POLICY ON CLASS ATTENDANCE

Senate Policy 102.1

Background

This policy has been updated to reflect changes in technology and communication as well as editorial clarifications regarding the process of evaluating and approving absences.

Policy

- Attending class is essential for academic success. The University expects students to attend all scheduled class times unless an absence is excused under this policy. An excused absence is one in which a student is absent due to an off-campus event (see below) or involves a legitimate extenuating circumstance which causes the student to miss class, miss a major assignment, examination or other graded requirement of the class. Students should contact the Dean of Students Office for excused absences of 3 or more consecutive days or if their absence resulted in missing a major assignment, examination or other graded requirement of the class. Students do not need to contact the Dean of Students Office for excused absences involving fewer than 3 consecutive days. Students are expected to notify their instructors of any absences as soon as possible. Instructors have the discretion to excuse student absences for reasons other than described in this attendance policy.

- Categories of University excused absences:

- Off-campus events:
  - Including intercollegiate athletics; fine arts performances; program-sponsored competitions; program-sponsored field trips; and similar official events where students represent the University in an official capacity.
  - The instructor or staff supervising students participating in these events must provide notice to the students' instructors and the Dean of Students Office prior to the date of the activity. The notice must include the name of the activity, the date(s) of class absence, the name of the supervising instructor or staff, and the names of all participating students.
• Absences involving legitimate extenuating circumstances beyond a student’s control:
  ○ These include student illness or injury that prevents a student from participating in class. Other examples are the death or critical illness of a family member; wedding of an immediate family member or member of the wedding party, birth of a child; military duty; jury duty or subpoena for court appearances; and similar extenuating circumstances.

**Documentation Requirements**: With the exception of extended absences related to COVID-19, documentation will be required for all absences of three or more consecutive days or when the student missed a major assignment, examination or other graded requirement of the class.

• COVID-19 related absences - Students will contact the Dean of Students Office for assistance and support services. Students are encouraged to seek COVID-19 testing as per the recommendations of the CDC, Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, etc. Following the recommendation of the American College Health Association in their document Considerations for Reopening Institutions of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era, students who become ill due to COVID-19 will not be required to make unnecessary visits to a healthcare provider for the purposes of obtaining documentation. Students advised by the university or through government recommendations/regulations to self-isolate for a period of time, will not be required to provide documentation from a healthcare provider. These students will work with the Dean of Students Office for assistance and support services.

Instructors retain the discretion to excuse student absences for reasons other than those described in the above paragraphs. Students participating in activities on behalf of a student organization may obtain a verified absence letter from the Student Activities Office. This letter is meant to confirm a student’s participation in an extracurricular activity and may be presented to the instructor when requesting an absence from class.

Students are responsible for notifying their instructors prior to missing a class and arranging a mutually-acceptable make-up procedure. In emergency situations, where students are unable to notify their instructors, students should promptly contact the Dean of Students Office for assistance.

Students with an excused absence shall be allowed to earn full credit for missing assignments by performing equivalent work, as long as the instructor deems that the learning objectives of the course can still be met. Where this is in question, it should be determined in conversation between the student and the instructor, if necessary in consultation with the Dean of Students. This conversation should happen as soon as possible. The substance of the equivalent work and the deadline for its completion shall be determined by the instructor.
Instructors concerned with a student’s excessive absence should contact the Dean of Students Office for advice and assistance.

The Dean of Students Office may be contacted by an instructor or a student for assistance in informally resolving any disputes under this policy. If a dispute cannot be resolved informally, the student may follow the Student Academic Grievance policy.

This change should also be made in Section 3.2.10 of the Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Handbook


Proposal 20-95:
Adopted by Senate: March 8, 1995
Approved by President: March 24, 1995
Became Senate Policy 102.1

Proposal 24-13:
Introduced to Senate: 27 March 2013
Friendly Amendment (in blue): 10 April 2013
Approved by Senate: 10 April 2013
Approved by Administration: 19 April 2013

Proposal 6-14:
Introduced to Senate: 20 November 2013
Approved by Senate: 11 December 2013
Approved by Administration: 17 December 2013

Proposal 19-15:
Introduced to Senate: 10 December 2014
Friendly Amendment :21 January 2015
Approved by Senate with Amendment: 21 January 2015
Approved by Administration: 30 January 2015

Proposal 64-20:
Introduced to Senate: 3 June 2020
Approved by Senate: 17 June 2020
Approved by Administration: 22 June 2020