

# College of Fine Arts Parental Accommodations and Family Emergency Accommodations for Graduate Students

With the endorsement of the department chairs and school directors, Dean Dempster adopted this policy for the College of Fine Arts on February 20, 2020.

To aid graduate students in balancing their scholarly and parenting/family responsibilities, the College of Fine Arts encourages departmental accommodation to qualifying graduate students for childbirth, newborn care, and adoption, as well as emergency family needs resulting from illness or death. These accommodations are available to full-time enrolled Fine Arts graduate students (enrolled for at least nine credit hours each long semester) who are in good academic standing. It is the responsibility of a graduate student anticipating a birth or adoption to inform his or her graduate adviser and research supervisor of any anticipated accommodation needs as early as possible. Accommodations may affect the following: Academic Responsibilities, Work Appointments, Time to Degree progress, and Leave of Absence.

## **1. ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

Eligible students are allowed a one-semester extension of the Academic Milestone document created by the department. The extension includes coursework, qualifying exams, committee meetings, presentations, and any other required academic responsibilities. The extension may be taken either during or immediately following the semester in which the student's child is born or adopted. After an accommodation period, students are expected to resume progress toward degree completion, and faculty are encouraged to remain flexible in their expectations so that students can meet the demands of graduate study while adjusting to new demands in their parental roles.

## **2. WORK APPOINTMENTS**

The College of Fine Arts encourages departments to provide non-TA/Al support for graduate students during the semester in which a child is born or adopted. If this cannot be done, new parents may request to be appointed to TA or GRA positions whose duties can be done in flexible environments and on flexible schedules. Flexibility regarding the distribution of specific TA duties within a semester is strongly encouraged for supervisors of students anticipating the birth or adoption of a child. The student and graduate adviser (or other supervisor) should agree to review these TA duties on a periodic schedule to ensure that work is being completed in a timely and satisfactory manner. A TA whose accommodations include performing at least some duties away from campus should review University guidelines regarding telecommuting and may be asked to sign a Telecommuting Agreement.

## **3. TIME TO DEGREE PROGRESS**

Each graduate program has completed a Milestone document that outlines timely progress toward completion of a degree. The College of Fine Arts Funding and Time to Degree policy specifies the timeline for graduate student funding relative to the Milestone; the Dean's office will consider any applications made for extension of funding (fellowships, work appointment) relative to the policy, upon review of the accommodation request.

#### **4. LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

In some cases, a complete break from all employment and academic responsibilities may be most appropriate: [AUTHORIZATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE \(For Master's Students and Doctoral students not in candidacy\)](#)

forms are available from the Graduate School. This leave is unpaid, and – unless the student qualifies for leave under the federal **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** – employee health insurance premium sharing is unavailable for any full month of leave (see the **Human Resources Parental Leave webpage**.) Please see your department's graduate adviser or graduate coordinator, for assistance.

#### **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

After consulting with their supervising professor, students must apply in writing to their graduate adviser for a Parental or Family Emergency accommodation. This application must conform to all Graduate School guidelines for leaves and must be approved by the graduate student's academic supervisor. A copy of this leave/accommodation should be forwarded to the College of Fine Arts Senior Associate Dean.

As with all academic employee appointments, future financial support is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress as defined by the student's GSC, and satisfactory job performance as defined by the employing unit.

International students are strongly encouraged to consult in advance with the International Office about possible visa implications.

If medical conditions indicate that additional accommodations may be necessary, students should contact Services for Students with Disabilities and the Office for Inclusion and Equity to determine what additional accommodations are reasonable

#### **5. GRIEVANCE**

Leave or appointment disputes unresolved at the department/school level may be brought to the attention of the Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the College of Fine Arts for further consideration.