

## Guidelines for Personal Flex Time

### General aspects

Research Assistant positions (RAs) are not entitled to vacation or sick leave, according to the Governed Code, Chapter 661 of the Texas Statutes. However, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) has enacted a Personal Flex Time policy which can be found in the “Student Section”. RAs are expected to work in the lab 20 hours per week. The additional hours in the lab (those over 20) are required for fulfillment of coursework and/or dissertation preparation.

### Personal Flex Time

1. Students that have RAs may work a flex schedule to cover 10 (ten) workdays out of the lab per academic year. Any time taken beyond 10 workdays each year will be considered leave without pay. Workdays are defined by the GSBS calendar and exclude holidays.
2. Personal Flex Time is enacted on September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current calendar year and terminates on August 31<sup>st</sup> of the following calendar year. The 10 flex days may not be accumulated and shall not be carried forward to the next year.
3. Flex time will only be granted in between semesters – students must be present while enrolled in any course and teaching assignments must be maintained. (Flex time may begin at the end of the fall or spring term after the last day of class as listed in the academic calendars). The applicant must restrain as possible from taking such paid vacation time during semesters and recommended to take them between semesters (starting during finals week of Fall, Spring or Summer Semesters respectively). **Request of Personal Flex Time during a semester in which the applicant is assigned as a Teaching Assistant will not be honored.**
4. Student must check with the Graduate Program Office to confirm number of days available and possible travel dates before requesting final approval from major advisor.
5. If the major advisor does not approve of the timeframe for the requested personal flex time by a graduate student, the mentor should provide an alternative timeframe for the graduate student to utilize Personal Flex Time. If a major advisor does not comply with this policy, a graduate student should initially appeal to the program advisor followed by the department chair for resolution.
6. No student may drop a semester to take extended leave. The only exception will be medical leave approved by the mentor, GPC and GSBS. Medical documentation must be provided in English.

### Extended Flex Time

Under exceptional circumstances, the GPPS will allow up to a maximum of ten (10) additional days granted by the major advisor, with a maximum of five (5) days during the pre-candidacy. Extended flex time is the only time during graduate studies that leave without pay will be granted.

### Extended leave/semester drop

No student may drop a semester to take extended leave. The only exception will be extreme medical reasons with written documentation in English, must be approved by the mentor and GPC.

### Leave of Absence

Students are required to complete the Graduate Student Leave of Absence Form for any personal leave greater than 2 consecutive days in length. All medical leave must be reported on the Leave of Absence form.