



FINAL POLICY

POLICY APPROVAL TEMPLATE

Instructions: Complete each field with information that pertains to the policy you are proposing. Overwrite or delete all of the guidance in each field before submitting for review. If the field does not apply, leave blank, or list “N/A” to mean Not Applicable.

Policy Name	Leave of Absence & Withdrawal Policy
Policy Category	Academic
Policy Approved By	Cabinet
Responsible Division Head or VP	Provost, Karen Campbell
Responsible Department	Academic Affairs
Responsible AVP or Director	Associate Dean for Student Academic Success
Original Policy Date	N/A
Last Known Revision Date	9/10/2021
Current Policy Effective Date	9/10/2021
Recommended Policy Review Date	02/15/2024 The date upon which the Responsible AVP or Director should initiate the next review of the policy’s efficacy.
Policy Applies To	Students
Additional Authority/References	N/A

POLICY PURPOSE

A leave of absence is defined as a decision to temporarily leave Albright College with a plan to return to the college in no less than two weeks and no later than one academic year from the semester of departure. Students are expected to be enrolled, and attending classes, continuously from their initial enrollment through graduation. Understanding that unexpected events may occur, the College allows for a student to request a leave of absence or a full withdrawal. Within this policy, Albright College reserves the right to initiate or mandate withdrawals and reserves the right to defer or refuse readmission. With this policy in place, it outlines a clear structure for students to take a leave of absence or withdraw from Albright College, thus the purpose of the policy.

BACKGROUND

With this policy, we have clear outlines to the following:

- *Voluntary Leave of Absence*
- *Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence*

- *Mandated Medical Leave of Absence*
- WITHDRAWAL

DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
LEAVE OF ABSENCE	<p>A leave of absence is defined as a decision to temporarily leave Albright College with a plan to return to the college in no less than two weeks and no later than one academic year from the semester of departure.</p> <p>A leave of absence might be voluntary or involuntary, might occur while a student is in good standing or on academic probation, and might be associated with a medical condition.</p>
<i>Voluntary Leave of Absence</i>	Voluntary Leave of Absence is defined as when a student wishes to temporarily leave the college for a time no less than two weeks and no greater than one year for any personal reason not associated with physical or mental health, including but not limited to issues relating to work, travel, family, or a need to consider future academic and personal plans and goals.
<i>Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence</i>	Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence is defined when a student wishes to temporarily leave the college for a time no less than two weeks and no greater than one year as the student is seeking professional treatment for a documented medical or psychological condition.
<i>Mandated Medical Leave of Absence</i>	Mandated Medical Leave of Absence is defined when the college requires a student to temporarily leave the college for a time no less than two weeks and no greater than one year if a reason exists for the college to believe a student’s continued presence on campus poses a significant threat to self or others or to the stability and continuance of normal campus operations for a reason associated with physical and mental health.
<i>Short-Term Emergency</i>	Short-Term Emergency is defined when a student experiences a situation that may cause them to miss academic and cocurricular experiences for a time no more than two weeks. These situations differ from taking a leave of absence and a withdrawal in that they are not official separations from college and do not constitute the need for readmission or reenrollment.
<i>Readmission</i>	The formal process after a withdrawal from the college whereby a student contacts the Admission Office and completes the readmission forms for consideration of readmittance to the college.
<i>Reenrollment</i>	The formal process after a leave of absence from the college whereby a student is permitted to restart academics, college residence, and cocurricular college activities following verification of the Registrar’s Office.

POLICY TEXT

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence is defined as a decision to temporarily leave Albright College with a plan to return to the college in no less than two weeks and no later than one academic year from the semester of departure. For example, if a student takes a leave of absence in the fall 2029 semester, the student has until the start of fall 2030 semester to return.

A leave of absence might be voluntary or involuntary, might occur while a student is in good standing or on academic probation, and might be associated with a medical condition. There are three types of leaves of absence: voluntary, voluntary medical, and mandated medical. Community Standards suspensions or academic suspensions will be handled by the appropriate department. Specific questions about Community Standards or academic suspensions should be addressed to the Student Life or Academic Affairs Office. Students planning a leave of absence should promptly consult with their academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office and the Residential Life Office to gain a better understanding of the possible ramifications, in particular as to how the leave of absence affects their academic progress, account balance, financial aid and housing. International Students must contact the International Students' Office or the Dean of Students to discuss their possible ramifications.

A student taking a leave of absence for any reason must meet the following conditions:

1. The student must complete and submit the appropriate form to the Registrar's Office.
2. The student must return to the college within one academic year. If not, the student will be fully withdrawn from the college. Please see below for more details about Withdrawals and the policies for readmission.
3. The student is responsible for understanding how the absence may affect their current course grades and their academic standing.
4. The student on a leave of absence may not be on campus without the permission of The Dean of Students.
5. The student on a leave of absence may not participate in college activities. This includes all athletics.
6. The student on a leave of absence may not remain living in a residence on campus. They should vacate their residence within 24 hours.
7. The student must have a financial plan in place to settle any account balance from a prior semester to avoid any delay in class registration for an upcoming semester.
8. The student on a leave of absence must meet the normal deadlines for applying for financial aid for the semester in which the student plans to return.
9. The student on a leave of absence is responsible for understanding how this may affect their current and future semesters' financial aid.
10. In order to meet many of these requirements, it is highly encouraged that the student meet with a college representative to have a Leave of Absence Meeting where these college processes will be discussed.

