Policy	E-2.10
Approved by:	Education Council
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Amendment date:	
Policy Holder:	Provost and Vice President Education & Innovation

INVOLUNTARY HEALTH AND SAFETY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Purpose

1.1 This policy enables Camosun College (the "College") to institute a non-punitive involuntary leave of absence when an individual student presents significant medical and/or mental health challenge(s) preventing or limiting their ability to function safely within the College community.

1.2 This policy provides for an involuntary leave of absence to be the final option identified and implemented by the College after all other supports, accommodations and withdrawal opportunities have been assessed.

Scope

2.1 This policy is applicable to all Camosun College students.

Principles

3.1 Camosun College is committed to the mental health and wellbeing of its College community, including students, faculty and employees, and to providing a safe and positive learning and working environment for all members within.

3.2 The College recognizes that students may experience significant emotional, psychological or other health-related difficulties during their pursuit of study with the institution. These challenges can impact a student's ability to achieve their academic goals.

3.3 The College is committed to exploring appropriate supports and reasonable accommodations to enable a student who is experiencing medical and/or mental health challenges to continue their studies at the College.

3.4 The College has a responsibility to respond pro-actively and appropriately to situations where a student's behaviour may have a negative impact on themselves, other members of the College community or the learning environment – up to and including enacting an involuntary leave of absence.

3.5 The College is committed to working with any student on involuntary leave, and with other support team members, to ensure that transition and support plan options are available when the student is safely able to return to the College learning community, with or without support.

3.6 The College is committed to ensuring a fair and transparent process that maintains, to the extent possible, the non-punitive intents of this policy and involves an individualized assessment in each case.

3.7 The College abides by applicable privacy legislation and, accordingly, acknowledges the personal and sometimes sensitive nature of student personal information. The College will respect the confidentiality of student personal information in accordance with applicable legislation.

Policy Holder & Operational Unit

4.1 This policy is the responsibility of the Provost and Vice President Education & Innovation and will be administered by Student Services.

Key Definitions

Assessment & Re-Entry Review Committee: This committee will be convened by Student Services' Student Support Manager when an involuntary leave of absence decision is being recommended and a Transition Plan is complete. This is intended to be an independent review. Committee members will represent academic and non-academic divisions of the College and will be selected consistent with the unique circumstances of each student's situation. Committee members cannot be (or have been) directly involved in the original assessment process or the creation of the Transition Plan.

Behaviour of Concern: Behaviour of concern is any type of behaviour (either direct or indirect) that is impeding the ability of a student to be a safe, contributing member of the College community. Examples of concerning behaviour include but are not limited to:

- physical aggression (e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, biting)
- object aggression (e.g. throwing and breaking objects)
- verbal aggression (e.g. language profanity or obscene gestures)

- disruptive behaviour (e.g. behaviours which a reasonable person would consider to substantially and/or repeatedly interfere with the classroom teaching or learning environment)
- self-injurious behaviours (e.g. deliberate self-harm, suicidal intent)
- inappropriate sexual behaviour towards self or others
- bullying and/or intimidation
- any type of harassment (e.g. stalking)
- mental health conditions

Involuntary Leave of Absence: A non-punitive, temporary separation/withdrawal of the student from the learning environment imposed by Camosun College following the process set out in this Policy**.** An Involuntary Leave of Absence is non-disciplinary, and does not constitute an expulsion or suspension from the College. The length of the Involuntary Leave of Absence will be dependent upon the individual circumstances of the student.

Risk / Need Assessment: A process of gathering and evaluating information from multiple, appropriate sources in order to understand, review and assess the situation and determine the appropriate intervention to ensure the safety of students and the rest of the College community.

Safety Net: The College Safety Net is a committee that receives reports of disruptive and/or concerning behavior or misconduct and tracks patterns and trends relative to the Student Conduct Policy and matters of safety. Safety Net is responsible for information sharing, consulting, advising, guiding and making recommendations in order to promote a safe environment for all students, staff and faculty focused on student learning and development at Camosun College. Safety Net is not a decision making body. Safety Net is the responsibility of the Associate Director of Student Services, will be coordinated by the College's Student Support Manager, and includes relevant college stakeholders such as security, counselling and faculty where appropriate.

