

Faculty/Staff Guidance on Students Requesting Policy Exceptions

CONTEXT: Increasingly, students are requesting exceptions to policies in all areas of student life: academics, student development, athletics. These exceptions often have to do with attendance and/or deadlines. This user-friendly guidance is intended to help faculty and staff navigate these requests as efficiently and effectively as possible, while receiving support from campus resources, to help our students flourish while here at Wheaton and prepare them for life after Wheaton.

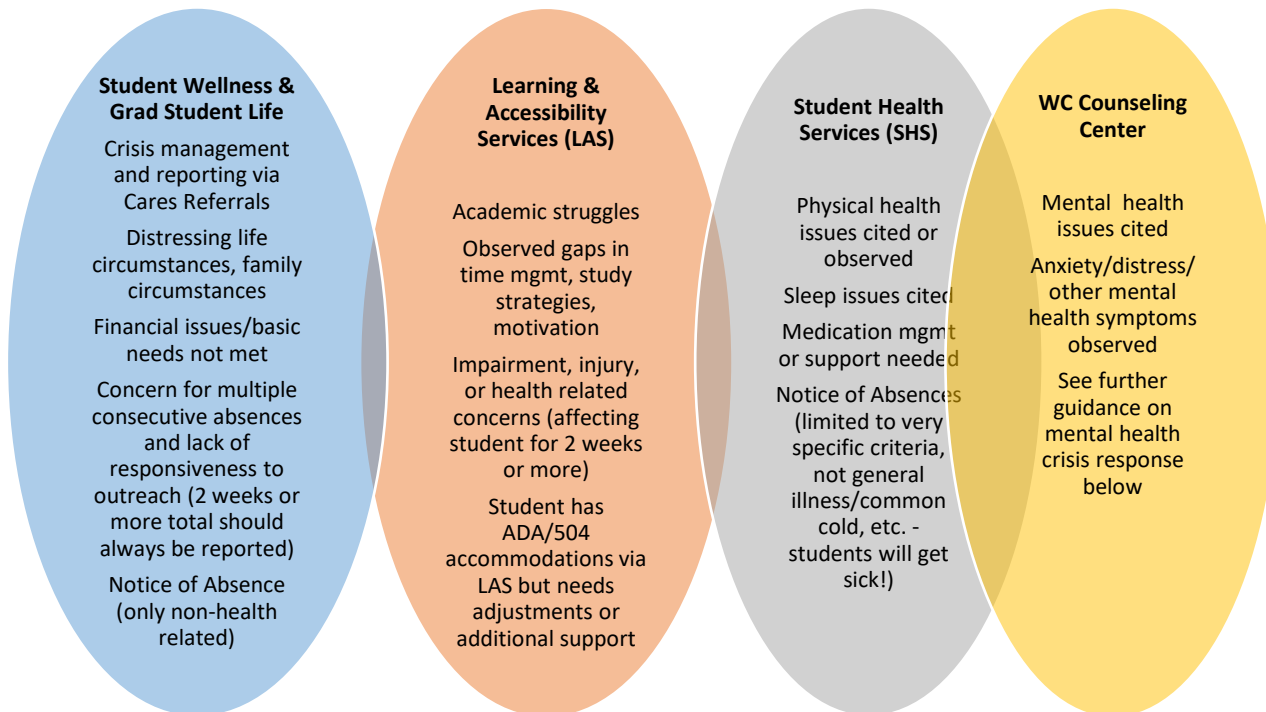
WHAT FACULTY/STAFF CAN DO PROACTIVELY:

- Identify and be clear on the Learning Outcomes (LOs) for your program, course assignment, extra-curricular activity, etc. as this is the starting point for consideration of any exception.
- Make participation/behavioral expectations and LOs clear at the start (especially for attendance and late assignments), both spoken and written down for students to reference later.
- Provide ongoing feedback so they know where they stand and if there are risks of them not meeting the LOs.
- Make referrals as needed! See below guidance.

Learning Outcomes:

It is critical to be aware of one's course or program/activity "learning outcomes", i.e. that which ought not be fundamentally altered even in cases of approved exceptions to policies such as official ADA accommodations. Further guidance on determining if something is a fundamental alteration is available from LAS.

REFERRALS GUIDANCE:



Questions to Consider:

Is the request a single request or chronic?

In what category are the barriers that the student is currently citing as the cause for the request for exception?

Is the policy in question a policy tied to the Learning Outcomes or is it more of a "behavior modification" policy?

Is there an alternate route for the student to meet the same Learning Outcome(s) in a path that reduces or eliminates the barriers? Or would an exception result in a fundamental alteration of the L.O.

If I say no, can I clearly show how if an exception was made, a fundamental alteration would occur?

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Why refer a student?

- Gives the College a broader perspective of the student/student needs over time and across other areas of student life
- Reduces burden faculty/staff to be the sole evaluator or decision-maker
- We don't want students feeling like they have to disclose personal mental health or medical information to each individual faculty/staff (who may all respond differently)
- We don't want students feeling like they have to submit personal medical or disability documentation to faculty/staff (outside of LAS) in order to get accommodations
- Connects student to available supportive resources and centralizes the support

Mental Health Levels of Concern and Response:

