**AS&E Policy on Parental Accommodation for PhD Students**

All PhD students in AS&E who are full-time, registered students in good standing have the option to pursue a parental accommodation immediately following the birth of a child, adoption of a child or placement of a foster child. Under this policy, eligible students can take advantage of a parental accommodation immediately following the birth of a child, adoption of a child or placement of a foster child applicable to up to twelve (12) continuous weeks of their academic, teaching and research responsibilities. School-funded PhD students may be eligible for a paid parental accommodation; compensation is tied to duties that would have been performed during the time of the accommodation. Any parental accommodation beyond the approved twelve-week period will be unpaid and considered a personal leave of absence.

**Purpose**

Aligned with the University’s efforts to support an inclusive environment balancing academics, work, and personal life, the Schools of AS&E adopted this Parental Accommodation policy. The policy makes it possible for a student to focus on the responsibilities of new parenthood while maintaining full-time registration status. Full-time status allows the student to keep benefits associated with this status, such as loan repayment schedules, housing eligibility, and health insurance. The policy also facilitates the return to full participation in courses, research and teaching.

Because the student remains enrolled as a full-time student during the accommodation period, this is not a formal leave of absence. It is instead a modification of deadlines and academic expectations to accommodate the student’s new parental commitments. Subject to their advisor’s and graduate director’s approval, the student will be able to postpone or modify academic requirements such as teaching and research assistantships, completion of course assignments, examinations, and other academic milestones during the twelve-week parental accommodation period. Students are expected to work with their advisors and graduate directors to ensure requirements are fulfilled in a timely fashion after the parental accommodation period has concluded.

**Eligibility**

To be eligible for an unpaid parental accommodation under this policy:

- An applicant must be a full-time PhD student in good standing in the School of Arts & Sciences or the School of Engineering.
- An applicant must complete a Parental Accommodation Request Form and provide all required documentation as well as clear written notice of the request for accommodation to the graduate dean at least ninety (90) days before the expected accommodation is proposed to start. (Exceptions to the notice time frame are permitted in extenuating circumstances).
- Take the parental accommodation immediately after the birth, adoption or placement of a child.
To be eligible for paid parental accommodation under this policy an applicant must meet the above eligibility requirements and:

- Hold an appointment subject to a stipend or fellowship that would otherwise apply to the requested parental accommodation period. For students in the School of Arts & Sciences, if an external funding source does not allow for a paid parental accommodation period consistent with this policy the student’s accommodation will be covered by University funds. Students in the School of Engineering receiving funding from an external funding source should consult their Graduate Dean regarding the availability of paid leave depending on the external funding source.
- Have been enrolled as a full-time PhD student for at least one semester
- Be within the first five years of the PhD program
- Take the twelve weeks of parental accommodation afforded under this policy in a continuous block immediately after the birth, adoption or placement of a child.
- Funding cannot be guaranteed if the student takes a leave of absence or chooses to take a leave of absence after having completed the twelve weeks of approved accommodation.

Preparing for Accommodation Period

Students preparing to participate in a parental accommodation must meet with their advisor and graduate director to develop a plan to facilitate and support the accommodation, including managing academic and work-related obligations, among other responsibilities. If the timing of an accommodation will impede a student’s ability to engage in their academic studies or work assignments, a plan will be developed to allow for the student’s continued progress and contributions as part of the accommodation. Students should understand that certain assignments which are time sensitive and/or time dependent may be impacted and should plan accordingly, including seeking the guidance and support of their advisor or graduate director. Also, students must understand that assignments and/or appointments that are restricted such as those that are semester-long and not subject to renewal prior to a parental accommodation may not be available after the accommodation.

An accommodation taken under this policy is subject to any sponsored research requirements applicable to any project engaged in by the graduate student, and as such, the PI must confirm the continued appointment of the student at the time of the request. International students must consult in advance of a parental accommodation with the International Center for information regarding their compliance with applicable immigration laws. Also, students should consult with the financial aid office regarding their loan eligibility prior to the accommodation and should understand that if they do not return following the expiration of an accommodation period, that this may impact their loan repayment terms, including the expiration of any grace period associated with applicable loans.

During the Accommodation Period

A qualified and eligible student already enrolled may continue health insurance coverage during the parental accommodation period subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans in place. Students may also continue to have access to on-campus facilities.
Tuition and stipend support will apply consistent with the student’s appointment and in compliance with applicable laws and/or other requirements.

**Return from Accommodation**
As the parental accommodation period comes to an end, students will be required to contact their advisor and graduate director to confirm plans for resuming their duties and should be in touch with their advisor and graduate director. Students must make contact at least one week before the end of the parental accommodation period.

**Retaliation and Discrimination Prohibited**
It is prohibited to retaliate or discriminate against any student for having exercised their rights under this policy.

**Questions?**
Any questions about this policy may be raised with the graduate dean’s office.