

General University Policies

- [Alcohol Policy](#)
- [Chapel/Spiritual Formation](#)
- [Computer Use](#)
- [Dancing](#)
- [Demonstrations](#)
- [Dress Code](#)
- [Drug Policy](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct](#)
- [Hazing](#)
- [ID Card Policy](#)
- [Mental Health Emergency](#)
- [Non-Discrimination Policy](#)
- [Political Campaign Activities](#)
- [Pornography](#)
- [Racism](#)
- [Sexual Stewardship](#)
- [Solicitation](#)
- [Student Complaint Policy](#)
- [Tobacco, Vapes and Related Products](#)
- [Weapons](#)
- [Withdrawals/Leave and Administrative Action](#)

Alcohol Policy

Abilene Christian University is committed to maintaining an alcohol-free campus. The ACU community cares deeply about the health and safety of our students, and is committed to educating students about the physical and spiritual dangers of alcohol abuse.

Furthermore, ACU realizes the heightened dangers in some social settings off campus and thus discourages students from attending establishments such as dance clubs, bars, and private parties where the principal purpose is known to be the sale and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages. The history of activities associated with these establishments (such as alcohol abuse, underage drinking, and drunkenness) is counter to our Christian values and lifestyle. The life choices and decisions that students make extend far beyond the college experience, and ACU is committed to challenging students to make decisions that ultimately glorify God.

In accordance with our educational mission, and for the well-being of our students and the ACU community, the University has established the following policies related to alcohol:

1. The possession, consumption, or distribution of alcoholic beverages on campus (including all ACU residence halls and University Park Apartments) is strictly prohibited. Moreover, any student present where alcohol is found on campus (including but not limited to residence halls or apartment rooms, vehicles, or in personal belongings) may be subject to sanctions.
2. Alcohol is prohibited at all University-sponsored events (including off-campus events). Any ACU-provided channels of communication may not be used to promote or advertise any event (on or off campus) that involves alcohol.
3. Any officially recognized student club or organization (regardless of legal drinking age of its members) is prohibited from hosting or participating in any formal group event (on or off-campus) that involves alcohol. Such groups include, but are not limited to: special interest groups, sororities and fraternities, athletic and intramural teams, etc.
4. Intoxicated students on campus or at a University-sponsored event will be sanctioned. For the purposes of ACU's student conduct policy and process, intoxication will be defined as any disruptive, destructive, hazardous, vulgar, or uncontrolled behavior during or following the consumption of alcoholic beverages.
5. Alcohol paraphernalia (such as glassware commonly used to serve alcoholic beverages; empty beer bottles or cans; posters, clothing, or signs promoting alcohol, etc.) is not permitted on campus.
6. Local neighborhood disturbances of the peace caused by ACU students may result in disciplinary action. (See also the Code of Conduct section of this Handbook). Where alcohol is involved, additional or further sanctions may apply. For the purposes of ACU's student conduct policy and process, a disturbance involving alcohol will be defined as an event in which alcohol is present and one or more of the following occur: the student(s) fail(s) to maintain control of the event, complaints are reported, and/or police respond to the scene.
7. All students must abide by Texas law related to the possession, consumption, and distribution of alcohol. Specifically, Texas law prohibits: **a.** The purchase, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages by a person under 21 years of age (Texas Alcohol Beverage Code Sec. 106.02, 106.04-106.05, 106.071); **b.** Being intoxicated in public to the degree that one poses a danger to him/herself or to others (Texas Penal Code Sec. 49.02); **c.** Furnishing alcohol to a minor (Texas Alcohol Beverage Code Sec. 106.06). For the purposes of this policy, ACU defines furnishing as purchasing for, giving to, or making alcoholic beverages available to a minor. This includes, but is not limited to, creating a situation where there is a risk a minor may be provided with or obtain alcohol. **d.** Driving while intoxicated (Texas Penal Code Sec. 49.04). **e.** Driving under the influence of alcohol by a minor (TABC Code 106.041). Per Texas law, any detectable amount of alcohol in the minor's system (such as alcohol emitting from the person's breath) is defined as driving under the influence.

