

Pregnancy, Childbirth, Adoption, and Lactation Policy

Policy Statement

Keck Graduate Institute (KGI) prohibits discrimination on the basis of any characteristic protected by applicable law, including discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, in the administration of its programs and activities.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to enrolled pregnant graduate students who wish to seek accommodations during pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Policy

Nothing in this policy requires modification to the essential elements of any academic program. Pregnant students cannot be channeled into an alternative program or school against their wishes. KGI will neither require nor prohibit leaves of absence for pregnancy or childbirth. KGI will reasonably accommodate pregnant students so that they may continue to make progress toward the completion of their degree.

Any student who believes that they have not been treated equitably under the provisions of this policy may contact the Title IX Office.

Privacy Statement

As with disability accommodations, information about pregnant students' requests for accommodations will be shared with faculty and staff only to the extent necessary to provide the reasonable accommodation. Faculty and staff will regard all information associated with such requests as private and will not disclose this information unless necessary. Administrative responsibility for these accommodations lies with the Disability Coordinator, who will maintain all appropriate documentation related to accommodations.



KGI Contacts

For accommodations under this policy, please contact:

Disability Coordinator: Andrea Mozqueda
Email: andrea_mozqueda@kgi.edu

To report violations of this policy, please contact:

Title IX Coordinator: Brittany Raygoza
Email: brittany_raygoza@kgi.edu

Definitions

Care-taking: caring for and providing for the needs of a child.

Medical Necessity: a determination made by a health care provider (of the student's choosing) that a certain course of action is in the patient's best health interests.

Parenting: the raising of a child by the child's parents in the reasonably immediate postpartum period.

Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Related Medical Conditions: include (but are not limited to) pregnancy, childbirth, miscarriage, termination of pregnancy, conditions arising in connection with pregnancy, and recovery from any of these conditions.

Pregnancy Discrimination: includes treating an individual affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related condition less favorably than similarly situated individuals not so affected, and includes a failure to provide legally mandated leave or accommodations.

Pregnant Student/Birth Parent: refers to the student who is or was pregnant. This policy and its pregnancy-related protections apply to all pregnant persons, regardless of gender identity or expression.

Non-birth Parent: refers to spouses or partners of individual's anticipating or recently experiencing the birth of a child, parents who adopt a child, or parents by means of surrogacy.

Reasonable Accommodations: (for the purposes of this policy) changes in the academic environment or typical operations that enables pregnant students or students with related medical conditions to continue to pursue their studies and enjoy the equal benefits of KGI while still maintaining the integrity of the program and fairness for all participating students.

Reasonable Accommodations for Pregnant Students

- Requests for accommodations due to pregnancy or related medical conditions must be supported by documentation from a healthcare provider.
- KGI and its faculty, staff, and other employees will not require students to limit their studies as the result of pregnancy or related medical conditions.
- The benefits and services provided to students affected by pregnancy will be no less than those provided to students with temporary medical conditions.
- No artificial deadlines or time limitations will be imposed on requests for accommodations, but KGI is limited in its ability to impact or implement accommodations retroactively.

- Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:
 - Providing accommodations requested by a pregnant student to protect the health and safety of the student and/or the pregnancy (such as allowing the student to maintain a safe distance from hazardous substances)
 - Making modifications to the physical environment (such as accessible seating)
 - Providing mobility support
 - Extending deadlines and/or allowing the student to make up tests or assignments missed for pregnancy related absences
 - Excusing medically-necessary absences (this must be granted, irrespective of classroom attendance requirements set by a faculty member, department, or division)
 - Granting leave per KGI leave policy or implementing incomplete grades for classes that will be resumed at a future date

Support for Lactating Parents

KGI supports the importance of health and bonding for students nursing their infants. To ensure access for students who wish to breastfeed, the institution will provide reasonable accommodations to enable parents to express breast milk. Lactation spaces (other than a restroom) are available to all members of the community.

