Policy on Pregnant and Parenting Students

Policy number: 603
Policy owner: Title IX Coordinator

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SECTION I. PURPOSE

The University of St. Thomas is committed to fostering a supportive, inclusive environment for all students, including those who are pregnant or parenting. This policy establishes modifications, supports and resources for parenting students and students affected by pregnancy or related conditions, in accordance with Minnesota law. It also designates a Parenting Student Navigator to ensure coordinated access to institutional resources.

SECTION II. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy:

- ***Parenting Student***: A student enrolled at the University of St. Thomas who is a parent, or legal guardian of, or can claim as a dependent a child under the age of 18.
- ***Pregnancy or Related Conditions***: Includes pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, lactation, medical conditions related to any of the foregoing, and recovery from such conditions.
- ***Parenting Student Navigator***: The University's Title IX Coordinator, who is responsible for administering this policy and serving as the designated resource for pregnant and parenting students.

SECTION III. PARENTING STUDENT NAVIGATOR

The University's Title IX Coordinator is appointed as the Parenting Student Navigator for current or incoming students who are parenting students. The Navigator will provide students with information and guidance regarding support services and resources that may be available at the University, including:

- Medical and behavioral health coverage and services;
- Public benefit programs, including food security, affordable housing, and housing subsidies;
- Parenting and child care resources;
- Employment assistance;
- Transportation assistance; and
- Other resources developed by St. Thomas to assist students, including academic success strategies.

The Title IX Coordinator will also provide reasonable modifications and protections under this policy and will coordinate all related processes (see Section V below). Students in need of resources or support, or who would like to request modifications relating to parenting or pregnancy, should contact the Title IX Coordinator:

Missy Majerus
Title IX Coordinator/ADA Coordinator
ASC 241 or AQU 213
2115 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105
(651) 962-6882
Title-IX@stthomas.edu

The Title IX Coordinator is also responsible for gathering and reporting information on parenting students to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education as required by law.

SECTION IV. PROTECTIONS FOR PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

The University of St. Thomas does not discriminate against students based on pregnancy or parenting status. The University will not, solely because of a student's status as a pregnant or parenting student or due to issues related to the student's pregnancy or parenting, require a student to:

- Take a leave of absence or withdraw from a degree or certificate program;
- Limit their academic studies;
- Participate in an alternative program;
- Change their major, degree, or certificate program; or
- Refrain from joining or continuing in any University course, activity or program.

SECTION V. REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS

a. Pregnant Students

Upon request, the University will provide reasonable modifications to pregnant students, including modifications that would be provided to students with temporary medical conditions and/or that are necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or unborn child (e.g., distancing from substances or activities known to be hazardous to pregnant women or unborn children).

For reasons related to a student's pregnancy, childbirth or resulting medical condition, the University generally will:

- Excuse related absences;
- When possible under the circumstances, allow students to make up missed assignments or assessments or allow reasonable modifications to assignments or assessments;
- Allow additional time for assignments, as would be granted for temporary medical conditions; and
- Provide access to instructional materials or video lectures for classes missed due to excused absences, to the same extent provided to any student with an excused absence.

b. Pregnant and Parenting Students

Upon request, the University will allow pregnant or parenting students to take a leave of absence and return in good academic standing to the student's degree or certificate program, without needing to

reapply, if the student was in good standing at the time of leave. Pregnant or parenting students will also be able to access early registration if the University offers early registration to other groups of students.

c. Modification Requests and Approvals

Modifications must be requested and approved. Students should consult with the Title IX Coordinator to discuss reasonable modifications. The Title IX Coordinator will then communicate with the relevant faculty/staff member regarding the modification(s) and approval.

Modifications will not be granted if they are unreasonable, pose an undue burden and/or result in a fundamental alteration to a course or activity. This policy will be interpreted consistent with other University attendance, coursework and absence policies. In determining the reasonableness of a request related to attendance, number of missed absences or coursework completion, the University will generally be guided by such policies; however, if there are any inconsistencies, this policy will supersede those policies to the extent required by law.

SECTION VI. POSTING AND ACCESSIBILITY

This policy shall be posted in a clear and accessible format on the University's website and made available annually to students, faculty and staff.