Change in Student Status

Policy/Procedure

Leaves of Absence:

Policy Statement: From time to time, students may need to take time away from the college under circumstances where they wish to maintain their status as enrolled students, eligible to return to active status without applying for readmission. Subject to the compliance with the procedures set forth below, Dickinson College will grant qualifying students leaves of absence.

Procedure:
Requests for leave from the college are considered for a variety of reasons. These are the more common reasons, but they are not intended to be an exhaustive list:

- Health related
- Family circumstances (such as illness or death of a family member)
- Financial hardship
- Global educational opportunities not approved by Dickinson
- Academic performance (when affected by illness or family circumstances)
- Unique non-academic opportunities
- Other reasons such as volunteer work or taking time away from college to reassess one's educational goals.

A request for a leave of absence is generally initiated by a student although there are certain circumstances under which the college will initiate leave procedures. Regardless of who initiates the process, the grant of a leave of absence will generally include conditions for return.

Student Initiated Request for a Leave of Absence
A request for a leave of absence should generally be submitted before the beginning of the semester but no later than the last day of add/drop of the semester for which the leave is sought. Exceptions are routinely made where the reason for the leave could not be planned, such as in health or family emergencies.

Except when a leave is requested for the pursuit of educational opportunities, requests for leaves of absence should be submitted to the Associate Dean of Students. The Associate Dean of Students will serve as the point of contact for gathering information about and communicating the college's response regarding the student's request. For leaves related to the pursuit of educational opportunities off campus, requests should be directed to the Executive Director of the Center for Global Study and Engagement.
A request for a leave of absence should contain:

- a clear statement of the reason for the request
- sufficient facts supporting the reason
- an estimate, if one is available, of the duration of the leave
- any records or documents that may be useful in considering the request (when a leave is for a medical or mental health reason, this must include a letter from your treating health care provider).

The grant of a leave of absence is within the discretion of the college. In considering a student's request the Associate Dean of Students will consult with the Dean of Advising, the Executive Director of the Wellness Center (when health related) and the student's College Dean, and others as necessary. The college will conduct an individualized assessment of each request for leave before a decision on the leave is reached. In most circumstances, a grant of a leave of absence will include conditions that must be met for the student’s return. The determination of the conditions for return will be based upon an individualized assessment of the students’ situation and the circumstances under which the leave is requested. Where the request for leave arises from a medical or mental health reasons, significant weight will be given to the documentation from the student’s health care provider.

The desire to avoid low grades unrelated to health, family issues or other unavoidable circumstances is not a proper use of the leave of absence policy. Requests made on this basis will not be granted.

**College-Initiated Request for a Leave of Absence**

In circumstances where a student's conduct seriously affects the health or well-being of any person, where physical safety is seriously threatened, or where the ability of the college to carry out its essential operations is seriously impaired, and the student does not request a leave of absence, the Associate Dean of Students may initiate a request that a student be placed on a leave of absence. All college-initiated requests will be sent to the Leave of Absence Committee for consideration, with a copy provided to the student. The Leave of Absence Committee includes the Associate Vice President for Student Life, the student’s College Dean, the Dean of Academic Advising, and if necessary an ad hoc College Dean to make a committee of three administrators. The Student shall have an opportunity to present information to the Committee. The Committee shall conduct an individualized assessment of the circumstances and shall consider the information submitted by the student before a decision is reached and in setting forth any conditions for return. Significant weight will be given to any documentation from the student's health care provider that the student submits for the Committee's consideration.

**Notification and Appeal**

The student will be notified promptly of a decision upon any request for leave. The decision shall indicate whether leave is granted, the time period for any leave, and will identify, if applicable, any conditions for return. The student may appeal the decision to the Vice President and Dean for Student Life. The decision issued by the Vice President and Dean for Student Life is final.
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When the request is student-initiated and the student is dissatisfied with the decision (including the conditions for return) or any decision on appeal, the student may decline the leave or may withdraw from the college. See Withdrawal.

When the request for leave is college-initiated, and the student is dissatisfied with the decision (including the conditions for return) or any decision on appeal, the student may withdraw from the college. See Withdrawal.

Duration & Conditions of the Leave
Leaves of absence are granted for the remainder of a semester, a single semester or an academic year. When a student takes a leave of absence during the course of a semester, either the grade of "Withdrawal" (W) or "Incomplete" (I) will be recorded by the Registrar for those courses in which the student is enrolled. Students eligible to utilize the grade of "Incomplete" should follow instructions in the Academic Bulletin. Students are eligible to receive incomplete grades only if the leave begins six weeks or less before the end of the semester.