This information is intended to give students a range of expected outcomes or consequences regarding violations of the University's alcohol policy. Depending on the level of severity involved per violation, and at the discretion of the Vice President for Student Life or his/her designee, sanctions may vary from what is outlined above. Subject to privacy laws, parents or legal guardians may be contacted where deemed appropriate.

[Back to Top](#)

Chapel/Spiritual Formation

One of the most significant ways in which a student develops at ACU is spiritually. Our vision for spiritual formation includes practicing the spiritual disciplines, service to others and experiencing community. Chapel is an important part of living life as community. For more information about Chapel, attendance policies, exemptions and more, use this [link](#).

[Back to Top](#)

Computer Use Policy

See "[Responsible Use of Information and Technology Resources](#)" for more information.

[Back to Top](#)

Dancing

ACU is committed to creating a strong Christian environment, where students have opportunities for appropriate social interaction as young adults and develop lifelong relationships. Many forms of dance and cultural expression are embraced by our society, some of which are consistent with our Christian mission and values, while others are more likely to distract us from a Christ-centered life. Therefore, in keeping with the Christian mission of the university, only certain dance forms and venues will be considered for approval. Requests for events involving dance may be submitted by officially recognized ACU student organizations and must be approved by Student Life.

[Back to Top](#)

Demonstrations

ACU recognizes the right of students to dissent as long as such behavior does not limit the freedom of others, damage university property or delay the opportunity of the student body, faculty or staff to proceed regularly with their work, school or scheduled activities. Students may use public areas approved in advance by the university for assembly as long as they do not restrict the movement of traffic. When a rally or other such gathering requires building space or public areas, clearance must be obtained in advance from the Dean of Students. Such clearance must be obtained at least 48 hours prior to the event, and the university reserves the right to make reasonable restrictions of location, time or format for such events, using the following guidelines:

1. to alleviate potential problems with safety or potential disruption of university activities
2. to facilitate a free exchange of ideas consistent with the academic environment and the university's mission; and
3. to comply with local, state and federal laws or ordinances.

The university reserves the right to review, alter or otherwise restrict events, demonstrations, speakers or groups whose nature or presentation is contrary to or inconsistent with the university's mission and Christ-centered character. This determination shall be at the sole discretion of the president or his or her designee.

[Back to Top](#)

Dress Code

All members of our community are responsible for the way they present themselves and how the decisions they make communicate what they value. Through the way they dress, students are encouraged to reflect their God-given worth and professional aspirations. ACU believes that God has uniquely designed each person and as God's creation, we are called to respect ourselves and our bodies. There is nothing shameful about the human body. However, the university is a professional and educational environment seeking to prepare students for their chosen careers. Part of the educational process, then, is learning to dress professionally and teaching students that from the first day at ACU, the way you present yourself to faculty, staff, visitor, future employers, and fellow students matters.

Colleges, Departments, faculty, staff and specific facilities may adopt additional guidelines or expectations based on professional standards, decorum or need.

1. Clothes should fit appropriately to cover private areas when sitting, standing, and walking. Some extremes are not acceptable, including halter-tops; any shirts that reveal chest, torso, or midriff; shorts with less than a 3 inch inseam; and/or revealing skirts or top.
2. Shirts should be worn in public at all times including outdoor exercise.
3. Athletic clothing appropriate for sports or recreation may be worn while participating in classes/activities in designated athletic or recreational areas or going to or from those areas.
4. Clothing with offensive, vulgar, or inappropriate advertising, pictures and/or slogans or that promote drugs or alcohol are contrary to ACU's mission and should not be worn.
5. Pajama pants or sleepwear are not appropriate for the university environment and should not be worn to class.
6. Leggings may not be worn without a top garment completely covering the area between the waist and buttocks.

