

Further, while your email requests information, I was unable to find a citation for any official Pitzer procedure regarding student return to campus following a medical emergency/accident. The Pitzer College Student Handbook (2017-2018) only states the following:

Involuntary Leave of Absence: When there are indications that a student's behavior could result in psychological or physical harm to her/himself or to others, prompt and decisive action is in the best interest of everyone. The Vice President for Student Affairs and/or the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs may place a student on involuntary leave of absence for a specified period or until such time the danger may be shown to no longer exist. Any student arrested for a felony or a misdemeanor involving crimes of violence, dishonesty, or moral turpitude may be immediately placed on involuntary leave. The College shall retain discretion to determine when it would be appropriate for the student to return to study.

As I have yet to submit any medical documentation, what are the indicators that my behavior could cause physical harm to myself or others? At the base of this policy is a concern of risk or danger to myself or others; however, any danger that has been mentioned is purely speculative. Is the concern that I will hurt myself, or that I am a liability to the college? If you are referencing another college procedure, I would like to formally request a copy.

What I find most troubling in all of this is the consistent pattern of abuses from Pitzer College aimed at low income Black women. Instead of providing any form of support, the college is pushing me, and has historically pushed other Black women off campus. In this time of vulnerability, I have not been offered financial assistance. Instead I have faced the College's violent attempts to bully me into isolation and silence. This is the same institution that refuses additional financial aid to students who opt to take, or are forced to take a leave of absence in their time at Pitzer.

When I received an impromptu call from both Dean Vasquez and Desiree Ross, Dean of Vasquez attempted to isolate me from the Black community on campus with an entirely baseless accusation; that I planned to "abuse my friends" in asking for their labor in my recovery. The Dean of Students' speculation failed to account for the fact that our multi-million dollar wheelchair accessible campus is far easier to navigate than the housing my immigrant, working-class family is able to afford. If the school looked holistically at my files with any care, they would understand that my class background only offers the option of caring for myself while I recover. This is irresponsible governance and allocation of resources is entirely incongruous with Pitzer College's core values.

Further, as you certainly know, a vast majority of my community on campus works as Resident Advisors. I find it extremely insulting that the school has never shown this level of concern in my community member's labor being exploited. While the College insinuates that I would unjustly use my community, several Resident Advisors have been directly ordered by Pitzer staff to check up every three hours on wealthy white students who are in need of help far beyond the capabilities of a twenty-year old student. I am no more of a liability or a burden than these students.

~~Resident Advisor, Health Education Outreach volunteer, First Generation member,~~
and former President of the Black Student Union, I am well versed in the procedures of Pitzer College. Therefore, it comes to an even greater surprise that this alleged classist and anti-Black procedure around my return to campus could exist when it so blatantly violates my constitutional rights.

Under section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act it clearly states that it is unlawful for the school to prevent me from participating in an activity or program because of a disability. Additionally in Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Action, Section 12182 states:

“No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation.” The previous section (12181) details that this applies to “a nursery, elementary, secondary, undergraduate, or postgraduate private school, or other place of education.” Private colleges and universities are covered by Title III.

At this time, the best thing the college could do to support me is to allow me return to campus. I demand my self-determination and constitutional rights. I am currently missing my courses and disconnected from my community and support network. I find it rather ingenuine that the institution actively recruits in working-class communities to diversify its student body, but refuses to provide the support necessary to retain them. My home environment is not conducive to a restful environment. Remaining on campus to continue my studies and have a supportive network would be the most helpful for me as this moment.

Best,



