

Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Policy

Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Policy

Effective: September 1, 2017

Subject to annual review

This Policy provides the guidelines by which students may temporarily leave or withdraw from the College, and, if applicable, apply to be reinstated thereafter.

Students are encouraged to consult with the Registrar's Office or their advisor prior to taking a leave of absence or withdrawing from the College. Additionally, all international students must meet with the Director of Global Connections prior to departure from campus. It is the obligation of Mount Ida College to report students' enrollment status, and if a student is away from the College for more than 180 calendar days, students may be required to pay back loans, and/or adhere to other financial aid requirements. It is recommended that students speak with their Financial Aid Counselor before departing campus.

Medical/Personal Leave of Absence

Voluntary Leave

A student may take a voluntary leave from the College at any time, for any reason, through week 12 of the semester. A student must notify the Registrar of their intent by filing the appropriate form(s) and may take a voluntary leave up to three times while at Mount Ida College. All requests for a Leave of Absence must include the reason for the leave, be submitted in writing, be signed, be dated, and be in advance of any LOA unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from doing so. A voluntary leave is in place for no more than 180 calendar days in a 12-month period before the leave is converted to a withdrawal. A student will receive W's on their transcript for the courses in which they were registered.

Reinstatement Criteria and Procedures for Voluntary Leaves

The student must complete the appropriate form(s) and send to the Registrar requesting reinstatement to the College. Additionally, a student must meet with the Office of Student Success prior to being readmitted and may be required to submit documentation related to their leave. If a student has been away from the College for two or more full semesters, the student will need to reapply for admission.

Voluntary Medical Leave

A student is encouraged to request a voluntary medical leave in the event that the student believes that physical and/or mental health concerns are significantly interfering with the ability to succeed at Mount Ida College and/or that the demands of college life are interfering with recovery or safety. A student may request a voluntary leave at any time during the semester. Review of medical documentation in support of the leave is required and will be received by Wellness Services.

A student must notify the Registrar of their intent by filing the appropriate form(s) and may take a voluntary medical leave up to three times while at Mount Ida College. All requests for a Leave of Absence must include the reason for the leave, be submitted in writing, be signed, be dated, and be in advance of any LOA unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the student from doing so. A voluntary medical leave is in place for no more than 180 calendar days in a 12-month period. If a voluntary leave extends past the 180 days, Mount Ida College will convert the leave to a withdrawal from the College. A student will receive W's on their transcript for the courses in which they were registered.

Return from Hospitalization

A student who is hospitalized as a result of a physical or mental health issue may wish to take a voluntary medical leave from Mount Ida College to recover. If so, the student should follow the voluntary medical leave process set forth herein.

Required Withdrawal for Health & Safety Reasons

The Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs or their designee, in consultation with Wellness Services, may determine that a student needs to take a required withdrawal for health & safety reasons. In the event such a determination is made, the College will immediately convey that determination in writing to the student. The determination will be based upon an individualized and objective assessment of the student's ability to participate safely in the College's programs and will examine whether the student presents a threat of substantial harm to that student or other members of the College community. The assessment will determine the nature, duration, and severity of the risk and the probability that the potentially threatening injury will actually occur.

A required withdrawal for health & safety reasons is allowed once during a student's time at Mount Ida College. A student receiving a required withdrawal will be individually assessed by the Center for Wellness Services to determine the length or duration of the required withdrawal. A student will receive W's on their transcript for the courses in which they were registered.

Return from Hospitalization

A student who is hospitalized as a result of a physical or mental health issue and no longer requires a hospital setting and does not wish to take a medical leave must be evaluated by Mount Ida College for readiness to return to campus before the student can return. In some situations, the hospital may determine that the student can be discharged; however, a separate administrative decision is to be made by Mount Ida with respect to whether or not that student can return to campus. It may be determined, upon an individualized evaluation, that the student has recovered such that the student no longer requires a hospital setting but may still need more support than the student can receive in a residential college setting. In such situations, a required withdrawal from Mount Ida for health & safety reasons may be considered to allow for a more extended period of recuperation.

