through the institution's approved electronic platform (e.g., Egnyte or equivalent)
- The student is required to complete and electronically sign the Return to Class Form
- Upon execution, the completed form is automatically distributed to the relevant departments, including the Registrar's Office and the Academic Department
- The Registrar's Office will update the student's status in the institutional system to reflect reactivation into full-time enrollment
- The student is officially reinstated to active full-time status upon confirmation of enrollment and system update

Limitations

- Limited to **one (1) annual vacation per academic year**
- May not be used to avoid enrollment requirements
- May not delay program completion

Failure to comply may result in:

👉 **Termination of SEVIS record**

Re-enrollment Requirement

Students must resume full-time enrollment in the next required academic term.

Failure to return will be considered a violation of F-1 status and will result in SEVIS termination in accordance with federal regulations.

Institutional Discretion

Miami Regional University reserves the right to deny any request based on:

- Academic performance
- Compliance concerns

- Program sequencing
- Financial standing
- Institutional integrity considerations

Approval of annual vacation is a **privilege, not a right**.

Regulatory Authority

This policy is governed by:

- **8 CFR 214.2(f)(5)(iii)** – Annual Vacation
- **8 CFR 214.2(f)(6)(i)** – Full Course of Study

Catalog Integration Note

This addendum supplements the **International Students section of the University Catalog** and must be interpreted in conjunction with all institutional policies governing:

- F-1 student status
- Enrollment requirements
- SEVIS reporting obligations