Academic Information

1. A student taking a leave of absence after the end of a semester or between semesters will not affect their grades, as no courses will be in progress.
2. Taking a leave of absence during a semester may affect a student's grades, as their courses will be in progress. See the [Class Attendance policy](#)
 - a. A student who does not take a leave of absence and simply fails to attend their courses will earn grades that reflect the student's academic performance and work completed in said courses; a leave of absence only occurs when a student has submitted the form to the Registrar's Office,
 - b. A student cannot take a leave of absence within the last two weeks of a semester.

Financial Aid Information

1. Taking a leave of absence may affect a student's financial aid. For more information, please see the Leave of Absence/Withdrawal FAQ.

Residential Life Information

1. Taking a leave of absence may affect a student's housing situation. For more information, please see the Leave of Absence/Withdrawal FAQ.

Short-Term Emergency

Sometimes, **emergencies** arise and require a student's attention. Short-Term Emergency is a situation that may cause students to miss academic and cocurricular experiences for no more than two weeks. See the [Class Attendance policy](#). These situations differ from taking a leave of absence and a withdrawal in that they are not official separations from college and do not constitute the need for readmission or reenrollment.

In the case of an emergency situation, for example the death of a family member, the hospitalization of a student, or a student entering an in-patient treatment program during a semester, students should contact the Public Safety Office as soon as possible to let the College know their whereabouts and the Dean of Students and their professors to discuss their short-term and long-term options, regarding time away from the College. Should the situation change and the length of time needed away from the college increase beyond two weeks, students should either contact the Gable Health and Counseling Center to make arrangements for a voluntary medical leave of absence or start the process for a voluntary leave of absence.

Voluntary Leave of Absence

Voluntary Leave of Absence is defined as when a student wishes to temporarily leave the college for a time no less than two weeks and no greater than one year for any personal reason not associated with physical or mental health, including but not limited to issues relating to work, travel, family, military service or another personal matter. For medical-related leave of absences, please see below for more information.

A student returning within the same semester in which the leave began should notify the Registrar when they return to classes. If a student indicates a return in a subsequent semester,

the student will be contacted by the Academic Affairs Office for reenrollment. Reenrollment will be granted after students complete all the applicable features of the reenrollment document sent by Academic Affairs and this material is reviewed and approved by College administration; however, the college reserves the right to refuse reenrollment.

Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence

During your time at Albright College, a student may experience life situations, or medical and/or psychological conditions that significantly interfere with their academic and personal success. In these instances, it may be necessary to take time away from Albright to focus on one's health. A voluntary medical leave of absence is intended to provide students with the opportunity to fully attend to their health and wellbeing, away from the stress associated with campus and academic life.

Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence is defined when a student wishes to temporarily leave the college for a time no less than two weeks and no greater than one year in order to seek professional treatment for a documented medical or psychological condition. A voluntary medical leave of absence from Albright College is processed through the **Gable Health and Counseling Center** so that the College can consult with students' off-campus care providers to ensure their safe return to full-time study with appropriate medical oversight, while keeping medical records secure and private.

Students requesting this type of leave of absence must indicate as such to the college, as it directly affects the reenrollment process. All requests for medical leaves of absence require the recommendation of the College's health or counseling care providers.

Recommendations are typically but not exclusively based on the following:

1. An evaluation by staff at the Gable Health and Counseling Center
2. A letter from a physician or mental health professional submitted to Gable Health and Counseling Center for review
3. An evaluation from a hospital Emergency Room department submitted to Gable Health and Counseling Center for review

If a student indicates a return within the allowable timeframe, the student will be contacted by the Academic Affairs Office for reenrollment, directing the student to first contact the Office of the Gable Health and Counseling Center. The student should provide relevant medical information to the Gable Health and Counseling Center, such as certification from a health care provider or psychologist that the student has participated in a course of treatment and is able to attend classes and conform to the standards of residential living. Return to the College may be contingent upon signing a behavioral contract. Such contracts may require the student to acknowledge that certain behaviors are proscribed.

The Gable Health and Counseling Center will review the paperwork and determine whether the condition requiring the medical withdrawal has been addressed sufficiently to allow students to resume their academic career at Albright successfully. Once the Gable Health and

Counseling Center has cleared a student to return, they will direct the student to complete all the applicable features of the reenrollment document sent by Academic Affairs. The Gable Health and Counseling Center staff will help connect students with resources to support their successful return to campus and academic life.

Mandated Medical Leave of Absence

Mandated Medical Leave of Absence is defined when the college requires a student to temporarily leave the college for a time no less than two weeks and no greater than one year if a reason exists for the college to believe a student's continued presence on campus poses a significant threat to self or others or to the stability and continuance of normal campus operations for a reason associated with physical and mental health.