Appeal Procedure for Required Withdrawal for Health & Safety Reasons

If a student believes that a decision for a required withdrawal for health & safety reasons made by the College is unreasonable, or that the procedures and/or information relied upon in making the decision were wrong or unfair, the student may

appeal the decision. The appeal must be made in writing to the Vice President of Student Affairs. Appeals should clearly state the specific unreasonable, wrong, and/or unfair facts and should present relevant information to support the statements. Once notified of the required withdrawal for health & safety reasons, the student has five (5) business days to submit their appeal. The student may not remain on campus during the appeal period. If no timely appeal is submitted, the decision about the required withdrawal for health & safety reasons is final. The Vice President for Student Affairs or their designee will respond in writing to the student's written appeal within five (5) business days of receipt of the appeal. The response will provide a conclusion as to whether or not the required withdrawal for health & safety reasons is appropriate upon a thorough review of the relevant facts and information. The Vice President for Student Affairs may request an assessment by an outside medical provider at the student's expense, unless the student demonstrates an inability to afford such an assessment, in which case an alternative payment arrangement may be made upon mutual discussion by the College and the student.

Reinstatement Criteria and Procedures for Medical/Health & Safety Leave

The student must complete the appropriate form(s) and send to the Registrar requesting reinstatement to the College. The Registrar will contact the Director of Wellness Services to review the reinstatement request. A student will also need to meet with the Office of Student Success as part of the reinstatement process. The student must send a report from the student's licensed medical provider; the report will include discussion of the student's current health status and course of treatment during the leave, as well as any specific recommendations for the student and the College with respect to the student's successful return to Mount Ida College. The report will address the following: (a) the student's readiness to return to the academic and co-curricular demands of college life; (b) the student's readiness to live on campus; (c) the student's current and ongoing treatment needs; (d) the student's readiness to return to competitive sports, if the student is a collegiate athlete; and (e) any other information that the health care provider deems appropriate.

The student must be evaluated by a licensed medical provider if the evaluation is regarding medical concerns and/or by a licensed mental health provider if evaluating mental health concerns. Further, all providers must be unrelated to the student and must have a specialty and credentials appropriate for the condition(s) of concern. No providers may be employees of Mount Ida College (except consulting providers). The student is responsible for any cost associated with the provider's evaluation.

The information provided by the student will be reviewed in order to evaluate the appropriateness of the student's return. Further information from the student's medical or mental health providers may be requested. In order to provide for such requests, the student will be asked to sign and return a release form so that those individuals at the College who are involved in evaluating the student's return can have access to the student's outside health care providers and have the ability to discuss relevant aspects of the student's condition. In addition, staff in the Center for Wellness Services may choose to meet with the student as part of the evaluation. Once a decision has been made, the student will be notified. If reinstatement is granted, the student may be required to attend a re-entry interview to review the recommendations of their medical provider and determine how the Center for Wellness Services can best support the success of the student. The Director will also notify other College officials where appropriate (for example, the Office of Student Success) regarding ongoing treatment expectations.

If a student has been away from the College for voluntary medical leave for two or more full semesters, the voluntary medical leave will become a withdrawal and will require the student to reapply for admission. If a student has questions about the Voluntary Medical leave policy, they should contact the Center for Wellness Services at 617-928-4599.

If a student has been withdrawn from the College, they are required to reapply for admission. After two withdrawals, a student is no longer eligible to enroll at Mount Ida College.

Academic Withdrawals

Required Withdrawal for Absence from Academic Activity

A student will be withdrawn from the College for absence from academic activity when no academic activity by a student can be verified for at least ten (10) consecutive class days. The Registrar will coordinate this withdrawal. A student

would receive W's on their transcript for the courses in which they were registered. Students are required to take a minimum of one full semester off from Mount Ida College and can be withdrawn for absence from academic activity once in their time at the College. Students are eligible to be reinstated to the College only once during their enrollment at Mount Ida.

Appeal Procedure for Required Withdrawal for Absence from Academic Activity

If a student believes that a decision for a required withdrawal for absence from academic activity made by the College is unreasonable or that the procedures and/or information relied upon in making the decision were wrong or unfair, the student may appeal the decision. The appeal must be made in writing to the Registrar. The Registrar will coordinate a review of the appeal with the appropriate School Dean. Appeals should clearly state the specific unreasonable, wrong, and/or unfair facts and should present relevant information to support the statements. Once notified of the required withdrawal for absence from academic activity, the student has five (5) business days to submit their appeal. The student may not remain on campus during the appeal period. If no timely appeal is submitted, the decision about the required withdrawal for absence from academic activity is final. The School Dean or their designee will respond in writing to the student's written appeal within five (5) business days. The response will provide a conclusion as to whether or not the required withdrawal for insufficient academic progression is appropriate upon a thorough review of the relevant facts and information.

