



ENGLE CENTER FOR COUNSELING
AND HEALTH SERVICE

Medical Leave Summary

When students, for reasons of personal health, are unable to complete a semester or return for the following semester, they may apply for relief under the medical leave policy. Following is a brief summary of the most important facts about the policy. The reader is referred to the Student Handbook or the College website (<http://www.messiah.edu/handbook/resources/complete.pdf>) for more details.

1. A student who leaves for health reasons during the first five weeks of the semester may apply for **medical leave** through the Engle Center. If granted, the student will receive W's for all classes and his or her semester charges will be calculated in accordance with the official institutional refund policy and will be based upon the date of the medical leave paperwork. A person on medical leave cannot receive course credit for classes taken during the semester that leave is granted.

2. A student who leaves for health reasons during the final ten weeks of the semester may apply for either a **medical leave** or **medically excused status**. When the student wishes to return to class, he or she must notify the Director of Counseling and Health Services by August 1 for the fall semester and December 1 for the spring semester. The student must provide the documentation required by the Director in order to return to class. If the student is not prepared to return, he or she can elect to request an extension of one semester of medical leave.
 - 2.1 A status of medically excused allows the student to either finish, take incompletes, or take W's in his or her classes. It remains the professor's decision as to whether a student has completed enough work to justify an incomplete grade. If not, the student with medically excused status has the option of either completing the work during the time remaining in the semester or taking a W (withdraw). A W does not count toward a person's GPA.
 - 2.2 A student with medical leave status, as stated under 1 above, cannot receive credit for the semester. W's will be entered for each class in which the student is enrolled.

3. If, for health reasons, a student wishes to seek incompletes for one or two classes, the student should first approach the professors to determine if an incomplete is reasonable. The Engle Center need not become involved in such decisions unless the professor wishes help in validating the health concerns, or unless the student is unable to complete the course work by

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the standard deadline as described in the College Catalog. In case of the latter, the student can meet with the Director of Counseling and Health Services to determine if relief under the medical leave policy is appropriate. If relief is determined to be appropriate, the student may take an incomplete and have until the end of the following semester to complete the work. All requests made and documentation provided should be done in a timely manner.

4. If a student, for reasons of health, cannot complete a course, and an incomplete is not feasible, a student may request a W in selected classes, even if it is past the “Withdraw” date. Under these circumstances, the Director of Counseling and Health Services, after reviewing the student’s case, will recommend a W to the Registrar.
5. If there is a pending academic or disciplinary proceeding that could result in a suspension from the College, medical leave requests will not be considered until the proceeding has concluded. A student under suspension from the College is ineligible for medical leave.
6. Taking medical leave can have financial aid implications. Students are strongly encouraged to contact the Financial Aid Office to understand the implications of medical leave for their financial aid.
7. A student on medical leave *can* register provisionally for classes and seek housing. However, a student’s return to class is contingent upon the approval of the Director of Counseling and Health Services.
8. It is important that requests regarding medical leave be made in a timely manner. A request for medical leave for the current semester must be made prior to the last week of class in the fall or spring semester, or prior to the last day of class in January term. Students are encouraged to discuss medical leave issues with their counselor or medical provider as soon as it becomes apparent that their health is preventing them from completing their work, and to take the necessary steps as soon as it is feasible to do so. This serves both the interests of the student and the College.
9. For students pursuing teacher certification, medical leave constitutes a break in enrollment and may necessitate repeating criminal background checks upon returning to class.

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