Recommended Steps

1. **Request:** Students should discuss a lactation accommodation with the KGI Disability Coordinator. The request does not need to be made in writing nor is a doctor's note required.
2. **Discussion:** The KGI Disability Coordinator will meet with the student to acknowledge the request and help develop an accommodation. The representative should confirm that the student or third party has a private, clean, and secure place to express breast milk. If the student has questions or concerns about the available accommodations on campus, questions should be referred to the KGI Disability Coordinator.
3. **Follow up:** The KGI Disability Coordinator should confirm the accommodation in writing and offer to revisit the plan with the student after two to three weeks to see if any changes are needed.

Support for Non-birth Parents

An enrolled graduate student in good academic standing who is not the birth parent and who chooses to take a leave of absence because of the birth of their child shall return to their program in good academic standing following a leave-period consistent with KGI's leave of absence policy.

Parental Leave of Absence Policy

Students requesting a leave of absence must apply in writing to the Division of Student Affairs Office. Any pregnant graduate student may request a Pregnancy Leave of Absence in order to suspend their student enrollment around the time of the birth. Any matriculated pregnant graduate student requesting a Pregnancy Leave of Absence will be approved for a leave period of two academic semesters. Non-birth parents may request a Parental Leave of Absence. Non-birth parents who request a Parental Leave of Absence will be approved for a leave period of two academic semesters. Students, with whom a child is placed for adoption, will also be granted a leave of absence.

General Leave of Absence Policy:

The usual limit for a leave of absence is two academic semesters. Students may petition to extend a leave of absence up to a maximum of two years. A leave of absence, if approved, will take into account the following conditions:

- Students who do not return at the end of the leave will be withdrawn and must submit a petition for subsequent readmission to the program, unless an extension is filed prior to the deadline.
- Students must return to classes, rotation, or an internship.
- Students must be currently enrolled in academic courses. If a student is withdrawn for any reason, a request for a leave of absence cannot be considered until the withdrawal is resolved.
- Students who receive financial aid should meet with a financial aid counselor before going on a leave. Students who take leaves should be aware that more than six months on leave will cause many student loans to go into repayment. Students should see their financial aid counselor for more information on how their loans may be affected by a leave of absence.
- International students should meet with the International Student Advisor before going on a leave to determine how the leave will affect their ability to stay in the United States.

Returning from a Leave of Absence:**Students returning to the Henry E. Riggs School of Applied Life Sciences:**

Students returning from an approved leave of absence must submit an Application for Reinstatement to the Division of Student Affairs Office. It is the student's responsibility to provide timely notice of their intent to return and contact KGI; failure to contact the appropriate office may result in an academic withdrawal from the Institute. The student must notify the school a minimum of two months prior to the start of the semester in which he or she wishes to return (this may be longer for International students to allow time for visa approval). Students are required to pre-register for courses upon returning from a leave of absence. Students who have withdrawn and have intent to graduate may be re-entered after a leave of absence pending approval, prior to the semester in which they will graduate.

Students returning to the School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences:

Students returning from an approved leave of absence must submit an Application for Reinstatement to the Division of Student Affairs Office. It should be submitted no later than June 1 for the fall term and November 1 for the spring term. Students are required to pre-register for courses upon returning from a leave of absence, if applicable. Students who are withdrawn and have intent to graduate may be re-entered after a leave of absence pending approval, prior to the semester in which they will graduate.

Retaliation and Harassment

- Harassment of any member of KGI community based on sex, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, or parental status is prohibited.
- Faculty, staff, and other KGI employees are prohibited from interfering with students' right to take leave, seek reasonable accommodation, or otherwise exercise their rights under this policy.
- Faculty, staff, and other KGI employees are prohibited from retaliating against students for exercising the rights articulated by this policy, including imposing or threatening to impose negative educational outcomes because students request leave or accommodation, file a complaint, or otherwise exercise their rights under this policy.
- Retaliation and/or harassment claims will be adjudicated using the procedures outlined in the KGI Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Misconduct Policy.

Housing—Related Accommodations

Pregnant students' on-campus housing status will not be altered based on pregnancy status unless requested by the pregnant students. Parenting students' access to housing is governed by the Oasis KGI Commons Housing policy. All communication regarding housing accommodations should be discussed with Oasis KGI Commons directly. Please contact Oasis Housing directly by email at Oasis@cocm.com.

Dissemination of the Policy

This policy shall be housed in the Student Handbook. A copy of this policy will be made available to students, faculty, and staff and shall be posted on the KGI website.