A student on a leave of absence is completely separated from campus and may be on campus or at College-sponsored activities only with written permission from the Associate Dean of Students. Generally, campus visits are limited to the handling of administrative matters related to the student's leave.

Please note that the College's policies for refunds and deposits are applicable when leaves of absence are granted during a semester.

At the end of the leave, students are expected to return to full-time study in Carlisle. Students may not study off campus (semester or academic year) directly following a leave of absence. (Students who feel that there is a compelling reason to study off-campus the semester directly following a leave of absence may petition the Global Education Advisory Committee.) Students may request an extension to the leave of absence prior to the expiration of the current leave by submitting a written request to the Associate Dean of Students. Students who fail to return on time from a leave of absence or any extension of the leave will be withdrawn from the college. Normally, leaves of absence may continue for no longer than two semesters before students will be withdrawn from the college. See Withdrawal.

NOTE: For loan repayment purposes, students on a leave of absence are considered withdrawn from Dickinson College. Federal Student Loans have a grace period before repayment of the loan must begin (six months for Direct Loans, nine months for Perkins Loans). Students who have not re-enrolled with at least a half-time course load by the end of the grace period must begin repaying their loans. The loans will revert to in-school status once students are re-enrolled with at least a half-time course load. Since the grace period has been used, however, the loans will go into immediate repayment once students are no longer enrolled. Students with Private Loans should consult with their lender concerning treatment of leaves of absence.
Withdrawal

Withdrawal from the college, whether voluntary, required, or administrative, discontinues one's enrollment as a degree candidate. If a student withdraws from the college with disciplinary matters pending, whether social or academic in nature, the matter may proceed to disposition, at the sole discretion of the college. Under such circumstances, the student has all rights afforded under the policies of the college for such proceedings, including the right of participation. Any sanctions imposed, other than expulsion, shall be imposed should a student return to Dickinson College at a future date. A sanction of expulsion shall become effective immediately.

For those matters which did not proceed to disposition upon a student's withdrawal from Dickinson, should a student seek to be readmitted within one (1) calendar year of withdrawal, the disposition of the disciplinary matter will proceed at the time application for readmission is made and before a decision on readmission is made by the college.

For those matters which did not proceed to disposition upon a student's withdrawal from Dickinson, no student shall be considered for readmission if one (1) calendar year or more has passed from the time of withdrawal. Note: See below for criteria for readmission.

Voluntary

A student may withdraw voluntarily at any time, with "W" grades being recorded for all registered courses if the withdrawal is made on or before the last day of classes. If withdrawal is made during the final examination period, earned grades will be recorded. Students should contact the Registrar's Office to obtain the appropriate forms and information and to schedule an exit interview. Note: See below for criteria for readmission.

Required

Dickinson College reserves the right, at any time, to require withdrawal from the college of any student whose academic performance or personal conduct on or off the college campus is, in the sole judgment of the college, unsatisfactory or detrimental to the best interests of the college. Students who do not meet the minimum qualitative and/or quantitative standards for their class are required to withdraw.

Appeal of Required Withdrawal for Academic Reasons

Normally, students must wait a full semester after required withdrawal before making reapplication. Students who wish to appeal for immediate reinstatement to active status must petition the Subcommittee on Academic Standards. To be eligible for appeal, the student (1) must submit a petition with the requisite information outlined below; (2) have proven his/her ability to achieve the established probationary average; (3) must not have received any failing grades in the semester just completed. In this written petition, addressed to the Subcommittee and sent to asc@dickinson.edu, the student must include a candid assessment and reflection of the poor academic performance as well as a detailed plan to be implemented to improve academic performance to levels expected by the College should the student be permitted to return.
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Upon review of the student's submission, the Subcommittee may deny the request for return and continue the required withdrawal, or may approve the student's return to active status on academic probation (see information regarding Academic Probation in Readmission section below) and require the implementation of some or all of the steps outlined in the student's plan as well as the following:

- active participation in the Steps to Academic Success Program for first-year and sophomore students if reinstated for spring semester.
- active participation in the Fall Bridge Program if reinstated for fall semester

A first-year student with a semester grade point average of 0.00 in the fall semester is not eligible to appeal for immediate return to active status in the spring semester.

Administrative

Students who fail to register by the end of add/drop and who do not inform the Registrar's Office of their plans will be administratively withdrawn. Such students may apply for readmission. Note: See below for criteria for readmission.

