

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

TITLE: POLICY ON EDUCATIONAL ADJUSTMENTS FOR STUDENTS EXPERIENCING PREGNANCY OR RELATED CONDITIONS

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW

The University of Tennessee of Tennessee Health Science Center (the “University”) is committed to creating and maintaining a non-discriminatory learning environment for all students. This policy is intended to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities. Title IX includes prohibiting discrimination against students on the basis of pregnancy.

SECTION 2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all aspects of the University’s education programs and activities.

SECTION 3. POLICY

Discrimination against any student or the exclusion of any student from participation in any part of a University education program or activity, on the basis of a student’s actual or potential pregnancy is prohibited. These education programs and activities include, but are not limited to, classes, extracurricular activities, athletic programs, internships, fellowships, clinics, and labs.

In this policy, “pregnancy” means pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions.

A. Excused Absences and Medical Leave

1. The University will not require a student to limit her studies as the result of pregnancy. If the student wishes to take a leave of absence, the University will assist the student in doing so.

2. A student’s absences due to pregnancy must be excused regardless of an individual faculty member’s absence policies, so long as the student’s physician deems the absences medically necessary.

3. Upon the conclusion of a medically necessary leave related to pregnancy, a student must be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as the student had prior to the leave.

4. A pregnant student must be allowed to make up any work missed due to medically necessary absences for pregnancy when the student’s medically necessary absences for pregnancy are completed. A student will be offered an acceptable alternative arrangements to make up missed work. Examples of acceptable alternative arrangements include, but are not limited to, retaking a semester, switching to an online course of study, or allowing the student additional time in a program to continue at the same pace and finish at a later date. These options will be addressed in the student’s individual plan for continuing education (C.4.).

5. If any part of a student’s grade is based on class attendance or participation, a pregnant student must be allowed to make up the attendance or participation points for any time missed due to medically necessary absences for pregnancy.

B. Participation in Education Programs and Activities

1. When necessary to ensure a pregnant student's access to an education program or activity, the University must make reasonable adjustments responsive to the student's pregnancy status. These adjustments may include providing modification to the physical environment (such as accessible seating), appropriate restroom breaks, or mobility support (such as temporary access to elevators).

2. Any special services, exceptions, or assistance provided to students with temporary medical conditions must also be provided to pregnant students.

3. A pregnant student will only be required to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to participate in an educational program or activity when such certification is required of all students for other physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician. For example, a student who has been hospitalized for childbirth will not be required to submit a medical certificate to return from leave unless a certificate is required of students who have been hospitalized for other physical conditions.

4. The University may provide pregnant students with information or instructions of any health risks of participating in an educational program or activity, only if a description of those risks will also be provided to non-pregnant students.

C. Request for Educational Adjustments

1. Disclosure of pregnancy is voluntary, and it is the pregnant student's obligation to disclose and affirmatively seek any necessary educational adjustments. Once a student discloses a pregnancy, the University will collaborate with the student to develop an appropriate plan for continuation of the student's education.

2. A student seeking adjustments because of pregnancy should contact the Office of Access and Compliance at (901) 448-2112 and advise the Office of Access and Compliance that she needs pregnancy-related educational adjustments.

3. The Title IX Coordinator or their Deputy designee will request a letter from the student's physician providing dates on which the student's attendance must be excused and a statement that the absences are medically necessary.

4. The Title IX Coordinator or their Deputy designee will work with the student and any faculty members to create a plan for the completion of coursework and continuation of the student's education. Individual plans may be adjusted as circumstances change.

D. Reporting Violations

A person may report any violation of this policy to the Title IX Coordinator at (901) 448-2112.