

Vacation Policy

Caltech is committed to providing students with the opportunity to take time off from the pressures of research and study. This is not only a matter of policy but is an important factor in reducing stress and maintaining a healthy attitude about work and life. Even a short break is important in enabling us all to better handle our busy lives at Caltech.

The Institute policy is that graduate students are "entitled to two weeks' annual vacation (in addition to [Institute holidays](#))." [Furthermore, "Graduate assistantship appointments include regular Institute holidays occurring during specified appointment periods."](#) There are approximately 11 Institute holidays each calendar year: New Year's Day; Martin Luther King Day; President's Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving; and special release days over Winter Break (see below for more information). In total, graduate students are entitled to at least 21 vacation days per calendar year. These days do not accrue from year to year.

In addition to the regularly scheduled Holidays, graduate students are also entitled to take time off during the Special Release days during the winter break. Students may take those days off, with pay, without having to use vacation or personal holiday time. Students who are asked to work during this time are entitled to take an equal number of days off in the winter term, to be arranged in consultation with their research advisers.

Some students may need to work on Institute holidays or during holiday breaks in order to staff ongoing activities, projects and operations. Graduate students are expected to coordinate their vacation plans with their research advisers sufficiently far ahead of time to avoid conflicts at the last minute. Students who defer their vacation plans or work on Institute holidays will be able to use their vacation days at another time within the same calendar year. Questions or concerns related to this or other graduate student policies should be directed to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies.