

SUBJECT:	Pregnant and Parenting Students Policy
REVIEWED/REVISED:	7/2016; 8/2020
RELATED POLICY:	Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination; Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy; Services and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy
PURPOSE:	To ensure support for the academic success of pregnant and parenting students.
POLICY OWNER:	Chief Student Officer/Dean of Students

Title IX prohibits discrimination against a student based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions. Therefore, NMC, its employees, and pregnant student(s) will follow the protocols and procedures set forth in this document. NMC's policy is designed to provide a set of guidelines and information to enhance the educational experience for its students who become pregnant or experience pregnancy-related conditions.

Policy

Under Title IX, schools may not exclude a pregnant student from participating in any part of an educational program. NMC must treat pregnancy and all related conditions in the same way any other temporary disability is treated. A school may require a pregnant student or student who has given birth to submit medical certification for school participation only if the school also requires such certification from all students with physical or emotional conditions requiring attention of a physician. NMC requires both pregnant students, and students with medical condition(s) or a disability to produce proper medical documentation prior to any academic assistance or accommodation(s) can be considered and/or granted.

NMC instructors will not grant pregnancy assistance or accommodation(s) for students without the proper documentation from the Director of Academic Success. NMC will not assume a medical condition or offer academic services to a student without proper documentation and approval. NMC will work to create an environment that encourages the student to voluntarily reveal her pregnancy and/or parenting status. Additionally, NMC will not publicly release personally identifiable health information about pregnancy without written, timely authorization from the student.

Specifically, NMC requires a pregnant student or student who has given birth within six months to submit medical certification for school participation if the student is requesting assistance and/or accommodations. NMC cannot and will not require a pregnant student to obtain permission from their physician as a prerequisite to attend school unless the student is requesting assistance or is a "high-risk" obstetric patient. If a NMC instructor is concerned about the health or safety of a student, the NMC

instructor may inquire about that student's limitations, but only as it pertains to the classroom/clinical and the student's successful completion of the course/clinical.

In accordance with Title IX, NMC a student's absence(s) due to pregnancy or childbirth are excused for as long as the student's doctor or other licensed health care practitioner deems medically necessary. Furthermore, when a student returns to school, she will be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before her medical leave began.

Accommodations

Under Title IX, a pregnant student may not be excluded from participating in any part of an educational program. This applies to specific classes, clinical rotations, extracurricular programs, interscholastic sports, honor societies, and other activities. NMC will not require a pregnant student to produce a doctor's note in order to participate in school or academic activities unless the same requirement applies to all students being treated by a licensed health care practitioner.

To ensure a pregnant student's access to an educational format, when necessary, a program must make changes to its regular schedule that are reasonable and responsible to the student's temporary pregnancy medical status. For instance, a pregnant student may need to require a larger desk, frequent bathroom trips, or allowed food in the classroom. With proper documentation, NMC students who are pregnant or have given birth within six months will be entitled to assistance and/or accommodation(s). These accommodations are conditional upon the pregnancy, medical documentation, and academic program in which the student is enrolled.

As previously stated, Title IX requires NMC to excuse a student's absence(s) due to pregnancy or related conditions, including recovery from childbirth, with medical approval. Therefore, NMC may offer alternatives to making up missed work.

Harassment

Title IX prohibits harassment of students based on sex, which includes pregnancy and related conditions. NMC will not tolerate harassment of any form, especially towards pregnant women. Harassment conduct can take many forms, including verbal acts, graphic and written statements, or conduct that may be humiliating, physically threatening, or harmful. NMC will take prompt and effective steps, reasonably determined, to end pregnancy-related harassment, prevent its reoccurrence, and eliminate any hostile environment induced by the harassment. NMC violates Title IX if sexual harassment by employees, students, or third parties is sufficiently serious that it interferes with a student's ability to benefit from or participate in the school's program, and the harassment is encouraged, tolerated, not adequately addressed, or ignored by school employees.

Any member of NMC who is found to have violated this policy, or who has breached confidentiality, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge or expulsion from the College. Any member of NMC who becomes aware of conduct that violates this policy should report the conduct to the appropriate official, such as the Title IX Coordinator, Dean of Students or Director of Academic Success. NMC will make every effort to prevent public disclosure of the names of all parties involved, except to the extent necessary to carry out an investigation. Retaliation against anyone who complains about pregnancy or parental status discrimination is specifically prohibited, even if the person was in error about the lawfulness of the conduct complained about. NMC will take the necessary steps to prevent any retaliation against the individual who made the complaint.

A Student Whose Partner Becomes Pregnant

Title IX regulation prohibits a school from applying any rule related to a student's parental, family, or marital status that treats students differently based on their sex. Students whose partner becomes pregnant are not affected physically with pregnancy; however, some may suffer psychological stress, have concern about the health of their pregnant partner and her pregnancy, or question the readiness for parenthood. At NMC, students whose partner becomes pregnant are encouraged to take advantage of academic success and counseling services. Title IX protects students from being discriminated against due to their partner's pregnancy or status as a parent.

Duties and Responsibilities

Student:

1. Review NMC's Pregnancy and Parenting Student policy.
2. Request assistance/accommodations due to pregnancy or pregnancy related condition from the Director of Academic Success.
3. Have licensed healthcare practitioner complete necessary paperwork and submit it to the Director of Academic Success.
4. Upon approval, give the documentation letters to NMC Instructors.
5. Return signed documentation from Instructors to the Director of Academic Success
6. As changes occur during pregnancy and accommodations are elevated, update the proper personnel in steps 3-5 above.
7. Assist your NMC Instructor in creating and documenting a coursework proposal for the semester, which includes deadlines and expectations.

It may be deemed necessary for an academic plan to be addressed in order to track deadlines and progression of course material. NMC finds it advisable to agree on this course of action and implement this matter early on in the semester.

The student must make every effort to minimize the impact on their academic progress. If events dictate, the student may be advised to take a formal Leave of Absence. The Leave of Absence can be utilized in situations where additional time is needed due to complications or other unforeseen circumstances. The goal of this policy is to minimize the disruption to the student's academic track and progress. The timing and extent of academic changes will vary greatly from student to student. The following are best practices for determining an equitable solution that minimizes the academic disruption for the student:

Course Work: Student's enrolled in a didactic course should discuss with the instructor the impact of the childbirth, adoption, or fostering on the course. For example, lectures may be videotaped for the student, rescheduled, or completed in an online format. The student may receive an incomplete until the coursework is complete, any required materials are submitted, and/or exams taken. The work needed to finish the course and receive a grade for the incomplete must be done within a timeframe agreed upon by the student, NMC Instructor and Program Director and/or Dean.

Comprehensive Exams: The student should do everything possible to remain on schedule in regards to comprehensive exams. The student is expected to maintain academic inquisition even during the time that they are on the childbirth accommodation period. The College may be flexible in scheduling and enforcing the dates for the comprehensive exam.

Seminar/Nursing Skills Laboratory/Clinical Courses: Courses that require student participation, presentations, or clinical affiliations will require extra consideration. NMC is required to provide assistance and make accommodations that are reasonable, but it may be impossible to alter the schedule so that the student can meet course expectations. In this type of scenario, the Program Director and/or Dean and student may decide that withdrawing from the course and taking it later is the best course of action.

Instructor:

1. If a student asks for academic assistance or accommodations due to pregnancy, refer the student to NMC's Director of Academic Success.
2. When the documentation letter is received from the Director of Academic Success, discuss the assistance or accommodations with the student.
3. Create a semester coursework plan with the student, including deadlines and expectations.
4. If changes need to be made to the type of assistance or accommodation requested, contact NMC's Director of Academic Success.
5. Sign and return the necessary documentation to the Director of Academic Success.

Before any non-listed or additional accommodation(s) is suggested, requested, or permitted, please discuss the need for such additional accommodations with the Director of Academic Success. Providing additional accommodations for which you have not received documentation could set an unreasonable precedent.

Determine if it is necessary for an academic contract to be implemented in order to track deadlines and progression of course materials. It is advisable to agree on this course of action and implement this matter early on in the semester with input from the Program Director and/or Dean.

The request for temporary medical accommodations must be submitted with the following stipulations. Failure to fully complete procedures may delay any requested assistance.

- Documentation must be on physician’s office letterhead or on a valid prescription pad;
- Documentation must include a proper medical diagnosis (pregnancy);
- A medical physician or other appropriate specialist must sign the documentation; and
- The documentation must include an estimated “due date” or “date of expectancy.”

Please note that a change in accommodations may occur due to the progression of the pregnancy. Any requests for different accommodations must be submitted with additional documentation justifying/verifying the adjustment.

Please circle accommodations requested:

Excused absence(s)	Frequent bathroom breaks	Breaks to walk around
Separate table and/or chair	Limited exposure to chemicals	No prolonged standing
Permission to leave class abruptly	Temporary disability parking	No lifting over ten pounds
Excused for tardiness	Permission to eat/drink in class	Susceptible to heat/cold

Additional accommodations:

Is this student classified as a “high-risk” obstetric patient? YES NO

For more information about how to receive accommodations or to return the completed request for academic accommodations and doctor’s documentation form to:

Lisa Flairty
 Director of Academic Success
 Office @ 402-354-7029
 Email @ Lisa.Flairty@methodistcollege.edu
 Fax @ 402-354-7010
 Mail @ 720 N. 87th Street, Omaha, NE 68114.