

PREGNANT AND PARENTING

Approved by: Director of Human Resources/Title IX Coordinator and the Senior Vice President for Human Resources, Equity, and Inclusion

History: August 1, 2019 | August 2020

Related Policies: Title IX Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy (SSC1)

Related Forms, Procedures, and References:

For Questions Contact: Access and Success | 651.690.7870 | Disability Resources | 651-690-6563 | Title IX Coordinator | 651-690-8754

I. Purpose

St. Catherine University (the “University”) strives to ensure that all students have full access to all educational programs, services, and activities. This policy sets forward the provisions for the University’s compliance with federal law, including Title IX and any other applicable law, and establishes the University’s intent to protect students against discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions.

It is the intent of the University to, where appropriate, make reasonable accommodations to educational programs and activities to support pregnant or parenting (immediately in the six (6) week postpartum period) students. Students with medical complications may need to extend their leave beyond the six-week period.

To that end, the University may provide reasonable accommodations, upon written request, to students based on their pregnancy or related medical conditions. Such conditions may include pregnancy, disability arising from pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or other serious medical conditions. The University will provide such accommodations in the same manner as it would to students who have other serious medical conditions or disabilities. Depending on the circumstances a reasonable accommodation may include an excused absence or leave of absence.

II. Scope

This policy applies to students seeking admission, currently admitted, and those enrolled at the University.

III. Policy Statement

The University shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of sex, including pregnancy or parental status, nor shall any student be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any education program activity or services, admissions, coursework accommodations, and completion, and leave policies

1. Admissions

During the admissions process, all applicants will be treated equally. No applicant will be treated differently on the basis of sex, pregnancy, or parental status. Additionally, disabilities related to pregnancy will be treated in the same manner and under the same policies as any other disability.

2. Course Absences

Course absences due to pregnancy or childbirth may be excused. However, depending on the length of the absence and the area of instruction (e.g., courses with lab requirements, clinical rotations,

etc.), it may not be feasible, even with reasonable accommodations, for a student to complete a particular course at a particular time.

When the student returns to the University, the University will make efforts to reinstate the student to the same academic and extracurricular status held by the student before the pregnancy or medical leave began.

3. Grading

Students will not be penalized due to pregnancy or childbirth. If a faculty member provides specific “points” or other advantages to students based on class attendance, the student will be given the opportunity to earn back the credit from classes missed due to pregnancy and childbirth, so that the student can be reinstated to the status held before taking leave.

4. Missed Academic Work

The University allows students to make up the work missed while on leave due to pregnancy, including recovery from childbirth. Students are encouraged to contact the Disability Resources Office if they will be gone for an extended period of time due to pregnancy or childbirth. Depending on the nature of the academic instruction, e.g., clinical rotations, other forms of accommodations may be made.

5. Participation in Off-Campus Academic Programs

The University will allow continued participation in off-campus programs such as internships, career rotations, and other off-campus elements of academic programs. Faculty will not require a doctor’s note for continued participation unless it is required for all students who have a medical condition that requires treatment by a doctor.

6. Responsibility

Students are responsible for contacting faculty members to ensure that they are notified of their intent to miss class, to be on a leave, or after the fact in the event of an emergency, based on pregnancy or childbirth. Students should work with faculty to determine how they will make up any work that was missed during their absence.

Faculty are responsible for ensuring that all students have equal access to educational programming and activities. This includes, where appropriate, making reasonable accommodations for students to make up any missed course or fieldwork, assignments, and be given the opportunity to make up any missed “points” due to an absence. However, nothing in this policy is intended to change the educational or course requirements.

Faculty are strongly encouraged to include the following or similar statement in the class syllabus:

“If during this course you need assistance due to pregnancy or related conditions, please meet with me. Also, it is recommended that you contact St. Kate’s Access and Success Program (accessandsuccess@stkate.edu) for student parents as soon as possible. Staff in Access and Success can assist you with strategies to aid in course completion as well as connect you with resources on and off campus including Student Accessibility and Accommodations if necessary”.

7. Leave of Absence

Faculty, staff, or other University employees will not require a student to take a leave of absence, or withdraw from, or limit their studies as the result of pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, but nothing in this policy requires modification of the essential elements of any course or academic program.

Students may elect to take a leave of absence because of pregnancy and/or childbirth. The leave term may be extended in the case of extenuating circumstances or medical necessity.

To the extent possible, the University will take reasonable steps to ensure that upon return from leave, students will be reinstated to their program with access to the same aid as when the leave

began. Continuation of students' scholarship, fellowship, or similar University-sponsored funding during the leave term will depend on the policies of the funding program regarding registration status. Students will not be negatively impacted by or forfeit their future eligibility for institutional scholarship, fellowship, or similar University-sponsored funding by exercising their rights under the policy. Federal and state awards are subject to refund calculations, satisfactory academic progress, repayment, and related regulations in place at the time of leave of absence or withdrawal from class. The University's tuition refund policy and schedule will be used to determine if a tuition refund will be applied for students who withdraw from classes. In order to determine eligibility for a full refund, students are required to complete a Request for Exception to Tuition Refund Policy (Tuition Appeal).

8. Housing-Related Accommodations

Pregnant students' on-campus housing status will not be altered based on pregnancy status unless requested by the pregnant student.

9. Breastfeeding and Pumping Milk

Students should make reasonable efforts to pump between classes or outside of instruction time. If a student must miss a portion of class to nurse or pump, this absence will be excused and the student will not be penalized for her time away. Instructors and students shall work together to identify solutions for making up in-class work or participation credits, as well as instruction missed.

The University will also designate a private room for students to breastfeed, pump milk, or address other needs related to breastfeeding during the school day. All designated lactation spaces shall, where possible, will be equipped with a table, chair, and electrical outlet.

The following list includes the location of the Wellness/Lactation Rooms on campus: Coeur de Catherine 490; Whitby 3rd floor, 328B; Fontbonne 122; Library 76.

Students should contact the Access and Success Office at 651-690-7870 for information about the Wellness/lactation rooms.

10. Request for Accommodation

A student in need of a pregnancy-related accommodation should contact Access & Success Office. Access & Success will work with the student and faculty to determine a mutually agreed-upon plan for successful course completion. If for some reason an agreement cannot be reached, or if the student requests an accommodation that the faculty cannot provide, Access and Success will work in partnership with the Student Accessibility and Accommodations office to try to meet the need of the student. At any point during this process, the Title IX Coordinator may be consulted and may determine if the accommodation is outside of the scope of either Access & Success or the Student Accessibility and Accommodations Office. In this case, the Title IX Coordinator will make the determination regarding the accommodation.

11. Campus Employment

If the student works for the University, she should consult the University's Employee Handbook or speak with the SVP for Human Resources, Equity, and Inclusion regarding pregnancy-related concerns.

12. Retaliation and Harassment

If a student experiences harassment or discrimination at the University based upon pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, she should seek help immediately from the Title IX Coordinator. The University prohibits retaliation against the student for making a complaint or raising a concern.

Students who experience or witness harassment or discrimination based on pregnancy may make a report per the process below. Faculty, staff, and other University employees are prohibited from retaliating against students for exercising the rights articulated by this policy, including imposing or threatening to impose negative educational outcomes because students request leave or accommodation, file a complaint, or otherwise exercise their rights under this policy.

13. Reporting

Any member of the University community may report a violation of this Policy to any supervisor, manager, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. Supervisors and managers are responsible for promptly forwarding such reports to the Title IX Coordinator.

14. Complaint Process

Students who feel that they have been discriminated against based on their sex, pregnancy and/or parental status can access the Title IX complaint process outlined in the Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy.

To make a report, contact:

Internal:

Sarah Gasparini
Title IX Coordinator
2004 Randolph Ave F-17
Derham Hall, Room 113
651-690-6732

External:

OCR Region Office for Minnesota:
U.S. Department of Education
500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1427
Chicago, IL 60661
Telephone: 312-730-1700
Fax: 312-730-1704