Transition Plan: The Transition Plan is a formal document to be developed by the Safety Net, with primary responsibility for assessing and supporting the student at-risk / of concern. This document will clearly communicate to a respective student, in a context-appropriate manner, all elements surrounding an involuntary withdrawal decision, including but not limited to:

- identification of the behaviour(s) or circumstance(s) leading to consideration of involuntary withdrawal;
- a summary of the procedures engaged in to reach the decision to involuntarily withdraw;
- decision making criteria employed by the College in reaching the decision;
- relevant timelines of events, meetings and communications;
- recommendations for medical / mental health support;
- a detailed description of re-entry requirements and/or a re-entry plan; and
- information on appeals process and options.

Policy Statements

Involuntary Health and Safety Leave of Absence

5.1 When a student is exhibiting behaviour of concern, Student Services is responsible for coordinating and convening the college's Safety Net, to review the situation for a potential involuntary leave of absence by conducting a Risk/Need Assessment, and to establish a plan for moving forward.

5.2 A Transition Plan will be developed, coordinated and implemented under the leadership of the Student Support Manager, in collaboration with Safety Net.

5.3 The College is responsible for clearly communicating to the student a contact person from whom the student: will receive information; may pose questions to or seek supporting information about the process or available College services; and will receive information about decisions and next steps throughout the process.

5.4 Every student has the right to support during the Risk/Need Assessment process, support planning processes and/or the involuntary health and safety leave of absence. This support can be organized by the College for the student through the Student Support Manager, or a student may identify a support person external to the College.

5.5 The College may request additional information, including medical or mental health professional assessments, where deemed necessary to enable a decision regarding an involuntary leave of absence. Students are not required to comply with any requests for additional medical information, including assessments. However, the College will continue to complete the review with or without this information, and therefore participation in medical assessments is strongly encouraged.

5.6 At the conclusion of a thorough review of all available relevant information, the Student Support Manager and the Associate Director of Student Services are responsible for making a recommendation regarding the involuntary health and safety leave of absence.

5.7 When an involuntary leave of absence assessment is recommended, the Student Support Manager is responsible for convening an Assessment and Re-Entry Review Committee to assess the recommendation.

5.8 The Transition Plan will be presented and discussed with the student prior to the involuntary leave of absence being implemented. The student may have a support person present at this meeting.

5.9 When an involuntary leave of absence is applied, the student's registration will be cancelled for the semester with no academic penalty and a tuition credit or refund will be granted.

5.10 The assessment for re-entry or re-admission may involve evaluation of supporting documentation, including medical evidence. Re-admission may be granted on the basis of conditions, including but not limited to proof of ongoing treatment or access to support. The College may require a medical assessment as part of the Transition Plan, prior to the assessment for re-admission.

5.11 When the student or their treating medical professional determines that they are ready to return to the College, the student may contact the College to discuss re-entry options where applicable. The Transition Plan will include contact options at the College for the student.

Management of Information

5.12 Students have a right to their personal information in the possession of the College that was used to make decisions under this Policy and can request, at any time, a copy of their Transition Plan.

5.13 Student information will be stored and retained in compliance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and any other applicable legislation.

Confidentiality

5.14 In alignment with the principles outlined herein, there are limits to confidentiality. Circumstances that may require the College to disclose student personal information include but are not limited to:

5.14.1 When an individual is identified as being at imminent risk of harming themselves and/or others

5.14.2 When there are reasonable grounds to believe that members of the College community or wider community may be at risk of harm

5.14.3 When notification and/or action is required by law, or other College policies

5.15 A student will be notified by the student's identified College contact person if their personal information is going to be disclosed pursuant to this Policy.

Appeal Process

6.1 A student has the right to appeal a decision made under this Policy.

6.2 To appeal a decision under this Policy, appeals can be directed in writing or in person to the Provost and Vice President Education & Innovation.

Related Camosun College Policies

- Student Conduct Policy
  - http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.5.pdf
- Course Withdrawal
  - http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.2.pdf
- Medical/Compassionate Withdrawals
  - http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.8.pdf
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy
  - http://camosun.ca/about/policies/operations/o-6-information-management/o-6.1.pdf
- Records Management Policy
  - http://camosun.ca/about/policies/operations/o-6-information-management/o-6.2.pdf

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