

Policies: Class Attendance Policy and Authorized Absence Policy

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Contents

- Attendance Policy
 - Instructor's Responsibility
 - Student's Responsibility
- Authorized Absences
- Medical excuses

Attendance Policy

Instructor's Responsibility

University Senate action provides as follows: Instructors will maintain student attendance records. The instructor will keep such records for reference during the session and for at least one year following the end of the session.

At the beginning of each course, the instructor must provide students in class a written copy of his/her policy specifying the role of attendance in the instructor's method for evaluation of student achievement. A copy of the statement must also be given to the instructor's immediate supervisor. (FS 4/86)

In the event a student is found by an instructor to be absent without explanation for an extended period, usually in excess of one week, this absence is to be reported directly to the Dean of Students Office. The absentees will be contacted immediately in an effort to determine the cause(s) of the absence. The instructor will be informed of their findings (FS 5/71; amended 11/79; amended 10/09). In matters of student absence, the Dean of Students Office is available to assist instructors where there is concern

regarding the excessive absence of a student. The office can be of greatest assistance when concerns are brought to our attention early in a semester.

Student's Responsibility

Because class participation is an integral component of the development of a successful learning community, all students are expected to attend all class sessions of courses in which they are enrolled. While attendance is expected, it is recognized that absences are at times unavoidable. If an absence is necessary, a student should take responsibility for contacting her/his instructor(s) as soon as possible to discuss the ramifications of being away from class. In some instances, significant personal issues result in the need to seek additional assistance (see [Authorized Absences](#)).

It is important for the student to realize that when classes are missed she/he may be at a disadvantage as it is often impossible for the instructor to reconstruct activities that took place in the classroom, laboratory, or field during the absence. Additionally, missing any classes may result in lower grades because the student may miss foundational material needed to succeed in the class. Even under the best of circumstances, extended absences can be problematic, with the real possibility that the student may not be able to complete the course successfully.

Authorized Absences

Absences that fall under one of the following categories are considered authorized: (1) participation in an approved field trip listed in the catalog as a requirement for a course in which the student is enrolled; or (2) participation in an authorized extra-curricular activity on the regularly approved calendar of university events [such absences are reported by the Dean to each Department at least 48 hours in advance of the trip or event]; or (3) Labor Day employment; or (4) active military service; or (5) accommodation of students' religious beliefs [see [Accommodation of student's religious beliefs policy](#)]; (6) illness, injury, or emergency of such severity as to prevent the student from being able to attend class. A student should communicate directly with the instructor when an absence falls under one of the approved six categories. Instructors have discretion regarding requests for absences that do not fall under one of the approved six categories.

In the case of severe illness, injury, or emergency, instructors should be kept apprised

of the situation through direct communication with the student and/or via the Dean of Students Office which will assist students and communicate with instructors as needed.

When absences are authorized, instructors are obligated to work with students to determine the best way for students to resume participation in the class without a penalty. However, if the absences are lengthy, the student, instructor, College Dean, and Dean of Students Office should work together to determine if it will be possible for the student to successfully complete the course.

Medical Excuses

Excuses will not be issued by Student Health Services for course related activities. Specifically, Student Health Services will not provide “medical excuses” for missed classes, missed examinations, or the late completion of assignments. Faculty and students should together resolve the dilemmas resulting from an illness or injury based on the student’s own explanation of the problem.

In some situations, clinicians at Student Health Services will give students specific advice impacting their ability to attend class or complete assignments. At the clinician’s discretion, written advice may be given. Students may wish to share this advice with instructors, but they are not required to do so. Student Health Services personnel will routinely call the Dean of Students Office on the student’s behalf if an absence is expected to be longer than two days. That office will then inform the student’s instructors.

Requests for illness verification may arise in certain specific situations. These requests will likely be granted if deemed to be in the student’s best interest. There are some situations in which verification from the office of Student Health Services will be provided; they are listed below.

Situations where verification is appropriate:

1. Health reason for termination of a housing contract.
2. Disability requiring handicap parking permit.
3. Health problem resulting in cancellation of an airline reservation or other reservation when required to obtain a refund.
4. Health problem causing withdrawal from the University after usual deadlines.

5. Required clearance for return to work.
 6. Health problem leading to a student requesting an “incomplete” in a course.
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