

<b>POLICY: Student Pregnancy and Parenting Students Accommodation/Adjustments Policy</b>
<b>Issued By: Title IX Office and Disability Resource Center</b>
<b>Effective Date: June 27, 2022</b> <b>Updated: January 5, 2024</b>

**PURPOSE: To provide guidance for pregnant and parenting students.**

**I. GUIDELINES:**

A student who becomes pregnant is strongly encouraged to notify Rockhurst University’s (“Rockhurst”) Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. This allows the student and Rockhurst to collaborate and develop an appropriate plan for the continuation of the student’s education in light of the unique nature of Rockhurst’s programs and any clinical requirements, as well as particular challenges the student may face while pregnant or when recovering from childbirth (e.g., missed classes, clinicals, make-up work, etc.). However, the choice to declare a pregnancy is voluntary, and a student is not required to disclose this information to Rockhurst.

**II. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all aspects of Rockhurst’s admissions, educational programs, and activities, including athletics.

**III. 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 or other conclusion of pregnancy, false pregnancy, conditions arising in connection with pregnancy, and recovery from any of these conditions.
- c. “Reasonable accommodations” for purposes of this policy are reasonable changes or adjustments in the academic environment or typical operations that enable a pregnant student or student with a pregnancy-related condition to continue to pursue studies and have the same access to school programs and educational opportunities.

**IV. REQUEST FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

- a. Students seeking reasonable accommodations are to complete a [\*\*Pregnancy or Parent Adjustment Request for Students Form\*\*](#) noting the requested accommodations. Specific accommodations or adjustments will be handled on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the circumstances, including but not limited to, the medical need and academic requirements involved.
- b. The University staff members will discuss the pregnant or parenting individual’s needs and may ask for documentation that supports the requested accommodations. These requests from students should be directed to:

[drc@rockhurst.edu](mailto:drc@rockhurst.edu)

Van Ackeren 200 F- within the Learning Center  
Office 816-501-4037

In certain situations, pregnancy-related complications or disabilities may make it appropriate for Rockhurst to provide additional reasonable accommodations. You can find more information on requesting accommodations for pregnancy-related disabilities at <https://www.rockhurst.edu/disability-resource-center/accommodations> or contact the Disability Resource Center.

If there are any questions about this policy, you can contact the Disability Resource Center or the University's Title IX Coordinator:

Kimberly Brant Schmelzle  
Director of Compliance and Risk Management/Title IX Coordinator  
Massman 3  
1100 Rockhurst Road  
Kansas City, MO 64110  
816-501-4036  
[TitleIX@rockhurst.edu](mailto:TitleIX@rockhurst.edu)

## **V. REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS OF STUDENTS AFFECTED BY PREGNANCY, CHILDBIRTH, OR RELATED CONDITIONS**

- a. Rockhurst does not require a student to limit studies or participation in Rockhurst activities due to pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, including off-campus assignments and clinical rotations.
- b. Students who are pregnant, may request reasonable accommodations so that they will not be disadvantaged in their course of study or research and may seek assistance from the Disability Resource Center.
- c. Although a student is not required to disclose a pregnancy, it is the student's responsibility to disclose pregnancy status in order to request desired pregnancy accommodations or adjustments to ensure successful completion of the student's education program. The University encourages pregnant students to work with the Disability Resource Center as early as possible to develop an appropriate plan for meeting the student's education needs. Disability Resource Center staff will communicate all reasonable accommodations granted under this policy to student's faculty (which may necessitate, at times and in Rockhurst's reasonable discretion, communicating the student's pregnancy status) and coordinate accommodation/adjustment-related efforts with the advisors and faculty. Students are encouraged to work with their advisors and faculty members to reschedule course assignments, lab hours, examinations, or other requirements, and/or to reduce their overall course load, as appropriate, once authorization is received from the Disability Resource Center.. Any reasonable accommodations or adjustments that have been agreed upon will be documented in an Education Plan and signed by the student and the Disability Resource Center. A leave of absence may also be available if a student chooses.
- d. Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- i. Providing accommodations/adjustments requested by a pregnant student to protect the health and safety of the student and/or pregnancy (such as allowing the student to maintain a safe distance from hazardous substances);
  - ii. Making adjustments to the physical environment (such as accessible seating);
  - iii. Extending deadlines and/or allowing the student to make up tests or assignments missed for pregnancy-related absences;
  - iv. Excusing medically necessary absences; and
  - v. Granting leave or implementing incomplete grades for classes that will be resumed at a future date.
- e. Rockhurst personnel are available to advise pregnant students of the impact of any reasonable accommodations on the student's ability to complete the student's educational program.
- f. Breastfeeding students will be provided reasonable time and space to express breast milk in a location that is private, clean, and reasonably accessible.
  - 1. Dedicated permanent lactation space may be found in:
    - i. Lactation Room, Arrupe 115 and Sedgwick 117. Please contact either the Disability Resource Center with any questions on how to access this room.
  - 2. Students who wish to request alternative spaces should contact the Disability Resource Coordinator or Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Students.

## **VI. MODIFIED ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PARENTING STUDENTS**

- a. Students with parenting responsibilities who wish to remain engaged in their coursework while adjusting their academic responsibilities because of the birth or adoption of their child or placement of a foster child or other extraordinary parenting responsibilities may request an academic modification period of up to two weeks beginning with the first six months of either the child entering the home or when the extraordinary circumstances arose. Extensions may be granted where additional time is required due to medical necessity or extraordinary parenting responsibilities.
- b. During a granted modification period, the student's academic requirements will be reasonably adjusted, and deadlines postponed as deemed appropriate by Rockhurst.
- c. Students seeking a period of modified academic responsibilities should consult with the Disability Resource Center to determine appropriate academic modification requests. The Disability Resource Center staff will communicate all granted modifications under this policy to the student's faculty and coordinate modification-related efforts with the student's advisors. Students are encouraged to work with their advisors and faculty members to reschedule course assignments, lab hours, examinations, or other requirements, and/or to reduce their overall course load, as appropriate once authorization is received from the Disability Resource Center. Any reasonable modifications that have been agreed upon will be documented in an Education Plan and signed by the student and the Disability Resource Center.
- d. Students can request modified academic responsibilities under this policy regardless of whether they elect to take a leave of absence.

## **VII. ACADEMIC LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

- a. Rockhurst does not require a student to take a leave of absence or withdraw from or limit their studies due to pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions.

- b. Rockhurst will excuse a student's absences due to pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions, including recovery from childbirth, for as long as the student's doctor deems the absences to be medically necessary.
- c. A student's absences due to medical necessity of child or extraordinary parenting issues, such as caring for a sick child, are also excused (this includes mothers and fathers) as deemed appropriate by Rockhurst.
- d. Students seeking a leave of absence should consult with the Disability Resource Center to determine appropriate requests. As appropriate and depending on the student's academic plan, faculty will work with students (and the Disability Resource Center to determine how to best make up missed work and points. Granted academic leave of absences supersede any school or instructor-based attendance policies regarding allowable numbers of absences or ability to make up missed academic work.

**VIII. DOCUMENTATION.** Rockhurst may require reasonable documentation, as determined by Rockhurst, before granting reasonable accommodations, academic modifications, or leaves of absence due to pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, or extraordinary parenting issues.

## **IX. RETALIATION AND HARASSMENT**

As stated in Rockhurst's Non-Discrimination Policy, "[c]onsistent with its Jesuit tradition of focus on individual dignity and *cura personalis* or "Care for the Whole Person," the University is committed to providing equal opportunities for all persons and does not discriminate or retaliate on the basis of... sex, pregnancy status..."

Any complaints of discrimination based on pregnancy or parenting status should promptly contact the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Students. Complaints of discrimination or harassment based on pregnancy will be investigated and resolved under the University's Non-Discrimination Policy.