

# CECIL COLLEGE

## PREGNANT AND PARENTING

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in an education program. Among the types of gender discrimination covered by this statute, Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. Protection extends to students who are pregnant or who have either had a false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, have gone through childbirth, or are recovering from any of those conditions. Title IX regulations also prohibit a school from applying any rule related to a student's parental, family or marital status that treats students differently based on their sex. Below are some frequently asked questions and their answers about the College's compliance with this aspect of Title IX.

#### **Where can a student seek assistance for pregnancy-related accommodations?**

Pregnant students may contact the Office of Student Life to request assistance with accommodations. Examples of accommodations include, but are not limited to, rescheduling tests or exams, excusing absences, submitting work after a deadline, providing alternatives to make up missed work, or retaking a semester. The Office of Student Life may facilitate communications with the student's professors or assist with other College resources. Pregnancy-related documentation will be maintained with the Director of Student Life.

#### **Pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions may necessitate absences. Will those absences be excused?**

Yes. Absences due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions must be excused and cannot be treated or penalized like unexcused absences. Depending on the length of the absence and area of instruction, it may be academically necessary for the student to take a leave of absence. The College must provide a leave of absence for pregnant students for as long as it is deemed necessary by their medical doctor. The College may require a doctor's note for pregnancy-related absences only if a doctor's note is required to excuse other medically-related absences.

#### **Can a professor prevent a pregnant student from attending class?**

No. Under Title IX, the College cannot exclude someone from class based on their pregnancy. The College can only require a pregnant student to provide a doctor's certification of fitness to continue in an education program or activity if the same requirement is imposed on all other students with medical conditions requiring a doctor's care.

**What happens when a pregnant student misses assignments, tests, exams etc. due to an excused absence?**

After an excused absence due to pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical conditions, professors must allow a reasonable time for the student to make up missed assignments and tests. This is true regardless of the professor's typical makeup assignment policy. Depending on the nature of the course, making up the exact missed assignment might not be feasible. The makeup work does not have to be exactly the same as the missed work, but needs to be reasonably equivalent.

**Can pregnant students be penalized for their absence if grades in a class are based on attendance or participation?**

A student may not be penalized for absences known to be due to pregnancy, childbirth, or other related medical conditions. A professor cannot reduce a pregnant student's grade because of attendance or participation points that the student missed during excused absences due to their pregnancy-related conditions. The professor must give the student a reasonable opportunity to earn back the credit missed due to pregnancy.

**Can a pregnant student participate in internships and other off-campus programs?**

Yes. Pregnant students cannot be excluded from College-related off-campus programs, such as internships, off-campus activities, College-sponsored activities, and other extracurricular activities. A professor cannot require a doctor's note to show fitness to participate unless it is required for all students in the program.

Certain academic programs have clinical and/or internship requirements. For these experiences, students must adhere to the rules and policies of the specific clinical site to which they are assigned, in addition to following College policy and procedure. Requests for accommodations related to clinical site work will be reviewed in accordance with policy, taking into consideration any relevant clinical site rules or policies.

**Does the College have to provide special services to pregnant students?**

The College must provide the same services to pregnant students that it provides to other students with temporary disabilities.

**What if a student or professor makes an offensive or inappropriate remark about a student's pregnancy?**

The College will not tolerate gender-based harassment, including harassment based on pregnancy and related conditions. If a pregnant student experiences harassment based on their pregnancy, they should let the Title IX Coordinator/Vice President for Student Services know immediately. If a faculty or staff member witnesses or learns about harassment of a pregnant student, they should immediately notify the Title IX Coordinator/Vice President for Student Services so that they can take prompt and effective steps to end pregnancy-related harassment, prevent its recurrence, and eliminate any hostile environment created by the harassment. The same grievance procedures applicable to complaints of sexual misconduct also apply to discrimination based on pregnancy or parental status.

Title IX prohibits a school's retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint or raising concerns about the rights of a pregnant and parenting student.

**Can a pregnant student lose their scholarship due to their pregnancy?**

As long as the student remains in school and is in good standing when the student is not medically required to be absent, the student will not lose the scholarship. Pregnant students will maintain their status as a student for up to one academic year from date of received documentation. If a student wants to take off more time than their doctor says is medically necessary, the student should contact their academic advisor.

**Does the College have designated areas for breastfeeding, pumping, or to address other needs related to breastfeeding while on campus?**

Yes. There are two on-campus lactation spaces. One is located in the Zen Den on the first floor of the Technology Center (Building D), Room 114 in the Office of Student Life. The other space is the Focus Pod located in the library. Please see a librarian to reserve the Focus Pod.

**Who should I contact if I have additional questions?**

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