

500 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

500.1 – Leave of Absence (LOA) (Including Medical and Parental Leave of Absence)

A student whose academic and clinical internship is in good standing may apply, in writing, to the Associate Dean for a Leave of Absence (LOA) (including medical and parental leave) at any point during Ph.D. study. A LOA may be necessary for medical, financial, academic, or personal reasons. Requests for a LOA should be made for a specific reason and after consultation by the student with his/her Faculty Field Adviser and the program director. Conditions for re-entry, such as a review of the student's performance, may be set by the School where warranted. No partial credit is given for an incomplete clinical internship. A student granted a LOA must meet the Program requirements of the class into which they are readmitted.

Students may petition for a Leave not to exceed a total period of three (3) years, with the understanding that the School will evaluate each situation on an individual basis. A student extending Leave beyond the approved period will be considered to have withdrawn from the School, and reinstatement will be subject to the procedures governing withdrawal.

The written request for a LOA, detailing the reason for the Leave and giving the dates of both the beginning and the anticipated end of the Leave, must be sent to the Associate Dean, with copies to the Ph.D. program director. The School will respond in writing and may set conditions or specify procedures to be followed when the student requests re-admission to the Program.

Upon return from a leave of absence (LOA), the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (ADAA) in consultation with the program director will configure the remainder of the student's course requirements in order to be consistent with current Ph.D. program policies. If there have been changes in graduation requirements while the student has been on LOA, the ADAA has the discretion to create alternative curricular structures that are consistent with faculty policy to meet the student's graduation requirements.

1. Tuition Reduction or Waiver of Fees for Students on LOA

Information regarding tuition reduction for students in residency status who are granted a Leave may be found in the section of this Handbook entitled Financial Matters. Information on waiver of fees for post-residency students who are granted a Leave may be found in the section of this Handbook entitled Waiver of Post-Residency Enrollment Fees during a Leave of Absence.

2. Returning to the Program from LOA (updated 2018)

Anytime during the 3-year limit of the LOA, a student wishing to end the Leave and return to the Program may submit to the Associate Dean a written request for reinstatement in the Program.

- To initiate reinstatement to the program, a student must request in writing to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs by January 5 of the year the granted leave expires. The student should copy the Ph.D. program director, RA or dissertation chair.

- To request extension for the leave of absence, a student must request in writing to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs by January 5 of the year the granted leave expires. The student should copy the Ph.D. program director, RA or dissertation chair.

Failure to write by the deadline may result in dismissal from the program. The request for reinstatement must include a statement from the student describing the period of Leave and justifying the request for re-entry. The School has the right to determine the subsequent educational requirements for the student at that time. Any requirements and procedures set forth by the School for the re-entry process must also be followed.

The Academic and Clinical Internship Performance Committee recommendations (when applicable) will be made by the Associate Dean in consultation with the Ph.D. program director. The Associate Dean's decision will be made on the basis of congruence between the reason for the LOA and the student's statement regarding the resolution of the situation giving rise to the Leave. A Leave is recorded in the student's academic record. A student in good standing at the beginning of a LOA is considered in good academic standing upon re-entry into the Program.

Returning from mandatory leaves during the post-residency period is covered under "Billing During the Post-Residency Period" in the Dissertation section of this Handbook.

3. Medical Leave: Mandatory and Elective

The School may require a Medical Leave of Absence of any student after consultation with appropriate faculty, agency personnel, and appropriate medical personnel. After a Review, the Academic and Clinical Internship Performance Standing Committee may require that a student take a mandatory medical leave. Reasons for this decision as well as learning objectives and other remedies for problems defined for the Leave shall be stated by the Committee. The Committee shall also determine the minimum amount of time for the Leave, which may not exceed three years. The Committee shall determine and specify whether the Associate Dean, or the Committee, will decide whether or not the objectives have been met upon the student's petition to re-enter.

- **Mandatory Medical Leave of Absence.** The Associate Dean may require a Mandatory Medical Leave of Absence of any student after consultation with appropriate faculty, agency personnel, and appropriate medical personnel.
- **Elective Medical Leave of Absence.** A student may petition the Associate Dean for Medical Leave of Absence. Reasons for the request as well as a statement from a physician or appropriate professional person, which documents the need for a Leave, must be included with the letter of petition. The procedures and policies for the length of Leave allowed and for reinstatement are the same as for a regular Leave of Absence, but must include supporting documentation from an appropriate professional person.

