

Pregnancy Non-Discrimination Policy

The University does not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, student, or applicant for admission on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions. These obligations apply to all employees and students, regardless of gender identity or expression or current, potential, or past parental, family, or marital status; however, the nondiscrimination obligations differ for employees and students. All terms not defined in this appendix have the same meaning as in the Policy. The University welcomes and supports pregnant and lactating students as well as students experiencing pregnancy-related conditions, such as childbirth, recovery from pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, lactation, and medical conditions related to any of the above. For more information, please contact Mr. Zack Hulings, Director of Accessibility Services, at: accessibilityservices@gmercyu.edu or (215) 646-7300 ext. 21033; or Ms. Tia Brown, Title IX Coordinator, at: brown.t8@gmercyu.edu or (215) 646-7300 ext. 21140.

Application to Employees

The University's non-discrimination obligations for pregnancy and related conditions with respect to employees, including the procedures for requesting reasonable accommodations for a physical or mental condition related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, are set forth in the Pregnancy Title IX Accommodations Policy.

[Title IX | Gwynedd Mercy University](#)

Allegations of sex discrimination or retaliation on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions with respect to employees will be resolved through the procedures outlined in the Title IX Policy.

Application to Students

The University's non-discrimination obligations for pregnancy and related conditions with respect to students are set forth below. Allegations of sex discrimination or retaliation on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions with respect to students will also be resolved through the procedures outlined in this Policy.

Information Sharing Requirements

Any employee who is informed by a student of that student's pregnancy or related condition must promptly provide the student with the following information:

- The Title IX Coordinator's contact information
 - That the Title IX Coordinator can coordinate specific actions (described below) to prevent discrimination and ensure equal access to the University's education program and activity.
- The employee is not required to provide the above information if the employee has a reasonable belief that the Title IX Coordinator is already aware of the pregnancy or related condition.

Specific Actions to Ensure Equal Access

If a student notifies the Title IX Coordinator of their pregnancy or related condition, the University will take the following actions:

Notification Obligations

The Title IX Coordinator will (1) provide the student with a notice of non-discrimination; and (2) inform the student of the University's obligations to:

- Prohibit discrimination in its education program or activity based on pregnancy or related conditions.

- Make Reasonable Modifications and limit related supporting documentation (as further described below).
- Allow access, on a voluntary basis, to any separate and comparable portion of the University's education program or activity.
- Provide access to a lactation area (as set forth in the Pregnancy Title IX Accommodations Policy).
- Allow a voluntary leave of absence (as further described below).
- Not require the student to provide any sort of certification or documentation for participation in the education program or activity (with certain exceptions).
- Treat pregnancy as comparable to other temporary medical conditions for medical benefit, service, plan, or policy purposes.
- Resolve allegations of sex discrimination or retaliation on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions through the Resolution Process outlined in this Policy.

Reasonable Modifications

The University must offer Reasonable Modifications in consultation with the student, based on the student's individualized needs. The student may accept or decline an offered Reasonable Modification at their discretion; however, if the student accepts a Reasonable Modification, the University must implement it. In some circumstances, a retroactive Reasonable Modification may be available.

The Title IX Coordinator reserves the right to confer with or refer a student to the Office of Accessibility Services to the extent that the student's pregnancy or related condition (also) entitles them to reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students are entitled to contact the Office of Accessibility Services directly at 215-646-7300 Ext. 21033, accessibilityservices@gmercyu.edu, Keiss Library, 2nd floor, Room 201.

Reasonable Modifications may include:

- Breaks during class to attend to health needs associated with pregnancy or related conditions, including eating, drinking, or using the restroom
- Intermittent absences to attend medical appointments
- Access to online or homebound education
- Changes in schedule or course sequence
- Time extensions for coursework and rescheduling of tests and examinations
- Allowing a student to sit or stand
- Allowing a student to carry or keep water nearby
- Counseling
- Changes in physical space or supplies (for example, access to a larger desk or a footrest)
- Elevator access
- A different size for required clothing or equipment
- Lactation breaks
- Other changes to policies, practices, or procedures determined by the Title IX Coordinator

Supporting documentation for Reasonable Modifications will be required only when necessary and reasonable to determine Reasonable Modifications or other specific actions to take to ensure equal access. Any information related to Reasonable Modifications under this Policy will be shared with applicable employees only as necessary to determine or provide the Reasonable Modification.

Leave of Absence

Under this Policy, students may take a voluntary leave of absence for pregnancy and related conditions. The length of the leave of absence may be the amount of time deemed medically necessary by the student's licensed healthcare provider. The leave term may be extended at the discretion of the University in the case of extenuating circumstances or medical necessity. Students who choose to take a leave of absence for pregnancy and related conditions can elect to keep their health insurance coverage and continue residing in University housing, subject to the payment of applicable fees.

To the extent possible, the University will take reasonable steps to ensure that students who take a leave of absence for pregnancy and related conditions return to the same position of academic progress that they were in when they took leave, including access to the same or an equivalent course catalog that was in place when the leave began.

During a leave of absence for pregnancy and related conditions, a student's scholarship, fellowship, or similar University-sponsored funding will continue, subject to the policies of the funding program (e.g., policies on registration status). Students will not be negatively impacted by or forfeit their future eligibility for their scholarship, fellowship, or similar University-supported funding by exercising their rights under this Policy.

To initiate a leave of absence for pregnancy and related conditions, students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator at least 30 calendar days prior to the initiation of leave, or as soon as practicable. The Title IX Coordinator will coordinate the request for a leave of absence with the appropriate offices including the Office of Student Services/ Dean of Students.

LABORATORY ACTIVITIES

Gwynedd Mercy University laboratories are in compliance with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) Act. However, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of the laboratory courses as soon as the student knows she is pregnant. The student must obtain written permission from her prenatal care doctor to participate in the course laboratory activities. If the student does not properly inform the instructor of the pregnancy, does not provide a doctor's permission note, or is unaware of her pregnancy, the responsibility for any risks or consequences associated with the completion of the laboratory work remains with the student. Gwynedd Mercy University cannot ensure that a pregnant student will not be exposed to chemicals that might be unhealthy for her or her fetus since the effects of all chemicals in fetal development are not completely known. In addition, it is impossible to precisely anticipate the level of exposure, the length of exposure, and the number of encounters that might occur with any chemical during a semester. Therefore, the University recommends that pregnant students should be advised NOT to take a lab course unless she is willing to understand and assume all the risks. She should certainly seek and follow proper medical advice from her physician. Pregnant students will be advised that if they choose to enroll in a laboratory course at Gwynedd Mercy University, they must participate as fully as any other student or their grades will be impacted. They may not take the course in a virtual format of any sort or by watching others, and laboratory course requirements will not be revised under any circumstances to accommodate a pregnant student.