MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

I. Purpose – to provide students who are experiencing a mental or physical health difficulty with a withdrawal venue in order to take the time away from campus to obtain proper treatment.

II. Types

A. Voluntary – a voluntary MLOA is initiated by the student at any time during the academic year, in effect until the end of the current semester.
B. Administrative– an administrative MLOA is initiated by the College at any time during the academic year, in effect until the end of the current semester.
C. Temporary Involuntary – a temporary involuntary MLOA is initiated by the College at any time during the academic year but differs from an involuntary MLOA in that this is for a brief period of time, not the remainder of the semester.

III. Procedure

A. Voluntary

1. Student provides verification of illness from a therapist or psychiatrist to Muhlenberg College’s Director of Counseling or from a physician to the Director of Health Center, who will make a determination on behalf of the college. The documentation needs to include: diagnosis, symptoms of the diagnosis that the student is experiencing and also how the student has been impacted by those symptoms. Dates of treatment must also be included.

2. If a compelling reason is approved, a notice of action concerning Medical Leave of Absence is sent by the Director of Counseling (mental health issues) or the Director of Health Services (physical health issues) to the following:
   a. Notification is sent by email to the:
      a. Registrar’s Group
      b. The Controller
      c. The Principal Accounts Coordinator of the Controller’s Office
   b. MLOA form with signature of Director of Counseling or Health Services is sent by mail to the:
      a. Registrar’s Office
      b. Dean of Students Office
      c. Dean of the College for Academic Life Office
   c. The Registrar’s Office will then notify the “Attrition Group” of the MLOA action by means of email.
3. Dean of Students, based on information from the Controller, determines:
   A. tuition and fees due and
   B. refund arrangement. (Normally, a refund will be pro-rated based on
      tuition and fees as outlined in the College catalog.) Financial aid sources
      will determine extent of cash refund. In addition, necessary agencies are
      notified.
   C. All course grades will appear as “W” on transcript.

4. Residential Services staff will assist student in meeting the check-out
   procedures.
   A. Student must surrender all keys recorded on the “Room and Board
      Contract”.
   B. Students are expected to remove their belongings within 72 hours.
   C. All students must return their ID card to the Residential Services Office.
   D. The Residential Services Office will inspect the student’s room after
      his/her departure from campus. Students will be invoiced for any
      damages, lost inventory, or extra cleaning required in accordance with
      “Damage Billing Policies and Procedures”.
   E. The Director of Residential Services will contact the Director of
      Counseling or the Director of Health Center once the student has removed
      his/her belongings and returned the key.

5. Controller
   A. The Controller will analyze the student’s account in conjunction with any
      financial aid or student loans that pertain to the student for the semester in
      question. A pro-rated refund will be calculated using the official leave
      date as determined by the Director of Counseling or Health Center. A
      daily rate for the number of days from the start of the semester to the
      official leave date will be used to calculate the tuition, fees, and room and
      board charges for the portion of the semester in attendance. The
      calculated charges will be subtracted from all payments, financial aid, and
      loans available for the period. The difference will be refunded to the
      student at the first available disbursement date. The “College Refund
      Policy” requires that the College retain a minimum of $200 of the
      comprehensive charges.

6. The professional signing the MLOA Form will send a follow-up letter to the
   student reminding the student of their responsibility to seek treatment and to
   provide documentation in order to return.

7. The Dean of Students sends a letter to the student indicating that the student
   must arrange for a letter from his/her psychiatrist/therapist to be sent to the
   College’s Director of Counseling or from his/her physician to the Director of
   Health Center in order to return from medical leave.

   The letter should outline:
A. The reason for the student’s original Medical Leave of Absence.
B. Dates and treatment or therapy the student has undergone or physician’s verification of treatment and date(s).
C. The prognosis for the student’s continued success at the College.

The Dean of Students Office mails registration packets with the cover letter when the advising period begins for registration. An application for housing is included in the registration packet. Registration and housing is contingent upon reinstatement.

9. Students must schedule an appointment with the Director of Counseling (mental health issues) or the Director of Health Center (physical health issues).

10. Once the psychiatrist’s/therapist’s or physician’s letter has been received and approved, and the appointment has been completed, the Director of Counseling or Director of Health Center will render a recommendation for either a reinstatement or a continued Medical Leave of Absence. This form will be submitted to the Dean of Students. Students returning from a Medical Leave will not be permitted to register for summer courses as support services are not available during summer sessions.

11. Notification of the action taken will be sent by the Director of Counseling Services or Director of Health Services to the following:
   a. Notification is sent by email to the:
      d. Registrar’s Group
      e. The Controller
      f. The Principal Accounts Coordinator of the Controller’s Office
   d. MLOA form with signature of Director of Counseling or Health Services is sent by mail to the:
      d. Registrar’s Office
      e. Dean of Students Office
      f. Dean of the College for Academic Life Office
   c. The Registrar’s Office will then notify the “Attrition Group” of the MLOA action by means of email.

A. Student
B. Dean of the College for Academic Life
C. Registrar
D. Residential Services
E. Financial Aid
F. Controller
G. Advisor
H. Director of Counseling
I. Director of Student Health
J. Seegers Union
K. Academic Support
12. A student may be granted a MLOA for up to four (4) semesters, cumulatively.

Please Note: 1. Students with Guaranteed Student Loans may have to begin repayment if they take a leave of absence of more than six months.

2. During a Medical Leave of Absence, no more than two courses will transfer to Muhlenberg College.

B. Administrative Medical Leave of Absence

Muhlenberg College strives to provide a safe and orderly environment, insofar as possible, in which all students are able to pursue their academic and social development. In doing so, we reserve the right to require an involuntary medical leave of absence of any student whose behavior or physical or psychological disorder is incompatible with minimal standards of academic performance and/or social adjustment. Students to whom this procedure applies include:

- Students who are deemed to be a danger to themselves or others. Danger to self or others is here defined to include any danger of suicide, self mutilation, accident, or assault substantially above the norm for college students which necessitates unusual measure to monitor, supervise, treat, protect, or restrain the student to ensure his/her safety and the safety of others around him or her.
- Students whose behavior is severely disruptive to others. Disruptive is here defined to include behavior which causes emotional/psychological/physical distress to fellow students and/or staff substantially above that normally experienced in daily life. Such disruption may be in the form of a single incident or somewhat less severe but persistent disruption over a more extended period.
- Students (a) who refuse or are unable to cooperate with recommended assessment and/or treatment and (b) whose behavior of physical condition suggests a disorder, such as an eating disorder, which is likely to deteriorate to the point of permanent disability, disfigurement, impairment, or dysfunction without such assessment and/or treatment. Where standard assessment is impossible because of the student’s resistance, indirect behavioral observations will constitute the basis for such judgment.
- Students whose physical or psychological disorder is such as to require highly specialized services beyond those available locally and whose condition will deteriorate (as in “3” above) without additional resources.

1. The Dean of Students, on the recommendation from either the Director of Counseling or the Director of Health Center, notifies the student that s/he is being placed on a temporary MLOA.
2. The Dean of Students notifies the student’s guardian of the same.
3. The student must seek immediate attention from a healthcare provider agreed upon by the Director of Counseling or the Director of Health Center.
4. When the student is cleared by the service provider to return to campus, the Director of Counseling or Director of Health Center will coordinate the student’s return through communication with the service provider.
5. While on a temporary involuntary MLOA, the student will be asked to leave campus until they have been cleared to return by the Director of Counseling or Director of Health Center, working in conjunction with their service provider.

C. Temporary Involuntary Medical Leave of Absence

A temporary involuntary medical leave of absence is initiated by the College when they have substantiated reports/evidence that a student is in jeopardy of harming himself or herself or another individual. This harm may come in the form of suicidal gestures, or continued suicidal ideation and threats of suicide, or it may come in the form of an overdose of alcohol/other drugs as a result of a dependency/abuse situation or a suicidal gesture. This action being taken is not limited to overt threats but may include placing oneself in harmful situations, risky behaviors, etc.

1. The Dean of Students, on the recommendation from either the Director of Counseling or the Director of Health Center, notifies the student that s/he is being placed on a temporary MLOA.
2. The Dean of Students notifies the student’s guardian of the same.
3. The student must seek immediate attention from a healthcare provider agreed upon by the Director of Counseling or the Director of Health Center.
4. When the student is cleared by the service provider to return to campus, the Director of Counseling or Director of Health Center will coordinate the student’s return through communication with the service provider.
5. While on a temporary involuntary MLOA, the student will be asked to leave campus until they have been cleared to return by the Director of Counseling or Director of Health Center, working in conjunction with their service provider.
COUNSELING SERVICES

STUDENT PROCEDURES FOR MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1. Student provides medical verification of illness or injury from:
   A. therapist/psychiatrist to Muhlenberg College’s Director of Counseling, or
   B. Director of Counseling, who will make a determination on behalf of the College.

2. If a Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA) is approved, the student must surrender all keys issued and recorded on the Student Key Registration Card and their ID card to Residential Services Office or Resident Advisor.

3. Student is expected to remove all belongings within 72 hours.

4. In order to return from medical leave, the student must arrange for a letter from
   his/her therapist/psychiatrist to be sent to the College’s Director Counseling outlining:
   A. the reason for the student’s original medical leave of absence,
   B. dates of treatment or therapy the student has undergone, and
   C. the prognosis for the student’s continued success at the College.

5. Student must schedule appointment and meet with the Director of Counseling. After meeting with the student, the Director of Counseling will make a decision regarding the student’s return.

6. Please note that students with Guaranteed Student Loans may have to begin repayment if they take a leave of absence of more than six (6) months.

7. Students may not return from a MLOA and register for summer courses as support services are not available during summer sessions.

8. A student may be granted a MLOA for up to four (4) semesters, cumulatively.

9. No more than two courses from other learning institutions taken during a Medical Leave of Absence will transfer to Muhlenberg College.
ADDENDUM - B

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

HEALTH CENTER

STUDENT PROCEDURES FOR MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1. Student provides medical verification of illness or injury from:
   A. family physician to Muhlenberg College’s Director of Student Health, or
   B. Director of Student Health, who will make a determination on behalf of the College.

2. If a Medical Leave of Absence (MLOA) is approved, the student must surrender all keys issued and recorded on the Student Key Registration Card and their ID card to Residential Services Office or Resident Advisor.

3. Student is expected to remove all belongings within 72 hours.

4. In order to return from medical leave, the student must arrange for a letter from his/her physician to be sent to the College’s Director of Student Health outlining:
   A. the reason for the student’s original medical leave of absence,
   B. date(s) of treatment and diagnosis of illness, and
   C. the prognosis for the student’s continued success at the College.

5. Student must schedule appointment and meet with the Director of Student Health. After meeting with the student, the Director of Student Health will make a decision regarding the student’s return.

6. Please note that students with Guaranteed Student Loans may have to begin repayment if they take a leave of absence of more than six (6) months.

7. Students may not return from a MLOA and register for summer courses, as support services are not available during summer sessions.

8. A student may be granted a MLOA for up to four (4) semesters, cumulatively.

9. No more than two courses from other learning institutions taken during a Medical Leave of Absence will transfer to Muhlenberg College.