Typically, a mandated medical leave of absence will arise from a student exhibiting acute or persistent health or behavioral problems, despite having been offered or provided with reasonable accommodations, such as those made in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The College may initiate the mandated medical leave of absence process if, in the judgment of the Senior Vice President for Student and Campus Life or the Behavioral Intervention Team, a student:

1. Engages or threatens to engage in behavior that poses a danger of harm to self or others, causes significant property damage, or substantially affects the health or safety of others.
2. Is not able to adequately address daily living skills to the extent that they cannot function independently and/or safely in the residential milieu.
3. Interferes with or disrupts the operations, activities, or functions of the College or fails to comply with the behavioral requirements of a College official in the performance of his/her duty with regard to the College's commitments to both the individual and the community.
4. In rare cases, a mandated leave of absence may co-occur with hospitalization or visit to the hospital. Occasionally, a student is released within hours or within a day or two of entering a hospital. If the student lives on campus, he/she must find alternative accommodations off campus. Any exceptions to this process must be approved by the Director of Counseling Services or the Senior Vice President for Student and Campus Life.

If a student is able to and opts to return within the allowable timeframe, the student should contact the Gable Health and Counseling Center for reenrollment. Reenrollment will require providing relevant medical information to the Gable Health and Counseling Center, including certification by the student's health care provider or psychologist that the student participated in a course of treatment to resolve issues that precipitated the medical leave, is able to attend classes and is able to conform to the standards of residential living. Documentation should be provided to the college at least 45 days prior to anticipated return.

The Senior Vice President for Student and Campus Life, or their designee, will have the final authority regarding reenrollment, including returning to activities and residential life. The Senior Vice President for Student and Campus Life reserves the right to determine additional criteria for reenrollment, including, but not limited to, signing a behavioral contract that may

require the student to acknowledge that certain behaviors are proscribed and that if they reoccur, withdrawal from the college will be mandated.

WITHDRAWAL

A withdrawal is defined as a decision to leave Albright College without a plan to return to the college before one academic year from the semester of departure. References in this policy to “withdrawal” refer to full withdrawal from all courses.

Students planning on withdrawing should promptly consult with their academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office and the Residential Life Office to gain a better understanding of the possible ramifications, in particular as to how the withdrawal affects their academic progress, financial aid and housing. International Students must contact the International Students’ Office or the Dean of Students to discuss their student visas.

If a student wishes to return to Albright College after withdrawing, the student must contact the Admission Office and apply for readmission.

A student who plans a withdrawal for any reason is responsible for the following conditions:

1. The student withdrawing has completed and submitted the appropriate form to the Registrar’s Office.
2. The student understands how withdrawal may affect their current course grades and future academic standing.
3. If a student withdraws tuition and institutional charges will be refunded in accordance with the schedule posted on the [Student Accounts website](#).
4. The student understands how withdrawal may affect their current and future financial aid.
5. Following withdrawal, the student may not be on campus without the permission of the Dean of Students.
6. Following withdrawal, the student may not participate in college activities. This includes all athletics.
7. The student who has withdrawn may not continue to live in a residence on campus. They should vacate their residence within 24 hours.

Academic Information

1. A student withdrawing after the end of a semester or between semesters will not affect their grades, as no courses will be in progress.
2. Withdrawing during a semester may affect a student’s grades, as their courses will be in progress.
 - a. A student who does not withdraw and simply fails to attend their courses will earn grades that reflect the student’s academic performance and work completed in said courses; a withdrawal only occurs when a student has submitted the form to the Registrar’s Office.
 - b. Withdrawing anytime up to the 60th day of instruction in a regular 70-day semester or the equivalent, as determined by the Registrar, in terms of different lengths will result in the students’ courses receiving the designation of W

(Withdrawn). This will not affect a student’s term or cumulative Grade Point Average.

- c. After the 60th day or its equivalent, a student will receive their earned grade.

Financial Aid Information

- 1. Withdrawing may affect a student’s financial aid. For more information, please see the Leave of Absence/Withdrawal FAQ.

Residential Life Information

- 2. Withdrawing may affect a student’s housing situation. For more information, please see the Leave of Absence/Withdrawal FAQ.

ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES LOCATION

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REVISION LOG

DATE OF REVISION	MAJOR CHANGES <i>(Note: electronic copies of the former versions of the policy must be maintained within the unit, department, or division)</i>
9/10/2021	Readmission & ReEnrollment processes were defined and laid out. Policy Language was updated to reflect changes to other policies.
Click or tap to enter a date.	
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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - For decision-making purposes only. This will not appear in the Final Policy that is posted to the Policy Repository.

All Major Stakeholders were contacted to ensure their ability to fulfill the policy’s execution prior to its approval.
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DECISION – For decision-making purposes only. This will not appear in the Final Policy that is posted to the Policy Repository.

Date of Draft Policy Review	8/13/2020	
Name of Reviewing Committee/Individual	Policy Group	
Date Approved	9/10/2021	Comments:

Date Rejected	Click or tap to enter a date.	Comments:
Date Draft Tabled or Further Review Needed (provide comments including plan for re-submission)	Click or tap to enter a date.	Comments: