

POLICY AND PROTOCOLS: PERSONAL LEAVES, SHORT-TERM ABSENCES, AND MANDATORY RESTRICTIONS

This document outlines the policy and protocols for: (i) voluntary personal leaves; (ii) short-term absences; (iii) mandatory personal leaves; and (iv) mandatory restrictions.

POLICY STATEMENT FOR VOLUNTARY PERSONAL LEAVE

There may be instances in which it is in a student's best interest to spend some time away from the college. Accordingly, students may pursue taking a personal leave from Davidson for medical or other needs. Students should be advised that the Dean of Students must approve a personal leave of more than two (2) semesters, and that a personal leave of three (3) or more consecutive semesters may result in a withdrawal from the college. Personal leaves are approved by the Dean of Students office, and a student must communicate with one of the deans before departing. (Note: Academic leaves are coordinated through the Registrar. Contact the Registrar's office for information about academic leaves.)

PROTOCOLS FOR VOLUNTARY PERSONAL LEAVE

Voluntary personal leave needs to be approved by the Dean of Students office.

Students going on voluntary personal leave should meet with Residence Life staff to check out of their room and turn in their room key before departing campus. Students must take all personal belongings with them.

The Dean of Students office reserves the right to notify a student's parent or guardian of the student's intention to take a personal leave.

Financial Implications

If a voluntary personal leave is initiated before the tenth day of classes, the college will refund 100 percent of tuition and room rent. Any leave initiated after the tenth day of classes is not eligible for a tuition or room rent refund. In either case, fees for meals are refunded on a pro rata basis as determined by the date of the leave. If the student is a recipient of a Federal Title IV grant and/or loan fund, the college must determine the amount of Federal Title IV funds the student has earned. If the student has received more Title IV funds at the time of the leave than earned, the excess funds must be returned. See the Refund Policy for additional information.

Taking a personal leave may affect a student's financial aid package. Any student receiving financial aid who takes a voluntary personal leave should consult with the Office of Admission and Financial Aid to discuss financial considerations.

Additional Information

- International students should contact International Student Services to understand how a leave might affect visa status.
- Planning future semester of personal leave:
 - After March 15, a penalty of \$250 is charged if a student receives approval for personal leave beginning the following fall semester. A \$500 penalty applies after June 15.
 - After November 1, a penalty of \$250 is charged if a student receives approval for a personal leave beginning the following spring semester. A \$500 penalty applies after January 1.
- A student who receives approval for personal leave after the first two weeks of the semester have passed will have the grade "WA" (Authorized Withdrawal) recorded for the student's courses.
- If a student needs to extend personal leave beyond one semester, the student should communicate with their faculty adviser and/or the Registrar's office to establish a plan for completing the academic requirements for graduation.
- A student who has taken two consecutive semesters of personal leave from the college must get approval from the Dean of Students office to take a third consecutive semester of personal leave. A student who has taken three (3) or more consecutive semesters of personal leave from the college, including any partial semesters and any mandatory leave of absence, may be withdrawn from the college and no longer be eligible for the regular reinstatement process. A student in these circumstances who wishes to return to Davidson must contact the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students and request readmission. The more extensive readmission process asks the student to document readiness to return to Davidson's rigorous academic environment, including, as appropriate, how the student's situation has changed or developed, to support a successful return.

Association with the College While on Leave

Unless expressly permitted by the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students, students on personal leave (mandatory or voluntary) are not permitted to be present on campus and are not permitted to engage in any college-related activities, including on-campus employment.

Students on personal leave (mandatory or voluntary) will maintain access to their Davidson email address so the student can receive important notices and communications from the college during the leave period.

Return to Campus

Students on voluntary personal leave must receive approval from the Dean of Students office to return to campus.

In some cases the Dean of Students office may establish specific requirements for a student's return to campus if the circumstances of the student's departure warrant it. The goal of such conditions is to prepare the student for a successful return to the college; for example, the student may be asked to participate in a consultation with the Student Health and Counseling Center to facilitate a successful return. If the leave is health-related, any conditions or requirements for the student's return to campus will be based on an individualized assessment, including consideration of current medical knowledge and/or the best available objective evidence. Careful consideration will be given to the opinions and recommendations of the student's treating physician or mental health professional, if available.

When the student goes on voluntary personal leave, the Dean of Students will make an initial determination whether the student's return to campus is contingent upon meeting specific requirements. This determination will be indicated in the SES email. If the SES email indicates "no restrictions," the student may enroll for courses for the following semester without further approval from the Dean of Students office.

