

JBU Medical Leave Policy

John Brown University cares deeply about the physical and mental health of its students. At times, a student may experience extreme medical or psychological circumstances that significantly impair their ability to function successfully. Students are encouraged to prioritize their health and safety and take steps toward establishing health even if academic progress must be delayed. JBU supports students to initiate a self-care plan. The University may initiate actions that consider the welfare of the individual student and the JBU community.

Medical Leave:

Medical leave is available for students who, due to documented serious physical or psychological illness, need to leave the University during the semester without completing their coursework. Medical leave is intended to enable a student to maintain his or her status as a student and continue their education at a later date. Medical leave may help a student maintain their health insurance or other dependency-related matters. Students on medical leave are not regarded as having permanently withdrawn from the University and need not apply for readmission through the admissions office. However, students must be approved for fitness to return to campus through the process described in this policy.

Medically Excused Status:

A student may request a more limited medically excused status if he or she is medically unable to complete the last two weeks of a semester but intends to return to the University at the beginning of the following semester. A student approved for medically excused status need not request permission to return to the University for the following semester unless conditions for returning are stipulated by the University at the time of departure.

Initiation of Request for Medical Leave:

A student or his or her representative requesting medical leave must make the request in writing to the Director of the Student Counseling Center or the Director of Health Services. The Director will notify the Registrar of the request and will direct the student to provide appropriate documentation from a physician, mental health provider, or other qualified caregiver; this individual cannot be a family member. The Director may choose to consult with the student's healthcare giver.

Determination of Request:

A decision approving or disapproving the medical leave request will be made by the Director in consultation with the Registrar. The Director will provide a copy of the decision to the Registrar, the academic dean, the Vice President of Finance, and to the Dean of Students. The Registrar will notify appropriate offices on campus of the student's status and send a copy of the decision to the student for his or her records.

Copies of the decision will be maintained in the student's academic and student development files. The Director will maintain original documentation of the student's medical records.

Deadline for Application for Medical Leave Status:

Requests must be initiated within three weeks of the student's last date of attendance. The deadline for requesting medical leave for the current semester must be made prior to the last two weeks of class.

Effective Date of Medical Leave Status:

A student whose request for medical leave is approved will be deemed to have medical leave status as of the date on which his or her request was made to the Director. The student will remain on medical leave status for the balance of that semester and may request an extension for the next semester by filing a request as described below.

A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the final two weeks of the semester will be deemed to be a medically excused student for the balance of that semester, but will have medical leave status as of the first day of the following semester – if necessary. The student may request an extension for one additional semester by filing a request as described below.

Extension of Medical Leave Status:

A student on medical leave may request a one semester extension by providing new documentation to the Director by August 1 for the fall semester or December 1 for the spring semester. The Director in consultation with the Registrar will make a decision approving or denying the request. The Director will provide a copy of the decision to the Registrar, the academic dean and to the Dean of Students.

Medical leave status may continue no longer than two consecutive semesters. After this time, a student who does not return to the University will be deemed officially withdrawn.

Grades and Completion of Academic and University Responsibilities:

A student whose request for medical leave is approved will be given either a grade of “WP” or “WF” (Withdrawal Passing or Withdrawal Failing) in each course for which he/she is registered. No “I” (Incomplete) grades will be given. No credit for any course is earned when medical leave is granted. *Any refund of charges is determined by the Business Office.*

A student whose request for medical leave is approved during the final two weeks of the semester will be deemed medically excused and may be given a grade of “I” for one or more courses with the approval of their faculty member(s) and the academic dean. When a grade of “I” is not deemed feasible, a grade of “WP” or “WF” will be given. It is the responsibility of the student to contact individual instructors to arrange for the timely completion of course work. If the student does not complete work in a course within the specified time, the grade of “I” for that course will be changed to an “F”. *No refund of charges will be made for students granted a status of medically excused.*

The student is also responsible to contact the Office of Christian Formation promptly to arrange for completion of chapel requirements. Failure to fulfill chapel requirements can negatively affect the ability to return to the University, and/or be eligible for commencement.

