

Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal Policy

I. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all undergraduate students at Goucher College who withdraw due to serious illness or injury (medical) or a significant personal situation (compassionate) that prevents the student from continuing their classes, and incompletes or other reasonable accommodations are not possible.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

A student may request and be considered for a medical withdrawal due to a serious illness or injury that prevents the student from continuing classes. The medical withdrawal policy covers both physical health and mental health difficulties.

A student may request and be considered for a compassionate withdrawal when extraordinary personal reasons, not related to the student's personal physical or mental health (for example, care of a seriously ill child or spouse, or a death in the student's immediate family), prevent the student from continuing in classes.

The following procedures provide for an individualized approach for assessing a student's eligibility and readiness to return from a medical or compassionate leave and are designed to be reasonable and flexible.

III. MEDICAL/COMPASSIONATE WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

- A. A student seeking to withdraw from the college for medical reasons must submit a written [Semester Withdrawal Form](#) and [Health Care Provider Release Form](#) to the Office of Student Support and Outreach (SS+O) or the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS). The term "medical" includes physical and/or mental health conditions and illnesses. In support of the withdrawal request, the student must also request a treating health care provider to provide documentation on the provider's letterhead including 1) diagnosis or condition; 2) date of onset of the condition; 3) dates of treatment; and 4) prognosis. Appropriate documentation for a compassionate withdrawal may also be required and is dependent upon the nature of the student's circumstances.
- B. SS+O or ODOS will advise the student to consult with the Office of Financial Aid and the Bursar's office to be counseled regarding the consequences of a withdrawal on the student's financial situation (see below for additional information).
- C. The SS+O, in consultation with the ODOS and appropriate campus medical or psychological professionals, will make a determination regarding the student's request. In some situations, the SS+O or ODOS may convene a committee to assist in making this determination.

The committee shall be ad hoc in nature and shall be composed of representatives from the academic and student affairs divisions; it may include representatives from the Student Health Center, Student Counseling Center, Office of Accessibility Services, and the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies, at the SS+O's or ODOS's discretion.

- D. A student may appeal the outcome of a request for medical/compassionate withdrawal by submitting an appeal within five (5) days in writing to Vice President and Dean of Students. The decision of the Vice President and Dean of Students shall be the final decision of the college.
- E. If a student seeking withdrawal does not intend to request to return in the following semester, they must also submit either a [Leave of Absence form](#) or [Semester Withdrawal Form](#).

IV. IMPACT OF A MEDICAL/COMPASSIONATE WITHDRAWAL

- A. A student who is granted a withdrawal for medical or compassionate reasons after the tenth week of the semester will receive a 'W' for all courses attempted during that semester. The W will be reflected on the student's official transcript.
- B. A student who is granted a medical or compassionate withdrawal will have a hold placed upon their registration by the Office of the Dean of Students, pending a successful request to return to the college.
- C. Any adjustment to the student's tuition will be made in accordance with the college's [refund policy](#).
- D. Goucher maintains a [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\) requirement](#), and a [Return of Title IV \(R2T4\) requirement](#), both of which are mandated by federal financial aid regulations. A withdrawing student must consult with the Office of Financial Aid to determine the effect of withdrawal on financial aid under these policies.
- E. Goucher also has implemented a policy regarding [Academic Progress Toward a Degree](#) ("APTD" policy) for full-time students. A medical or compassionate withdrawal may affect the student's ability to meet the requirements of this policy and the student may be subject to suspension and/or dismissal under this policy. Students seeking withdrawal who may be affected by the APTD policy will be referred to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies for advisement.

V. RETURNING TO THE COLLEGE AFTER A MEDICAL OR COMPASSIONATE WITHDRAWAL

The college aspires to support students in a successful return to the college community when medical or personal issues have necessitated withdrawal; however, approval to return to the college following a medical or compassionate withdrawal is not guaranteed.

- A. Following a medical withdrawal, a student is expected to take a leave of sufficient duration to allow the student to address the issues necessitating the medical leave. It is common for students who withdraw because of a serious illness or medical condition to take a minimum of one full semester away from the college in order to enhance the likelihood of success upon return, and such a leave of

absence may be required at the SS+O's or ODOS's discretion, depending on the individual circumstances.

Prior to requesting to return, students withdrawn for medical reasons are required to address the condition(s) that led to their withdrawal. Further, these students are encouraged to engage in activities that demonstrate their readiness to manage the rigors and challenges associated with the campus environment. This may include (but is not limited to) evidence of ongoing self or clinical care, and development of an academic success plan

The length of leave after a compassionate withdrawal will depend upon the student's individual circumstances.¹

- B. A student wishing to return to Goucher following a medical/compassionate withdrawal must complete the following steps:
1. Notify SS+O of an intention to return to the college by submitting a Medical Withdrawal – Request to Return – Healthcare Provider Report. Such report shall provide detailed information from the student's healthcare provider about the student's current medical condition and ongoing treatment plan, and provide an assessment of the student's ability to undertake an intensive academic curriculum and, if relevant, to reside in the residence halls.
 2. A student returning from a compassionate withdrawal must submit a letter documenting the student's readiness to return to the college and success plan. The success plan may include and is not limited to ongoing care and development of an academic plan.
 3. All documentation will be held in strict confidence by the college and will not become part of the student's academic record. Upon request, the student will authorize the SS+O or ODOS to secure any additional information necessary to assess the student's readiness for readmission.
 4. Submit documentation by the following dates: August 1 for the fall semester and December 15 for the spring semester.
 5. Consult with the Bursar's office and the Office of Financial Aid to obtain clearance from those offices for return.
- C. For medical withdrawals, the SS+O, in consultation with appropriate college officials, as necessary, will make an individualized determination whether to grant or deny the request to return. This decision will be based on an assessment of the student's readiness to successfully and safely resume academic and residential life at the college. In some situations, the SS+O or ODOS's designee may convene a committee to assist in making this determination. The committee shall be ad hoc in nature and shall be composed of representatives from the academic and student affairs divisions; it may include representatives from the Student Health Center, Student Counseling Center, Office of

¹ Note: If the student takes a leave of absence from the college for more than a total of two semesters during the student's time at Goucher, the student will be formally withdrawn from the college and will be required to submit a [Reinstatement Form](#) prior to returning to the college.

Accessibility Services, and the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies, at the SS+O's or ODOS's discretion.

- D. A student may appeal the outcome of a request to return or petition for reinstatement to the college by submitting an appeal in writing within five (5) days to the Vice President and Dean of Students. The decision of the Vice President and Dean of Students will be the final decision of the college.
- E. If a student is approved to return to campus following a medical or compassionate withdrawal, that student is required to meet with SS+O within the first two weeks of the semester to develop a care or success plan. Failure to complete this meeting may result in the assignment of alternative requirements (based on a student's individualized assessment) for continued enrollment.

VI. RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL

The [Office of the Dean of Students](#) is responsible for implementing this policy. Questions should be directed to the [Office of Student Support and Outreach](#).