



## **Pregnancy and Related Conditions**

***Whitworth University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting students.***

Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex, including pregnancy and sex-based harassment, in employment, educational programs, and activities. This includes harassment and discrimination against a student based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or lactation, as well as any related medical conditions or related recovery.

Whitworth University will provide reasonable accommodations due to pregnancy and/or related conditions. The University will allow access, voluntarily, to any separate and comparable portion of a program or activity. Whitworth University will also allow a voluntary leave of absence, ensure the availability of lactation space, and maintain grievance procedures to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of sex discrimination.

Title IX mandates that schools (1) offer supportive measures to students who are pregnant or have related conditions and (2) allow students who are pregnant to return to their same academic and extracurricular status as before their pregnancy.

For information regarding pregnancy or related conditions leave or to request an accommodation related to pregnancy, please contact Rhosetta Rhodes at: [rrhodes@whitworth.edu](mailto:rrhodes@whitworth.edu).

### **Resources**

Various resources such as the U.S. Department of Education provide general information to support the academic success of pregnant and parenting students.

#### **Parenting Student Liaison:**

**Rhosetta Rhodes**  
**Title IX Administrator**  
**Title IX Office**  
**509-777-4536**  
**[rrhodes@whitworth.edu](mailto:rrhodes@whitworth.edu)**



### **Accommodations**

Pregnant and parenting students have access to a variety of educational adjustments, accommodations, and protections to ensure their ability to fully participate in the education environment.

Whitworth University works with each student to provide educational adjustments or accommodations that best meet their needs. The following are examples of some of those supports:

- Breaks during class, as needed
- Excused absences or a leave of absence
- Makeup missed assignments or assessments
- Additional time to complete assignments in the same manner as the institution allows for a student with a temporary medical condition
- Access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for classes for which the student has an excused absence under this section to the same extent that instructional materials and video recordings of lectures are made available to any other student with an excused absence
- Access to lactation rooms on campus
- Additional supports due to a disability such as a notetaker for carpal tunnel, an alternate chair, or permitting the use of a heated pad for lumbar lordosis (back pain)

To request an accommodation for a temporary disability due to pregnancy, contact Rhosetta Rhodes, [rrhodes@whitworth.edu](mailto:rrhodes@whitworth.edu)

### *Protections*

Title IX prohibits discrimination against a student based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions. Institutions must treat these conditions the same as any other temporary disability concerning any hospital or medical benefit, service, plan, or policy for students. Title IX also prohibits a school, college, or university from applying any rule related to a student's parental, family, or marital status that treats students differently based on their gender. When a student returns to school, they must be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before their medical leave began.

**To report discrimination or harassment based on pregnancy or parenting status, contact:**

**Rhosetta Rhodes**  
**Title IX Administrator**  
**[rrhodes@whitworth.edu](mailto:rrhodes@whitworth.edu)**  
**509-777-4536**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Common reasons for requesting accommodations include:**

- Experiencing pregnancy symptoms that are interfering with your schoolwork (e.g., morning sickness, fatigue, hyperemesis gravidarum)
- Planning your recovery from delivery (it is recommended you start the accommodation process in advance of your due date) or if you had a complicated delivery and need additional support
- Suffering from a postpartum mood disorder, such as postpartum depression, anxiety, or panic
- Needing private space on campus to express milk

### **Do my professors need to excuse my absences related to my pregnancy or parenting status?**

Yes, if your absences due to pregnancy or related conditions (including recovery from childbirth) are medically necessary. However, even though your absences may be excused, you will still be required to complete assigned coursework. You may be eligible to have alternative assignments assigned, be able to make up missed work or receive additional time in a program, especially after longer periods of leave. You would continue the program at the same pace and complete it at a later date.

A secondary caregiver's absences during pregnancy are only excused if the primary caregiver's doctor believes they are medically necessary.

### **Can my instructor require a doctor's note to excuse my pregnancy-related absences?**

State and Federal law protects students from absences related to pregnancy. Students are encouraged to communicate directly with their instructor to align expectations during extended absences. An interactive conversation between both parties provides clarity to ensure students' needs are met.



Under federal law, students are not required to submit a doctor's note unless the school requires a doctor's note from all students who have a physical or emotional condition requiring treatment by a doctor. The school also must not require a doctor's note from you after you have been hospitalized for childbirth unless it requires a doctor's note from all students who have been hospitalized for other conditions.

**What if I need to be out for an extended time?**

Your doctor may find that it is medically necessary to be absent due to your pregnancy, related conditions, or to recover from childbirth for an extended period of time. Title IX protects excused absences of this nature for as long as your doctor says it is necessary. You will be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before your medical leave began and you will have the opportunity to make up any work missed while you were out.

Additionally, some extended absences or if you have a prolonged medical condition related to your pregnancy may qualify you as a student with a disability under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Contact Rhosetta Rhodes at [rrhodes@whitworth.edu](mailto:rrhodes@whitworth.edu) to determine if you are eligible for additional accommodations.

**Can I still complete my internship or external program requirement?**

Yes, pregnant and parenting students will not be denied the ability to participate in an internship, practicum, or field experience.