

Saint Michael's College

**Responsible Official:** Vice President for Student Affairs or designee after consultation with Director of Bergeron Wellness Center

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## Medical Withdrawal

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### Policy Statement

Saint Michael's College is strongly committed to supporting students achieving success in their intellectual and extracurricular endeavors. When illness or significant personal hardship intrudes upon a student's ability to successfully meet the requirements of his or her course of study, it is the college policy to assist with the student's withdrawal from the college for the purpose of focusing on those matters requiring attention. Prior to re-matriculation, it is the college's intent to provide students with information about resources which may be of use to them as they resume their studies and to provide support where possible in order to optimize the likelihood of a successful return campus life.

It is the college's goal that all students are able to participate fully in the academic community. In usual circumstances, however, when a student's illness causes him or her to pose a threat to self or others or creates a significant disruption to the activities of the campus community, the student may be required to withdraw from the college.

### Reason for the Policy

It is the goal of the college to foster an environment in which each student is able to fully pursue his or her academic goals. When illness prevents a student from achieving these goals, it is the intent of the college to provide a mechanism whereby the student may withdraw from his or her studies and return to them when able. In unusual circumstances, illness may cause a student to pose a threat to others or significantly disrupt the life of the community. In such circumstances, the college may find it necessary to involuntarily withdraw a student from the college.

### Strategic Direction

This policy supports the following goal in the college's Strategic Plan:

- **Student Experiences:** Provide a distinctive college experience that prepares students for success as accountable leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate students at Saint Michael's College and is in force for the entirety of each academic calendar, including summer.

## Procedures

### Medical Withdrawal

1. Students who seek to withdraw from the college because of illness must meet with or submit a written request to the Director of the Bergeron Wellness Center (Mary Masson). If the director is unavailable, the student may meet with the Director of Personal Counseling (Kathy Butts), the Dean of Students (Lou DiMasi) or the VP of Student Affairs (Dawn Ellinwood). As necessary, the VP or his/her designee will confer with appropriate campus medical or psychological professional in order make the final determination regarding the student's request. In unusual or complicated situations, the VP or designee may convene a committee composed of representatives from Students Health Services and/or the Office of Personal Counseling.
2. Students who are granted a withdrawal because of illness will receive a 'W' for all courses attempted during that term.
3. Students granted a medical withdrawal will have a hold placed upon their registration by the VP's office pending successful petition for re-enrollment to the college.
4. Graduate and undergraduate students granted a medical withdrawal should address the impact of withdrawal on the continuation of scholarship, research, graduate assistantship or other forms of educational support with the appropriate program administrator in their academic department, the Dean of the School or College, and for graduate students, the Dean of the Graduate College. Any adjustment to the student's tuition will be made in according with standing college policy.

Students who wish to appeal the outcome of their request for medical withdrawal may do so by submitting their appeal in writing to the Director of Bergeron Wellness Center (mmasson@smcvt.edu).

It is the college intention to support students in a successful return to the college community when illness has necessitated withdrawal. To this end:

1. Students will be informed by the VP's office that the college expects the leave to be of **sufficient duration** to allow the student to address the issues involved in necessitating a medical leave. It is common for students who withdraw because of serious illness to take a minimum of one full semester away from the college in order to enhance the likelihood of success upon return.

2. Students wishing to return to their studies following medical leave must complete the following steps:
  - a. Notify the Director of the Bergeron Wellness Center (Mary Masson) of their desire to return to the college.
  - b. Submit documentation from their treating clinician to the Medical Leave Committee (in the care of Bergeron Wellness Center, Box 259 One Winooski Park, Colchester, VT 05439) attesting to the student's ability to resume studies with a reasonable likelihood of success. This information must be specific in its description of the student's illness and the treatment rendered. It must outline, as appropriate, a plan of treatment to be followed upon return. All documentation will be held in strict confidence by the college; it will be maintained in the student's health record. Upon request, the student will authorize the Medical Leave Committee to secure any additional information necessary to assess the student's readiness for readmission.
  - c. Submit documentation by the following dates: **July 1<sup>st</sup>** for the fall semester, **December 1<sup>st</sup>** for the spring semester, and **April 1<sup>st</sup>** for the summer term.
3. The Medical Leave Committee will consult with appropriate resources in considering the student's request.
4. When the Medical Leave Committee has concerns about the likelihood of the student's success, the committee's designee will communicate this to the student and, with the student's permission, to the treating clinician.
5. Students are expected to meet with Mary Masson, Director of the Bergeron Wellness Center within two weeks of the first day of classes for the purpose of assessing their experience thus far and reviewing support resources available for them. An appointment can be made by calling 802.654.2234. A plan shall be outlined by the student and the Director determining plan of care and resources for the student.

## **Involuntary Withdrawal**

1. The College may involuntarily require a student to withdraw from classes or require conditions for continued attendance when, as a result of a medical or psychological condition, one of the following transpires:
  - a. The student threatens the safety of others.
  - b. The student causes or threatens to cause significant property damage.
  - c. The student significantly disrupts the activities of the college.
  - d. The student demonstrates evidence of significant impairment and is unable to make an independent determination that a voluntary leave is needed.
2. When a student exhibits any of the behaviors described above, he or she may be brought to the attention of the Vice President of Student Affairs. The VP or designee, in consultation with appropriate medical, psychological, or academic resources, may involuntarily withdraw a student from his or her classes or place conditions on the student's continued education.

3. Under certain circumstances involving the safety of the college community, the Office of the Vice President may mandate that the student undergo a psychological or medical assessment to assist in evaluating the student's ability to participate successfully in college life.
4. The results of the requested inquiry will be shared in written form with student.
5. If a student is involuntarily withdrawn from classes, the VP of Student Affairs, in consultation with appropriate campus resources and the committee, will make a determination regarding the length of separation from the college and describe the conditions under which the student may seek to return. A hold will be placed on the student's registration until the student has been granted readmission.
6. A student may appeal the results of the college's decision to involuntarily withdraw him or her from classes to the Vice President of Student Affairs and the director of the Bergeron Wellness Center. These individuals will review all available information and render a final determination. This result will be shared with the student.
7. Students involuntarily withdrawn from classes will receive a "W" for all courses attempted during that semester.
8. Students seeking readmission to the college following involuntary withdrawal must follow the same procedure outlined for students returning following voluntary withdrawal.
9. All records concerning involuntary withdrawal will be kept separately from the student's academic record in accordance with the college's policy on the confidentiality of student records.

## **Concerns Regarding Discrimination**

Any student who believes they have been discriminated against under the policy because of their medical condition should discuss their concerns with the representative for Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity and may file a complaint with that office. It is Michael New at 802-654-2635.

## **Contacts**

Questions related to the daily operational interpretation should be directed to:

Vice President for Student Affairs

Dawn Ellinwood

(802) 654-2566

dellinwood@smcvt.edu

-Or-

Director, Bergeron Wellness Center

Mary Masson

(802) 654-2234

mmasson@smcvt.edu

## **Related Documents/Policies**

Medical Withdrawal Request Form

Medical Withdrawal Re-Entry Student Self-Report Form

Mental Health Community Provider Report

Medical Community Provider Report