Suspension from the College

Sanctions for Violation(s) of the Academic Provisions of the Community Standards A student suspended from the college may not participate in classes or other college activities and may not be on College property (except by appointment, arranged in advance with the Provost/Dean of the College or the Dean of Students or one of their designees) for the period of time specified in the notice of suspension. Students will receive "W" grades for all registered courses when suspension takes effect during the semester. Suspension extending beyond the semester in which action is taken shall consist of units of full semesters. In no case shall the suspension terminate prior to the end of a semester. Courses taken at another institution during this period of suspension will not be accepted for transfer to Dickinson. Conditions for resuming active status on campus following suspension may be imposed by the College. See the Community Standards and Procedures.

Sanctions for Violation(s) of the Social Provisions of the Community Standards For the individual, exclusion from classes, activities of the College, from residence halls, and/or use of facilities or other property of the college for the period of time specified in the notice of suspension (except by appointment, arranged in advance with the Provost/Dean of the College or the Dean of Students or one of their designees). Students will receive "W" grades for all registered courses when suspension takes effect during the semester. Suspension extending beyond the semester in which action is taken shall consist of units of full semesters. In no case shall the suspension terminate prior to the end of a semester. Conditions for readmission may be specified. Courses taken at another institution during this period of suspension will not be accepted for transfer to Dickinson. Conditions for resuming active status on campus following suspension may be imposed by the college. See the Community Standards and Procedures.

Students who are separated from the college during any semester for disciplinary reasons, either social or academic, lose the opportunity to receive college credit for that semester.
Readmission

Any formerly matriculated student who wishes to re-enroll must file a “Request for Application for Readmission.” Students who attended another college while withdrawn from Dickinson must have the “Request for Certification for Students Seeking Readmission” completed by an Official at the prior college and submitted directly to the Registrar’s Office via mail, e-mail or fax. Such applications should be submitted to the Registrar prior to May 15 for the fall semester and prior to November 15 for the spring semester. Normally, students must wait a full semester (not a summer session) after withdrawal from the college before making reapplication. Students who wish to reapply sooner must petition the Subcommittee on Academic Standards. When possible, the student's academic advisor at the time of withdrawal will be consulted as a part of the subcommittee's consideration of an application for readmission. The student's record while previously enrolled at Dickinson will be considered in the decision. A student who is readmitted must meet the requirements for the degree in effect at the time of readmission. Favorable action in readmission, either by an individual or a committee, does not necessarily constitute a guarantee of a space in the college. It is quite possible that a student applying for readmission might have fulfilled all requirements or conditions for readmission but still be denied access to the college for a particular semester or year because of space limitations.

A student whose average is below the minimum class standard at the time of withdrawal may be eligible to apply for readmission by attending an accredited institution for one semester (not a summer session) with a full program of study approved in advance by the Registrar and the Subcommittee on Academic Standards, attaining a minimum average of 2.25 in those courses, and having no grades lower than a C. Military service or satisfactory employment for at least one year may be substituted for a semester of academic work. All applications for readmission for students whose average is below the minimum class average will be considered by the Subcommittee on Academic Standards.

Academic Probation

As a condition of return to active status, students with a cumulative grade point average below the minimum for his/her class will be placed on academic probation. A minimum average will be established for the student in the returning semester. Normally, this average is set to be high enough that it will return the student to good academic standing at the end of the semester. All students on academic probation during fall or spring semester must enroll in four courses for a letter grade. All students on academic probation during the summer session must enroll in two courses. Students on academic probation are determined to be making satisfactory progress for the purpose of receiving financial aid. A student who does not achieve the minimum probationary average will be required to withdraw from the college.

If the student was required to withdraw for non-academic reasons, the application process will normally include a clearance interview with a staff member from the Counseling Center, as well as the possibility of additional documentation being required. Any conditions set forth by the college when the withdrawal became effective must be satisfied at the time of reapplication.

A student who is absent from the college for at least three (3) years, and who is readmitted and successfully completes the equivalent of at least two semesters of work on campus, may petition the Subcommittee on Academic Standards to have course credits toward graduation and cumulative grade
point averages based only on work accomplished after the second matriculation. "Successful completion" will mean the attainment of at least a 2.00 average, or a higher probationary average, as stipulated by the committee.

**Dismissal**

A student required to withdraw for a second time for academic reasons is dismissed from the college without the privilege of readmission at any time.

**Expulsion**

A student who is expelled from the college does not have the privilege of readmission at any time.