Questions about the interpretation and enforcement of these standards should be directed to the Dean of Students.

[**Back to Top**](#)

Drug Policy

In keeping with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, ACU has implemented a “zero-tolerance” policy prohibiting the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and controlled substances, including prescription medications or steroids. Also prohibited is the possession, use or distribution of any simulated or synthetic psychoactive substance, including synthetic marijuana/cannabinoids, which are designed, intended, possessed or used for the purposes of producing an intoxicating, hallucinogenic or psychoactive effect on the user. These substances may include, but are not limited to, all THC-related products as well as salvia, “spice”, “K2” or any other substance categorized as such.

The university upholds local, state and federal laws about the possession, use and distribution of illegal drugs and/or drug paraphernalia. Offenses involving on-campus possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and controlled substances may be referred to the ACU Police Department for investigation and possible filing of applicable criminal charges.

Students suspected of or reported to have been using illegal drugs or controlled substances, on or off campus, may be required to submit to drug testing. Failure to comply may result in further disciplinary action. Any student testing positive for any illegal drug or controlled substance, including steroids, or found in violation of the university drug policy will be assessed the full range of disciplinary responses, including the possibility of immediate dismissal from the university.

Students who are found responsible for violating the University policy concerning the possession, use, and/or distribution of illegal drugs and/or drug paraphernalia will be subject to a range and/or combination of sanctions that may include: (1) fines ranging from \$200 to \$300 for first time violations, increasing to a minimum of \$500 for repeat violations; (2) completion of an alcohol education program, which involves a \$100 fee to students; (3) counseling; (4) disciplinary probation; (5) indefinite suspension; and (6) dismissal from the University.

Under the Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008, federal law requires the university to notify students that a criminal conviction for any drug offense may result in the student losing his/her financial assistance related to any Title IV, HEA grant, loan, or work-study programs. Therefore, a student's ability to obtain financial assistance upon returning to the university after completion of a suspension may be impacted.

[**Back to Top**](#)

Sexual Misconduct

At ACU, we strive to maintain a work and academic environment that is free of sexual misconduct as defined herein. Abilene Christian University's [**Sexual Misconduct**](#) website provides information related to our policy, sexual misconduct reporting, supportive measures, and prompt and equitable procedures to resolve complaints related to sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, and relationship violence.

[**Back to Top**](#)

Hazing

ACU will not tolerate hazing as defined by Texas law. Moreover, ACU strongly discourages any action which degrades, intimidates, humiliates, or endangers any individual. The University reserves the right, for its administrative disciplinary purposes, to define conduct as “hazing” whether or not it would constitute hazing under the Texas law. All acts of hazing and any act which transgresses ACU's Student

[Back to Top](#)

ID Card Policy

Students are issued an official ACU identification card at the beginning of their academic enrollment with the university. Students are required to carry their card with them at all times and to present the card to any university official upon request. Students failing to render an ID card upon request, using an ID card of another student, allowing an ID card to be used by another student, or falsifying information used for identification purposes will be subject to disciplinary response. The ACU identification card issued to each student remains the property of the university and must be returned to Student Life when a student withdraws or is suspended from the university. Any lost or stolen identification card must be reported to [Wildcat Central](#) immediately.

[Back to Top](#)

Mental Health Emergency: Returning to Campus

A student who has a mental health emergency (self-harmful behaviors, threat to harm self, etc.) that results in them going to a local emergency room or psychiatric in-patient facility, is required to meet with a member of the ACU Counseling Center staff prior to returning to the classroom or other university activities. The student must receive clearance from the counseling staff, working in consultation with the Dean of Students. Clearance decisions will be made after an individualized assessment of a student's unique circumstances.