4. Maternity/Paternity Leave

This type of Leave applies to field internship period only. The faculty strongly affirms that there should be a flexible policy at Smith that supports planning for continuation of education while allowing for a 6-week maternity/paternity Leave at the birth or adoption of a child. The parameters of such planning must include the hour requirements

and performance expectations for field learning and concern for clients while attempting to accommodate the student's needs. This policy applies to the Clinical Internship only and students are expected to make up the time. There can be no such policy for the academic summer sessions, given their structure and the continuity of the learning experience. Procedures for arranging Maternity/Paternity Leave are as follows:

- Student writes to the Associate Dean and the program director informing them of the pregnancy or adoption and makes a request for a 6-week Maternity/Paternity Leave.
- The director will then be in touch with the student to acknowledge receipt of the letter and to discuss with the student his/her plans. An interview may be arranged, depending on the proximity of the agency to Smith College. The student may request another faculty member be present for the interview to assist with planning.
- The director responsible for internships will take responsibility for discussing the request for Maternity/Paternity Leave with the student's supervisor, the Director of Training of the Agency, and the Faculty Field Adviser.
- The director responsible for internships and the student will plan with the agency personnel around the Maternity/Paternity Leave. If, for some reason, a plan cannot be worked out with the assigned agency, the director, in consultation with the student, will talk with, or attempt to work out such plans with, another agency. Such planning may not be feasible, depending upon the timing of the delivery.

500.2 – Withdrawal

Except in instances where the School has identified an alleged case of plagiarism, or a review has been called, a student may withdraw from the School at any time. The student must submit a formal letter of withdrawal to the director. For withdrawals requested during periods of clinical internship, the student must meet with the director prior to withdrawal, and must make arrangements with the clinical internship site, including arrangement for the care of clients. For purposes of the School record, the official date of withdrawal will be the date indicated on the withdrawal form or the date the School receives the official notification, whichever is later. Mere absence from class or clinical internship does not constitute withdrawal.

For a student whose academic and clinical internship is in good standing at the time of withdrawal, the official record of the School will indicate "Withdrawn." If a student withdraws after a Review has been called, but before the Review has been held, he/she may do so without permission from the Associate Dean. The official School record will indicate "Withdrawn." If a student withdraws while on probationary status, the record will indicate "Withdrawn on Probationary Status."

A student who has withdrawn from the School is not automatically readmitted. An application for readmission must be made to the Committee on Admission, accompanied by new application materials covering only the period of time between withdrawal from the School and the new application for readmission. The Committee will review the application in the light of current admission policies, and with due regard to the circumstances surrounding the student's withdrawal.

A student who is readmitted to the School will be granted credit for completed academic and internship taken previously in the Program only if no more than three years have elapsed since the date of the original withdrawal. This three-year period would include a Leave of Absence if

one had been granted. However, given the special need for continuity between the academic and practice components of the Program, in specific cases where students have withdrawn having completed only the first academic summer session, it shall be left to the discretion of the Committee on Admission whether a student readmitted to the Program would be required to repeat the first academic summer or could re-enter the Program at the beginning of the fall internship period.

500.3 Probation & Dismissal

The Smith College School for Social Work through its various faculties and appropriate committees reserves the discretionary right to place on probation or dismiss any student from the School for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing, personal conduct, or professional standards. In cases of dismissal, fees will be refunded as stated in the section on Refund Policy. The student's financial aid will be cancelled. If a student withdraws from the School while on probationary status, the record will indicate "Withdrawn on Probationary Status." If a student is dismissed from the School, the record will indicate "Dismissed."

500.4 Dismissal - Academic Work

Please review the section of this Handbook pertaining to Marginal Pass and Failing grades. A student in the Ph.D. Program who receives any of the following shall be dismissed from the Program:

- A failing grade in any required course (Within our structure the course cannot be repeated. See section of this Handbook regarding Failing Grades), or
- A grade of Marginal Pass in three required courses (Also see section of this Handbook regarding Marginal Pass in ten-week courses), or
- Failure to progress in work and/or to complete the dissertation requirement within the five-year post-residency time limit, except when written notice of an extension to this time limit has been granted by the School, either in recognition of a student's ongoing productive work on the dissertation or in consideration of special extenuating circumstances communicated by the student to the School, or when formal leave of absence has been granted by the School.

A decision to dismiss a student from the Program can also result from an action of the Ph.D. Academic and Clinical Internship Performance Standing Committee. Any situation warranting or placing a Student at risk of dismissal may be brought to the Ph.D. Academic and Clinical Internship Performance Standing Committee by a concerned party, including the student, except when the dismissal results from a prior action of the Committee itself. In that case, the recourse of the student is to a grievance or appeal procedure.