If the SES email indicates restrictions on the student's return, then the Registrar will not release the student's Webtree PIN unless the Dean of Students has confirmed the student is eligible to return to campus. This approval process will be a rolling process, and the student will be kept informed of the current status. If the student is approved to return after Webtree registration has closed, the college will provide information to the student about late registration for classes. If the student has a specific academic need, the student should notify the Registrar as soon as possible (including during the period when approval to return is pending).

Residence Life has discretion to determine whether to hold a specific bed for a student whose return is contingent on meeting specific requirements, and Residence Life will notify the Dean of Students office of its decisions.

Additional steps a student needs to take in order to return to campus:

- Once return is approved by the Dean of Students Office, the student should pre-register for classes for the semester.
- The student should select a student to serve as a proxy during the Residence Life housing lottery and/or communicate with Mary Ann Shessler about their housing request. The student should note the following housing priority deadlines: March 15 – housing lottery held for fall semester assignments; November 1 – housing lottery held for spring semester assignments.

SHORT-TERM ABSENCES (LESS THAN A FULL SEMESTER)

A student who will be absent from class for medical or personal reasons for more than two or three class periods should contact the Dean of Students office to communicate with a dean about the student's needs. Regular class attendance is a student's obligation, and the student is responsible for all the work of all class meetings. A student who is absent for more than one-fourth of the course meetings scheduled by the instructor shall be assigned a grade of "F" unless the instructor specifies a different policy at the beginning of the course. Students should note that each professor has the discretion to establish the attendance policy in each class.

In some cases, the Dean of Students may establish specific requirements for a student's return to campus after an absence if the circumstances of the student's department warrant it. The goal of such conditions is to prepare the student for a successful return to the college; for example, the student may be asked to participate in a consultation with the Student Health and Counseling Center to facilitate a successful return. If the leave is health-related, any conditions or requirements for the student's return to campus will be based on an individualized assessment, including consideration of current medical knowledge and/or the best available objective evidence. Careful consideration will be given to the opinions and recommendations of the student's treating physician or mental health professional, if available.

POLICY STATEMENT FOR MANDATORY PERSONAL LEAVE

Davidson provides a range of support services to address the medical needs of students, including mental health needs, within the context of the campus community. On occasion, students may be unable to perform the basic academic and/or non-academic activities of student life, or may experience health needs requiring a level of care that exceeds what the college can appropriately provide. In such circumstances, students may take a voluntary leave of absence. In situations where (i) a student is unable or unwilling to carry out substantial self-care obligations or to participate meaningfully in educational activities, (ii) current medical knowledge and/or the best available objective evidence indicates that a

student poses a significant risk to the health and safety of others, (iii) a student poses an actual risk to their safety not based on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about individuals with disabilities, (iv) a student's behavior is repeatedly disrupting the educational, residential, or other activities of the campus community, or (v) a student demonstrates an unwillingness or inability to engage sufficiently in treatment while maintaining participation in campus life; and the student does not want to take a leave voluntarily, the Dean of Students office has the authority to place the student on a mandatory personal leave. Before placing any student with a disability on a mandatory personal leave, Davidson will do an individualized assessment of observable functional criteria to determine if there are reasonable accommodations that would permit the student to continue to participate in Davidson's campus community without taking personal leave. Such decision may be appealed in writing to the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students.

PROTOCOLS FOR MANDATORY PERSONAL LEAVE

Mandatory personal leave is reserved for exceptional circumstances when a student meets the criteria for mandatory personal leave, the student does not want to take a voluntary leave, and after careful evaluation, the college has deemed all other preferred approaches (e.g., reduced course load) infeasible. Mandatory personal leave may be short term—for example, following hospitalization, if the discharged student does not meet the criteria for returning to their residence hall—or it can be a semester-long leave. The college will impose mandatory leave only if it has determined that all other preferred approaches and accommodations, including mandatory restrictions, are infeasible.

Criteria for Mandatory Personal Leave

The Dean of Students Office may place a student on mandatory personal leave or impose mandatory restrictions following an individualized assessment of the student in which the college determines that a student reasonably meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. A student is unable or unwilling to carry out self-care obligations or to participate meaningfully in educational activities;
2. Current medical knowledge and/or the best available objective evidence indicates that a student poses a significant risk to the health and safety of others;
3. A student poses an actual risk to their safety not based on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about individuals with disabilities;
4. A student's behavior is repeatedly disrupting the educational, residential, or other activities of the campus community;
5. A student demonstrates an unwillingness or inability to engage sufficiently in treatment while maintaining participation in campus life.

