

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE POLICY ON PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

I. POLICY SUMMARY

Springfield College is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all individuals enjoy freedom from discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sex, as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Sex discrimination, which can include discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status, is prohibited and illegal in admissions, educational programs and activities, hiring, leave policies, employment policies, and health insurance coverage.

Springfield College does not discriminate against pregnant or parenting students on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion, or related conditions, including recovery. Students at Springfield College have the right to take medically necessary leave and to be free of harassment, intimidation, or other discrimination because of pregnancy-related conditions and have the right to return to the same academic and co-curricular standing following a leave for these purposes.

Springfield College hereby establishes a policy and procedures for ensuring the protection and equal treatment of pregnant students, students with pregnancy-related conditions, and students who are new parents.

II. POLICY TEXT

(1) Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of Springfield College's program, including admissions, educational programs and activities. The College has the responsibility to ensure that all faculty members understand the Title IX requirements related to excused absences relative to pregnancy and parenting, including class participation, grades, and delayed due dates for assignments. If you are experiencing medical concerns based on your pregnancy or parenting that are affecting your academic schedule or standing, support can be provided by meeting with the College Title IX coordinator or one of the deputy Title IX coordinators.

(2) Definitions

- a. *"Medical necessity"* is a determination made by a health care provider of a student's choosing.
- b. *"Pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions"* include (but are not limited to) pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, conditions arising in connection with pregnancy, and recovery from any of these conditions, in accordance with federal law.
- c. *"Pregnancy discrimination"* includes treating an individual affected by pregnancy or a pregnancy-related condition less favorably than similar individuals not so affected, and includes a failure to provide legally mandated leave or accommodations.
- d. *"Pregnant student/Birth-parent"* refers to the student who is or was pregnant. This policy and its pregnancy-related protections apply to all pregnant students regardless of gender identity or expression.
- e. *"Reasonable accommodations"* for the purposes of this policy are changes in the academic, living, or dining environments or typical operations that enable a pregnant student or student with a pregnancy-related condition to continue to pursue their studies and enjoy equal benefits of the University.

(3) Non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation of students affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions

- A. Springfield College and its faculty, staff, and other employees shall not require a student to limit their studies due to pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions.
- B. The educational benefits and services provided to students affected by pregnancy shall be no less than those provided to students with temporary medical conditions.
- C. Students with pregnancy-related disabilities, like any other student with a disability, are entitled to reasonable accommodations so they will not be disadvantaged in their courses of study or research, and may seek assistance from the Academic Success Center's Disability and Accessibility Services (DAS).
- D. Where DAS requires students to identify their disabilities and request accommodations by a fixed date in the term, deadline exceptions may be granted in the case of disabilities arising as a result of pregnancy or related conditions at any time.
- E. Students requesting reasonable accommodations are required to submit documentation from a qualified professional that establishes the need for conditions requiring such accommodation. At a minimum, this documentation should include a description of the condition, the current functional limitations of the condition, the expected progression of the condition, and any applicable recommendations for accommodations.
- F. Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. accommodations requested by the pregnant student to protect the health and safety of the student and/or their pregnancy (such as allowing the student to maintain a safe distance from hazardous substances)
 - ii. modifications to the physical environment (such as accessible seating)
 - iii. mobility support
 - iv. extending deadlines and/or allowing the student to make up tests or assignments missed for pregnancy-related absences
 - v. alternative class participation options
 - vi. occasional medically-necessary absences
 - vii. granting leave
- G. Breastfeeding students will be granted reasonable time and space to pump breast milk in a location that is private, clean, and reasonably accessible. Bathroom stalls do not satisfy this requirement. The College currently has several spaces available for lactation purposes, including the following:
 - i. Health Science Center, Lactation Room, HSC 105 (opening in 2023)
 - ii. Learning Commons, Parenting Room, LC103
 - iii. Wellness Center, Baby Changing Area and Parenting Room, Pool Lobby

(4) Academic Leave of Absence

- a. Faculty, staff, or other employees shall not require a student to take a leave of absence, or withdraw from or limit their studies due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions.
- b. Pursuant to Title IX, Springfield College shall treat pregnancy and related conditions as a justification for a leave of absence. An enrolled student may elect to take a leave of absence for up to one academic year. The leave term may be extended in the case of extenuating circumstances or if medically necessary due to the health of the student.
- c. A student taking a leave of absence under this policy shall provide notice of the intent to take leave thirty days prior to the initiation of leave, or as soon as practicable.
- d. Intermittent leave may be taken with the advance approval of the student's department, or when medically necessary due to the student's health condition.
- e. Upon return from leave, the student will be reinstated to their program in the same status as when the leave began.
- f. Students may be eligible for refunds due to a leave of absence following the College's Tuition, Housing, and Meal Plan Refund Policy.

- g. Students should consult with the College's Financial Aid office to determine how their Federal financial aid may be impacted if they take a leave of absence.
- h. Continuation of the student's scholarship, fellowship, or similar college-sponsored funding during the leave term will depend on the student's registration status and the policies of the funding program regarding registration status. Students will not negatively impact or forfeit their future eligibility for their scholarship, fellowship, or similar university-supported funding by taking leave under this policy.

(5) Student Employee Leave

Students that are also employees of the College seeking reasonable accommodations or leave related to pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions should contact Human Resources to review applicable employment policies.

(6) Retaliation and Harassment

Springfield College prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation against a student based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions, in compliance with federal and state law. In addition, harassment by any member of the Springfield College community based on sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, or parental status is prohibited.

Faculty, staff, and other employees are prohibited from interfering with a student's taking leave, seeking reasonable accommodation, or otherwise exercising their rights under this Policy. Faculty, staff, and other employees are prohibited from retaliating against a student for exercising the rights articulated by this Policy, including imposing or threatening to impose negative educational outcomes because a student requests leave or accommodation, files a complaint, or otherwise exercises their rights under the Policy.

III. REQUESTING SUPPORT AND ACCOMMODATIONS

If you need help or support with accommodations related to your pregnant or parenting status please contact:

- Camille Elliott, Associate Director/Deputy Title IX Coordinator, Academic Success Center
Learning Commons room 306
Telephone: (413) 748-3978
Email: celliott@springfield.edu
- Erin Leeper, Director of Non-Discrimination Initiatives/Title IX Administrator and 504 Coordinator
Flynn Campus Union Room 228, 263 Alden St., Springfield, MA 01109-3797
Telephone: 413-748-3248
Email: eleeper@springfield.edu

IV. COMPLAINTS

If the pregnant or parenting student has experienced harassment, discrimination or retaliation based on their status as a pregnant student or student with a pregnancy-related condition or as a result of their exercising of their rights under this policy, they may file a complaint with the following campus official(s):

- Erin Leeper, Director of Non-Discrimination Initiatives/Title IX Administrator and 504 Coordinator
Flynn Campus Union Room 228, 263 Alden St., Springfield, MA 01109-3797
Telephone: 413-748-3248
Email: eleeper@springfield.edu
Website: springfield.edu/TitleIX

Filing a complaint with the College does not prevent any individual from also filing a complaint with external agencies nor is filing a complaint with the College a prerequisite to contacting external agencies.

- United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: 617-289-0111
- United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203
Telephone: 800-669-4000
Website: www.eeoc.gov

V. POLICY RESOURCES

<https://thepregnantscholar.org/>

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-know-rights-201306-title-ix.html>

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>

<https://nwlc.org/resource/pregnant-and-parenting-students-rights-2/>

Approved by:	President & President's Leadership Team
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