- Emergency Room Discharge Procedure: As the student is discharged from the emergency room, they should request discharge papers and recommendations for follow-up treatment.
 - Students who live off campus
Contact the ACU Counseling Center at 325-674-2625 to make an appointment. The Counseling Center staff will make every effort to see the student as soon as possible. Discharge paperwork and recommendations should be brought to the appointment and presented to the counselor.
 - Students living in ACU Residence Halls
Discharge papers/recommendations should be presented to the Residence Life Housing Coordinator during normal business hours, or to the RD On-Call after business hours as the student re-enters the residence hall. An appointment will be made for the student and their RD to meet with a Counseling Center staff member the next morning. Discharge paperwork and recommendations should also be brought to the appointment and presented to the counselor.
- Psychiatric In-Patient Facility Discharge Procedure: Prior to discharge the student should request that their facility doctor, counselor or caseworker schedule an appointment for them to meet with an ACU Counseling Staff member prior to their return to the classroom and/or other university activities. If the student lives in an ACU Residence Hall, the appointment with the ACU Counseling Staff member must take place prior to their return to the residence hall.

ACU Counseling Center Appointment

The student will bring their discharge papers/recommendations to the appointment and share them with the counselor. Following the meeting/session the counselor will inform the Dean of Students (and if appropriate, the student's RD) as to whether it is recommended that the student return to the classroom and regular university activities. Factors to consider will include whether the student poses a threat to themselves or others, is able to function effectively in an academic environment, and is able to do so without creating a disruptive environment. If the student is able to return to class/activities, the counselor and Dean of Students will make them aware of the various on-campus resources available, including SOAR, ongoing counseling, and academic accommodations through University Access Programs.

If the counselor does not recommend that the student is ready to return to classes and other university activities, the student, counselor and Dean of Students will meet to discuss options. Every attempt will be made to collaborate with the student and their parent(s) or guardian to develop a plan for them to take a temporary leave of absence, or a medical withdrawal for the semester.

Additional Information

Discharge Papers / Recommendations. Students who fail to provide discharge papers / recommendations will not be permitted to return to classroom attendance and other university activities. If the student lives in a residence hall, they will be required to secure the documents as soon as possible. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the student's parent(s)/guardian being contacted and an Involuntary Withdrawal being considered.

Involuntary Withdrawal. Whether a student lives on or off campus, if they refuse to participate in this return policy, university administration will consider taking steps to have the student involuntarily withdrawn (Involuntary Withdrawal Policy).

[Back to Top](#)

Non-Discrimination Policy

Purpose

Scope

This policy applies to all students of the university. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of enrollment, including, but not limited to, admission standards and processes, and the guidelines by which enrollment may be denied or terminated, based on the standards outlined in the Student Handbook. This policy does not apply to claims of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct, which are addressed in the university's Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy.

Policy

Abilene Christian University complies with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws and does not engage in prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin, gender, age, veteran status, genetic information, or disability. ACU is affiliated with the fellowship of the church of Christ. The university is governed by a Board of Trustees, all of whom are members of a church of Christ, and is operated within the Christian-oriented aims, ideals and religious tenets of the church of Christ. As a religiously affiliated institution of higher education, ACU is exempt from compliance with some provisions of certain civil rights laws, including some provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

A. It is the responsibility of each student to obtain, read and comprehend the purpose, policies and procedures of the Student Handbook, including the policy for non-discrimination.

B. A student's application for admission to ACU indicates acceptance of and an agreement to abide by the policies and regulations of Abilene Christian University.

C. The university reserves the right to make changes to the Student Handbook at any time. Such changes will be communicated with students by routine student communication methods and will be updated on the Student Life Web site, which serves as the official Student Handbook.

D. The university reserves the right to deny the enrollment, or terminate the admission, of any student whose attitudes and actions do not represent the Christian mission of the university as set forth by the Student Handbook. Such decisions will be made according to the principles and guidelines described in the Student Handbook, with careful consideration of the fair and reasonable processes provided for appeal.

E. ACU encourages students with disabilities to request any appropriate academic and other accommodations to University Access Programs. Naoemi Gire, Director of University Access Programs, serves as the compliance coordinator for ADA/Section 504.

F. ACU encourages applicants for enrollment or enrolled students with a complaint regarding discrimination to report the offense to the Dean of Students. If a faculty or staff member should receive a complaint of discrimination from a student, he or she should report it to the Dean of Students. Complaints can be submitted using the online [Incident Reporting Form](#).

G. The Dean of Students will investigate all complaints of discrimination or refer them to other offices for appropriate action (for example, complaints of discrimination related to academic coursework will be referred to the appropriate academic office).

[Back to Top](#)

Political Campaign Activity

Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code prohibits tax-exempt organizations, such as ACU, from participating or intervening in political campaigns on behalf or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Where applicable, this policy also applies to all students and student organizations. Violations of these prohibitions could result in loss of the university's tax-exempt status, imposition of taxes on the institution and its responsible managers, federal or state government lawsuits, audits, investigations or other penalties.

For detailed information related to the [political campaign policy](#), refer to ACU's Employee Handbook Section 440.

[Back to Top](#)

Pornography

All materials of a pornographic nature, including magazines, videos and the Internet, are considered immoral and therefore not conducive to the mission of ACU. Students who struggle with addictions to pornography should seek confidential counseling from the Counseling Center.

[Back to Top](#)

acting against these truths are unacceptable and will be subject to the full range of disciplinary action, including dismissal from the university.

[Back to Top](#)

Sexual Stewardship Policy

Our Vision for Sexual Ethics

ACU strives to be a community that follows Jesus' example in all things, including our understandings about the authority of Scripture, sexuality, relationships and our core identity as children of God. Therefore, our foundation for a sexual ethic is a call to chastity outside of marriage between a man and a woman. Throughout Scripture and in the life of Jesus, we see a commitment to honor God with our bodies through relational and sexual stewardship as well as pastoral love and compassion for those who do not live according to those beliefs.

Guidance on Same-sex Relationships

The ACU Board of Trustees has developed the following guidance to address the university's understanding of Scripture and commitment to provide a caring environment for students.

We affirm the dignity and worth of every person as created in God's image. ACU affirms the full humanity and dignity of all human beings, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. We recognize that there are individuals who identify as LGBTQ or who experience same-sex attraction within our community. We strive to love and welcome all individuals.

We believe Scripture teaches that God intends for sexual relations to be reserved for marriage between a man and a woman. We recognize that this belief may conflict with the practice or vision of the larger culture. Yet we hold to the historic Christian view on this issue while being respectful of those who disagree with us.

We call for civility and respect. As a university, we encourage the vigorous pursuit of truth. As a Christian university, we believe the Bible is true and reliable. We recognize that Christians inside and outside the ACU community have different interpretations of Scripture on same-sex relationships. Regardless of one's perspective, we encourage all of our community members to engage this issue with Christian care and compassion. We condemn language and behaviors that communicate disrespect toward any member of the ACU community.

A Call for Love and Inclusion

In regard to student behavior, ACU believes this guidance calls the university to create an inclusive environment for all students – even those who disagree with ACU's beliefs – so long as they refrain from sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and woman. The university acknowledges that an institution cannot control how students think, believe or identify regarding sexuality. Instead, ACU invites all students into a community where they can belong, grow and develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

A Distinction Between Attraction and Action

For both opposite and same-sex attracted people, it is possible to experience attraction without choosing to act upon those feelings. Instead, it is what we do with these attractions that determines whether we are living within God's will for our lives.

A Commitment to Safety and Protection

ACU is committed to ensuring safety and protection for all students. Specifically prohibited are language and actions that communicate disrespect, denigration, threat of harm or assault by members of the campus community to others. The university encourages all such matters to be reported to the [ACU Police Department](#) and/or [appropriate university officials](#).

The Heart Behind ACU's Beliefs

Above all, ACU encourages members of our community to extend love and grace, as some of our students arrive at different interpretations of Scripture on a range of matters. Some will choose to act in ways that do not conform to ACU's beliefs. While we do not desire this for our students, our first instinct is not to exclude but to love, include and involve students, allowing them to have a vibrant educational, faith and community experience on our campus. We pray that the Holy Spirit will surround, protect, indwell and draw every student closer to God.

ACU will continue to uphold and promote the university's commitment to the global, historical Christian teaching that sexual activity is reserved for the context of marriage between a man and a woman. Even if students disagree, the university expects those choosing to be a part of our community to live within and respect these boundaries. Our hope for all students is that they will pursue relationships in keeping with this historical perspective.

student, student group or outside entity, including advertisements, donations, patrons or any other type of financial support for any ACU or outside activity.

[Back to Top](#)

Student Complaint Policy

Information regarding disciplinary decisions, harassment, discrimination, residence hall assignments, the residence hall living/learning experience and parking citations may be found in other sections of the Student Handbook.

For all other student complaints, please see the [Student Complaint Policy](#) and refer to the appropriate section.

[Back to Top](#)

Tobacco, Vapes and Related Products

Students should be aware of the many physical dangers associated with the use of smoking and tobacco products. To maintain a healthy environment and to encourage healthy lifestyles for all students, staff and faculty, use of all tobacco products (including smokeless tobacco) and vapes (vaporizers, e-cigarettes, etc.) is strictly prohibited on the ACU campus and other university property and at all university-sponsored activities, including sporting events. Use of any of these products in the residence halls and in University Park is a serious violation of this Handbook. The safety of all residents requires that students and their guests respect this policy. Students should be aware they may be held responsible for the actions of any of their visitors or guests.

Students who are found responsible for violating the University policy concerning the possession and/or use of tobacco products and vapes will be subject to a range and/or combination of sanctions that may include: (1) fines ranging from \$200 to \$300 for first time violations, increasing to a minimum of \$500 for repeat violations; (2) disciplinary probation; and (3) counseling; (4). Repeated violations can result in suspension from the university.

[Back to Top](#)

Weapons

ACU prohibits the possession of any illegal knives and other dangerous weapons, as well as firearms, either open carry or concealed carry. This includes any replica or facsimile weapon designed, intended, or displayed to appear like a functional firearm or weapon (realistic appearing water guns, air-soft guns, BB/pellet guns) on all university owned or controlled facilities and properties, including athletic venues and any passenger transport vehicles used for university related activities. Other dangerous weapons not listed may be subject to sanction. If a student is found in violation of this university policy, they may be subject to the university student conduct policy and may be suspended or dismissed. Devices commonly used for personal protection, such as personal size electronic control devices (stun guns), and pepper spray, are permitted.

Specific to the August 1, 2016 implementation of the Texas Senate Bill 11:Campus Carry Statute; please be aware that ACU, as allowed by the law, did extensive consultation with campus constituents and chose to opt out of Campus Carry. ACU will continue to be a firearms free campus and will continue to ban the concealed carry of all firearms by anyone, including Texas handgun license holders, on all university owned or controlled premises as defined by Texas

law: <https://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/GV/htm/GV.411.htm#411.2031>.

Please be advised that the open carry of any handguns or any firearms, even by handgun licensees, continues to be prohibited by Texas law on all college/university campuses. Students who are Texas Handgun Licensees, are allowed by Texas Law and ACU policy to store their licensed and legal handguns inside their LOCKED vehicle parked on any ACU owned or controlled parking facility. Such students are strongly encouraged (but not required) to consult with ACUPD regarding appropriate crime prevention strategies aimed at preventing firearms from being stolen from their vehicles and compliance with this new law. Questions regarding the Texas Campus Carry Law can be directed to ACUPD by phone, 325-674-2305, or via email at acupolice@acu.edu.