These criteria are based on the following grounds: First, it is a requirement that all students meet Davidson's eligibility requirements with or without reasonable accommodations.

Students are expected to be active participants in their education; the development of critical study and life skills, such as working independently, managing competing obligations, and completing work in a timely fashion, is an essential educational goal. Students are expected to observe all college deadlines as described in the academic regulations. Students are expected to carry out self-care obligations and to obtain treatment for medical needs.

Second, Davidson may impose legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation. Safety requirements must be based on actual risks and not on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about people with disabilities.

Third, any student that poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others can be removed from campus. In determining whether a student poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, Davidson will make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment that relies on current medical knowledge or on the best available objective evidence, to ascertain: the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures or the provision of auxiliary aids or services will mitigate the risk.

Process for Determining Mandatory Personal Leave or Mandatory Restrictions

Before initiating a process to determine whether to place a student on mandatory personal leave, the Dean of Students office shall discuss the process for a voluntary personal leave and the process for a mandatory personal leave with the student. The decision to take a voluntary personal leave is at the student's option. If the student opts not to take a voluntary personal leave, and the Dean of Students office has reason to believe a further review of the necessity of a personal leave may be warranted, then the college's Behavioral Intervention Team (the "BIT") will convene to determine the necessity of mandatory personal leave. The student will be notified that a mandatory personal leave is under review, and will be assigned a point of contact to work with through the process.

In cases where the Dean of Students office determines mandatory restriction(s) are the preferred approach, the college may convene the BIT to determine the necessity of mandatory restrictions without first discussing the process for a voluntary personal leave and mandatory personal leave with the student. If at any point during the mandatory restriction process the college determines a personal leave may be required, then the Dean of Students office shall discuss the process for a voluntary personal leave and the process for a mandatory personal leave with the student.

The BIT membership comprises the following individuals or their designees:

- Associate Dean of Students (chair)
- Director of Student Health and Well-being
- Assistant Dean of Students/Case Manager
- Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Residence Life
- Chief of Campus Police

The BIT may also consult with academic advisers, faculty, the Registrar, the Director of Academic Access and Disability Resources, Director of Financial Aid, General Counsel, the Section 504 Coordinator, and other members of the college community as appropriate.

The BIT shall conduct an individualized assessment and review. Students are expected to cooperate in the assessment and will be given the opportunity to provide information for the committee's consideration. The committee may require a mental or physical evaluation from a clinician designated by the college if it believes such an evaluation will facilitate a more informed decision. Students are expected, if necessary, to sign a release of information to facilitate discussions between the college and the clinician conducting an evaluation.

The college may require the student be away from campus while the individualized assessment and review are taking place.

As part of its review, the committee will conduct an individualized assessment of observable functional criteria to determine if there are reasonable accommodations that would permit the student to continue to participate in the campus community without taking personal leave. The committee shall impose mandatory leave only if it has determined all other preferred approaches and accommodations, including mandatory restrictions, are infeasible.

Mandatory restrictions may include, but are not limited to:

- Required withdrawal from a particular course or courses
- Limited access to certain college facilities
- No contact orders
- Removal from on-campus housing
- Suspension from campus employment
- Suspension from athletic teams or other student organizations and co-curricular activities
- Restriction from school-sponsored travel programs

The committee will provide written notice to the student of the decision to impose mandatory personal leave or mandatory restriction(s). In the case of a mandatory personal leave, the notice will address: (i) the time frame when the student could be eligible to return; and (ii) the conditions the student will need to satisfy to be eligible for return. In the case of mandatory restriction(s), the notice will address the conditions required for the student's continued enrollment at Davidson.

The student may appeal the decision of the committee in writing to the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students within two (2) days of the decision. For health and safety reasons, the college may require the student be away from campus while the appeal is pending.

All reviews shall be done in a reasonably timely manner.

Association with the College While on Leave

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Return to Campus

Except in extraordinary cases, the student may not return to the college until the leave period specified in the notice has elapsed and the conditions for return have been satisfied.

A student must make a written request to the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students to return. The Dean of Students office may require further evaluation of the student to determine readiness to return, including but not limited to a medical certification, interview with campus health and counseling professionals, interview with the case manager, and/or interview with Dean of Students office staff. The Dean of Students office may ask, confer, or seek information from others to assist in making the determination. If the Dean of Students office is not satisfied that the student is ready to return, the office will notify the student in writing of the decision, including the reason for the decision. A student not permitted to return may appeal the decision in writing to the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students.

Where appropriate, the Dean of Students office may require conditions for the student's continued enrollment at Davidson, including but not limited to compliance with a medical treatment plan.