Reinstatement Criteria and Procedures

The student must complete the appropriate form and send to the Registrar requesting reinstatement to the College. Additionally, a student must meet with the Office of Student Success prior to being readmitted. Re-application to Mount Ida College would be required after two (2) semesters away. After two withdrawals from the College, a student is no longer eligible to enroll at Mount Ida College.

Voluntary Withdrawal with Pending Academic Integrity Violation

A student who withdraws from Mount Ida College with any pending academic matter must notify the Registrar of their intent by filling out the appropriate form(s). A student will receive W's on their transcript for the courses in which they were registered. Students who choose to withdraw pending an academic integrity violation are not eligible to return to the College.

Financial Withdrawal

Required Withdrawal for Financial Reasons

Student Financial Services will initiate a required withdrawal for financial reasons when a student is unable to satisfy current financial obligations to the College. A student would receive W's on their transcript for the courses in which they were registered. A student may be withdrawn for financial reasons a maximum of two (2) times during their academic career at Mount Ida College. After two withdrawals, a student is no longer eligible to enroll at Mount Ida College.

Reinstatement Criteria and Procedures

The student must complete the appropriate form(s) and send to the Registrar requesting reinstatement to the College. Additionally, a student must meet with Student Financial Services prior to being readmitted and be in good financial standing by the College's billing due date. Re-application to Mount Ida College would be required after two (2) semesters away.

Additional Considerations

Academic Implications

Enrollment Status. While on leave, the student is not an enrolled student at Mount Ida College. The leave status will continue until the student is prepared to return to the College and is readmitted or the timeframe has passed.

Taking Courses at Other Institutions. If a student chooses to enroll in a course or courses at another institution during their leave, they should consult the Transfer Credit Policies and Procedures in the College Catalog.

Course Registration. Once the student on leave has been readmitted to the College, they will be able to participate in course registration. It is strongly advised that the student consult with their course instructors, advisor, and dean when choosing courses following leave as certain academic programs may have specific requirements as it relates to academic progression.

Educational Record Reflection. The student's transcript will not reflect the reason for a leave or withdrawal. In the event a medical leave occurs after the start of the semester, courses for that semester will be listed on the transcript with grades of "W" (withdrew). The handling of the student's educational record is governed by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Financial Implications

Prior to granting the Leave of Absence, the College must provide to all Title IV Loan recipients information regarding the effects to the student's loan repayment terms, including information on the expiration of the student's grace period if they fail to return from their LOA.

Financial Aid Eligibility. Any student not in attendance for one or more terms, for voluntary or involuntary reasons, should be aware that their withdrawal from the College may affect any financial aid they are receiving and/or any federal loans borrowed while enrolled. The student is advised to:

- 1) Ensure that all aid forms and required documents have been submitted prior to leaving the College;
- 2) Review any loan obligations that may come due during the leave; and
- 3) Understand the deadlines and form requirements for aid application for return to the College.

Tuition and Fee Refunds. Tuition and fee refunds for medical leaves taken during the course of a semester are made in accordance with the College's Refunds Policy. For more information, consult the Refunds section of the Withdrawal Policy Adjustment/Schedule.

Tuition Insurance. Tuition insurance is available, but it must be purchased prior to the start of the semester. Questions should be directed to Student Financial Services.

Student Health Insurance. If the student is currently enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan, their coverage will continue as specified by the policy. If the student waived the College insurance, they should consult their comparable plan for any exclusions or limitations. Questions should be directed to the Center for Wellness Services.

Housing Implications

On a case-by-case basis, the College, in consultation with the student's health care providers, may determine that the returning student should not live on campus but is capable of attending classes. In addition, College housing may not be available to the student upon their return, due to space limitations. Once the student has been readmitted, they can discuss availability and options with the Office of Campus Living. Students on leave are ineligible to participate in the spring housing lottery. In the event that College housing is not available, the student may choose to be added to a housing waitlist.

Students taking a Leave of Absence who are residing in on-campus housing are required to make arrangements to have their belongings removed from their residence hall room within a timeframe set by the Office of Campus Living.

Presence on Campus

While a student is on a leave or withdrawn from the College, they will not be permitted to visit campus unless following the Visitor and Guest Policy in the Student Handbook.