Determination of Fitness for Return to Campus: (see Authorization for Release of Information, pg. 27)

A student requesting to return from medical leave will be asked to sign a release allowing the Director (or the student’s designee) to communicate with the physician, mental health provider, or other qualified caregivers. A release permitting consultation with persons at JBU, e.g., the Director of Residence Life, may also be requested so as to determine the student’s fitness to return.

The student must provide documentation from his or her physician, mental health provider, or other qualified caregiver concerning current medical/psychological status by August 1 to be considered for approval to return for the fall semester, or by December 1 to be considered for approval to return for the spring semester. The student may be required to have an interview with one or more of the following: The Director of the Student Counseling Center, the Director of Health Services, the Director of Disability Services, and/or the Dean of Students. All information will be reviewed and a decision regarding fitness to return will be made by the Director. The

Director will notify the Registrar, Academic Dean, and Dean of Students. The Registrar will notify the student and appropriate offices on campus if approval is given. *The granting of medical leave by the University does not guarantee that the student will be allowed to return.*

Registration and Housing for Returning Students:

A student on medical leave may register conditionally for courses if she or he intends to return for the following semester. The student must register for classes and housing by the deadlines stipulated by those departments. The student may register for classes and housing prior to providing the necessary documentation used to assess the student's "Fitness for Return to Campus" outlined above. Registering for classes and housing does not guarantee that the student will be allowed to return.

Any money paid to the University, as deposits against tuition or charges anticipated for the following semester, will be refunded in full if the student is not approved to return.

Documentation for determination of fitness to return must be received by the deadlines listed above (August 1 or December 1) and approval to return granted in order for registration to be considered final. Seniority for housing preferences cannot be guaranteed for students who do not meet these requirements.

Financial Aid Implications:

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Financial Aid Office to discuss the implications of medical leave for his or her financial aid. Students who are granted medical leave may be eligible for some refund. See the Business Office for specific information.

Refunds of Tuition and Fees:

Students who are granted medical leave may be eligible for some refund. See the Business Office for specific information.

Involuntary Medical Leave:

In order to provide a safe environment conducive to the achievement of the University mission, the University may require a student to involuntarily take medical leave. This occurs when the student's behavior or emotional or psychological condition compromises minimal standards of academic performance and/or community life. At that time, the student will be qualified for medical leave. Students to whom this policy applies includes but is not limited to:

1. Students who are deemed to be in a danger to themselves or others. Danger to self or others is here defined to include a risk of suicide, homicide, self-mutilation, accident, or assault substantially above the norm for college students which necessitates unusual measures to monitor, supervise, treat, protect, or restrain the student to ensure his or her safety and the safety of others.
2. Students whose behavior is severely disruptive to others. Disruptive is defined to include behavior which causes emotional and/or physical distress to other students and/or staff substantially above that normally experienced in daily life. Such disruption may be in the form of a single incident or a pattern of behavior.
3. Students (a) who do not comply with assessment or treatment required by University officials and (b) whose behavior or physical condition is likely to deteriorate to the point of permanent disability or dysfunction without such assessment and/or treatment.
4. Students whose physical or psychological condition requires specialized services beyond those available through the Student Counseling Center, Health Services, or some other service provider in the area.

Once a student's condition (s) is assessed, the Director of the Student Counseling Center or the Director of Health Services will make a recommendation to the Dean of Students as to whether or not the student should be required to take medical leave. The Dean of Students will make the final decision but may authorize other college officials to make the decision based on the contextual and individual circumstances. The Dean of Students will notify the student, Director, Registrar, and Academic Dean. In order for the student to return to campus and resume course work, they must follow the guidelines listed under "Determination of Fitness for Return to Campus".

A student placed on involuntary leave may appeal the University's decision by following the *Student Grievance Process* listed in the Student Handbook.

The guidelines listed above, i.e., Extension of Medical Leave Status, Grades and Completion of Academic Work, Determination of Fitness for Return to Campus, and Registration and Housing for Returning Students apply to students who are granted medical leave and to students placed on medical leave *involuntarily*.

*All students are encouraged to meet with the Business Office and the Financial Aid Office to learn what financial implications there may be resulting from their medical leave status.

Portions of this policy were adapted from the Medical Leave policies of Gordon College, Messiah College and Pepperdine University.

Last update: 12/14/16