[Back to Top](#)

Withdrawals/Leave and Administrative Action

Students deciding to withdraw from the university will do so in one of two ways, depending on the reason for their withdrawal. Students seeking to take a medical withdrawal will contact the Office of Student Life in the lower level of the Campus Center. For more information about medical withdrawals, please see below. For students wanting to withdraw for other reasons than medical, go to Wildcat Central,

Voluntary Medical Leave of Absence

The University recognizes that students may experience medical situations that significantly limit their ability to function successfully or safely in their role as students (e.g., serious injury, illness, or mental-health issue). In those situations, students should consider a voluntary medical leave of absence, which permits students to take a break from University life and their studies, so that they may receive treatment and later return to the University with a better opportunity to achieve their academic and co-curricular goals. ACU seeks to ease those student-initiated transitions and has designed this policy to ensure that students are given individualized attention, consideration, and support needed to address medical issues that may arise.

The Leave Process

Students may initiate a voluntary medical leave from the university for the reasons set out above by contacting the Office of the Vice President for Student Life ("VPSL"). Appropriate paperwork is in the lower level of the Campus Center in the Student Life Office. Along with the paperwork, students must submit supporting documentation. Acceptable documentation would be a letter or note from the student's physician, psychologist, or counselor, on their letterhead, which may indicate the following: (1) the reason the student is requesting a medical leave, including diagnosis; (2) the date of initial treatment; (3) the dates of subsequent treatment (if applicable); and (4) the expected semester of recovery. Additionally, health permitting, a student may be asked to submit to an examination by ACU's Counseling Center or Medical Clinic so that individualized treatment recommendations can be made and provided to the VPSL.

If approved, students on a medical leave receive non-punitive withdrawal grades regardless of the point in the semester that the leave is granted. And depending on the situation, requests for tuition refund or crediting to ease the student's transition will also be considered. A student on medical leave of absence is away from the campus and classes for the remainder of the semester and cannot return until the VPSL or designee has approved a re-entry assessment. A Student Life hold will be placed on the student's account until the VPSL or designee approves return.

The Return Process

In order to return from leave, a student should contact the Office of the VPSL. Although a request for return will be assessed whenever requested by a student, a medical leave is generally for a period of at least one long semester. The normal processing time for a return request is one month.

Students desiring to return from a voluntary or involuntary medical leave will submit a written statement which includes: 1) their request to return; 2) an explanation of what they have done while away to address issues that led to their withdrawal; 3) steps they will take if they return in order to maintain a level of wellness necessary in order to effectively manage academic stresses and demands. In reviewing requests for return from medical leave, all students, regardless of their situation or basis for the leave, must sufficiently demonstrate that the reason for withdrawal has been addressed. Specifically, evidence the student has maintained stability and demonstrated follow through with treatment for a sufficient period of time to enable him or her to be a successful student. Additionally, evidence of productive functioning (i.e., employment, volunteerism, etc.) is looked upon favorably. In order to be approved for return, a student must have complied with any recommendations given to the student for treatment at the time of his or her medical leave. Moreover, students are encouraged to inform the VPSL of any help, resources, or reasonable accommodations that the university can provide to support the student's return.

After one long semester, if a student has not returned or re-applied to extend their medical leave, they will be administratively withdrawn from the university and will need to re-apply for admission. Moreover, a Student Life hold may be placed barring the student's admission for future semesters until approval is obtained pursuant to this policy.

Administrative Action

Responding to Disruptive Behavior

Students, whose harmful or disruptive behavior has come to the university's attention, may be allowed to continue their studies pending adherence to conduct or behavior restrictions over a specified period of time. Such conditions could include stopping classroom disruption, allocating alternative or suitable living accommodations if available, undergoing required assessment (as described below), or receiving supportive services or treatment. However, such conditions are not appropriate when a student's behavior indicates harm or danger to themselves, or any member of the university community. Failure to comply with such conditions and/or further disruptive behavior, may result in the advancement of pending or previously deferred conduct code proceedings or involuntary leave from the university.

