Involuntary Withdrawal

Summary/Purpose: To describe the circumstances under and processes by which the Student Intervention Team may involuntarily withdraw a student from the University of Mississippi.

The University of Mississippi is committed to the well-being and safety of all its community members. Therefore, a student may be involuntarily withdrawn from the University if it is determined that the student presents a danger to himself or to others. Decisions for involuntary withdrawal will be made by the Student Intervention Team or SIT. A decision for involuntary withdrawal will only be made after less drastic measures have been considered and rejected as inappropriate or insufficient under the circumstances. Prior to any involuntary withdrawal, a student will be encouraged to withdraw voluntarily.

This policy does not take the place of disciplinary action for a student’s violations of University policy. This policy is to be invoked only in extraordinary circumstances where it is determined that other policies are inadequate or inappropriate.

The standard for involuntary withdrawal is clear and convincing evidence that the student represents a danger to himself or herself, or to others. Examples of such circumstances include, but are not limited to: students threatening other individuals with severe bodily harm, students making suicidal threats, students engaging in serious self-abuse (such as life-threatening eating disorders or substance abuse), students who are not able to care for their own basic needs to the extent that their lack of self-care represents a threat to the health of themselves or others, and/or students exhibiting extremely bizarre or destructive behavior. This policy may not be used to involuntarily withdraw a student simply because he or she exhibits eccentric or unusual behavior.

Prior to involuntarily withdrawing a student, SIT may require that the student undergo a mandatory evaluation. The evaluation will not be required if SIT believes that such an evaluation will not be helpful in arriving at a decision.

A student who is being considered for involuntary withdrawal shall be notified in writing by SIT. If the student would like to request a hearing before SIT, he or she must request a hearing in writing within 48 hours of the initial notification. If a student requests a hearing, it will be conducted as soon as possible, but no later than seven calendar days after the request is made, unless both the student and SIT agree that a further postponement is necessary. While the hearing is pending, SIT may, for safety reasons, prohibit the student from being on campus or limit other student privileges or access to University facilities or resources.

The hearing will be informal. The student may bring a parent, an advisor, or a mental health professional to the hearing. The student will be allowed to present any evidence that he or she believes demonstrates that involuntary withdrawal is not necessary; however, SIT may decline to hear evidence that is irrelevant or redundant. If a student fails to appear at a scheduled hearing, SIT may, in its discretion conduct the hearing in the absence of the student.
If SIT decides that involuntary withdrawal of a student is necessary, the student may appeal in writing to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. Such an appeal must be filed within three days of the notification that the student is being involuntarily withdrawn. Within three days of the receipt by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs of a notice of appeal from a student, both SIT and the student will submit written reports to the Vice Chancellor for his or her review. No hearing will be made upon appeal. The Vice Chancellor will rule as soon as possible, but no later than one week after the receipt of the written reports from SIT and the student. The decision of the Vice Chancellor will be final.

If a decision is made by SIT to involuntarily withdraw a student from the University, the members of SIT shall immediately prepare a list of offices to be notified of the decision. The list shall include the offices of the Provost, the Registrar, the Dean of the School or College in which the student is enrolled, and UPD. Other offices may need to be notified as well, such as Housing and Financial Aid. Furthermore, SIT may notify any person or office, both on campus or off campus, of its decision if SIT determines such notification is necessary to protect the health and/or safety of either the student or third parties.

Students who are involuntarily withdrawn from the University will be allowed to petition SIT for readmission during a subsequent term. Students who have been involuntarily withdrawn will be required to present clear and convincing evidence that they no longer pose a danger to themselves or to others. SIT may impose reasonable conditions upon students who are readmitted after being involuntarily withdrawn. Failure to comply with conditions may result in the student being withdrawn from the University immediately.

Students denied readmission by SIT may follow the appeal process outlined above.