Mandated Assessment

In making determinations under this policy, or if a student, subject to this policy or conduct proceedings, notifies the university that information concerning a mental/behavioral disorder will be introduced, the VPSL may refer or mandate a student for evaluation by a

Interim Separation

The VPSL may impose an interim separation when a student presents an immediate danger to the fulfillment of the educational mission of the university or to the life, health, welfare, safety, or property of any member(s) of the university community. Such separation will only be used pending the outcome of an initial conference or disciplinary hearing, which shall be scheduled as expeditiously as possible. Notification of interim separation and the reasons for it will be communicated to the student, in writing, within 24 hours of the decision. If this is not possible because of a student's absence, or the VPSL, or designee is not able to locate and/or correspond with the student, the VPSL or designee may place a Student Life hold on the student's account. The leave will remain in effect until a final decision has been made pursuant to the standard procedures, unless, before a final decision is made, the VPSL or designee determines that the reasons for imposing the interim separation no longer exist or a voluntary medical leave is granted. This action may be taken, but is not limited to, situations involving physical and/or sexual violence, drugs and other controlled substances.

Involuntary Medical Leave

Consistent with Abilene Christian University's [Nondiscrimination Policy](#), ACU prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of any type of disability or any other characteristic protected by applicable law in the administration of the University's programs and activities. ACU offers a range of resources, support services and accommodations to address the physical and mental health needs of students. However, there are times when a student's needs may require a level of care that exceeds the care ACU can appropriately provide. Where current knowledge about the individual's medical condition and/or the best available objective evidence indicates that a student poses a significant risk to the health or safety of a member of the university community, where a student is unable or unwilling to carry out substantial self-care obligations and poses a significant risk to their own safety not based on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations, or where a student's behavior severely disrupts the university environment and the student does not want to take a voluntary leave, the Dean of Students has the authority to place a student on an involuntary leave of absence. When an involuntary leave of absence is being considered, university officials may consider the appropriateness of utilizing the regular student conduct policies and/or undertaking an involuntary leave as described below:

Before making a decision on whether or not to place a student on an involuntary leave of absence, the following steps will be taken:

1. The student will be notified in writing that an involuntary leave of absence is under consideration;
2. An individualized assessment will be conducted, consulting with the Office of University Access Programs to determine if there are reasonable accommodations that would permit the student to continue to participate in the University community without taking a leave of absence;
3. The Dean of Students may require any documentation or assessment that is deemed necessary in making a determination, including medical assessment or evaluation by a licensed mental health or medical professional of the university's choosing, which will be disclosed to appropriate university personnel. Failure to appear for a mandated assessment will result in an involuntary leave of absence without further process;
4. When in the opinion of a medical or mental health professional the student is unable to function in the university community without harming others and/or disrupting the educational mission of the institution, the professional member shall notify the Dean of Students of the situation as soon as possible;
5. When the Dean of Students receives notification described above, they will review appropriate documentation and make a decision regarding the student's status. If the Dean of Students or designee determines that the student should be placed on involuntary leave, they may inform the student and student's parents(s), spouse, or other close relative;
6. A student may appeal this decision to the Vice President for Student Life within two business days of receiving notification on one or more of the following bases:
 - a) To consider new information, unavailable to the Dean of Students, that could be outcome determinative;
 - b) To assess whether a material deviation from this policy impacted the fairness of the decision; or
 - c) To determine if the conclusion evidence provided did not support the finding.

The appeal is deferential to the original decision, making changes only if compelling justification to do so exists. A written decision will be provided to the student summarizing the decision, and will typically be issued within no more than five (5) business days after requested.

In order to return to the university following an involuntary medical withdrawal, see "The Return Process" section of this

Withdrawals/Leave and Administrative Action policy.

[Back to Top](#)

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RESOURCES

+

APPLY

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