

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sheila Converse, Executive Secretary
Faculty Senate

FROM: Becky Bitter, Registrar's Office

FOR: Academic Affairs Committee

DATE: 10 November 2016

SUBJECT: Proposal to Revise Rule 72, Class Attendance During the First Week to Ensure Enrollment, and Rule 73, Absences

At its meeting on November 8, 2016, AAC approved the following proposal to revise Rule 72 and to eliminate Rule 73 (because the information from Rule 73 is now incorporated into Rule 72).

The proposal for the revisions was requested by the Office of the Dean of Students, which provided the following rationale:

The Office of the Dean of Students offers suggested revisions to the Absence policy to provide clarity for students and instructors. This office routinely responds to questions from students and questions from instructors seeking clarity on the current Absence policy.

The suggested revisions seek to clearly convey that the instructor is responsible for determining the course policies and responsible to determine appropriate flexibility to those policies. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of the absence as soon as possible and request arrangements for missed work. Instructors shall determine whether to accept the excuse request from a student, waive the absence, permit make-up work, etc. The Office of the Dean of Students does not excuse absences for students.

Suggested additions to the policy provide clarification to the current practice of the Office of the Dean of Students of informing instructors of Emergency Notifications and Request for Consideration.

The rules have been reviewed by the Associate Deans and Vice Chancellors who support the changes presented here.

For ease of reading, a clean copy of the changes is provided following the copy with markup.

At this time, Faculty Senate review and approval is recommended, to be effective fall 2017.

72. CLASS ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES DURING THE FIRST WEEK TO ENSURE ENROLLMENT

Students are responsible for ensuring that they attend all class meetings and complete all in-class and out-of-class work as assigned by the instructor. Students are also responsible for communicating with the instructor should they need to be absent.

1. **ATTENDANCE POLICY:** The instructor is responsible for determining the attendance policy and for making decisions regarding the policy, including the consequence of missed classes, within guidelines established by the academic unit. The instructor is responsible for communicating the policy to the students, both in the classroom and on the course syllabus.
2. **ADMINISTRATIVE DROPS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE: ~~CLASS ATTENDANCE DURING THE FIRST WEEK TO ENSURE ENROLLMENT:~~** Students who have not attended class (including lectures, laboratories, and other meetings) and/or laboratory meetings during the first week of the semester or according to a prorated schedule for shorter sessions may be dropped from the course by the department. Students enrolled in online classes may be dropped if they have not logged into the class during the first week.

Students should not assume that they have been dropped without checking their class schedules. verification from the department or Registrar's Office.

~~Students who believe that they have extenuating circumstances which prevent their attendance during the first week should notify the Dean of Students or Student Services. That office will notify instructors of the absence and the reason for it. Instructors shall determine whether to accept the excuse, waive the absence, and permit make-up work.~~

73. ABSENCES

~~Absences impede a student's academic progress and should be avoided.~~

3. **ABSENCES:** Students should make all reasonable efforts to attend all class meetings. However, in the event a student is unable to attend a class it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor as soon as possible and make arrangements for any missed work. Missing class meetings may result in reducing the overall grade in the class.
 - a. **UNIVERSITY SPONSORED.** Any student who is required to participate in off-campus, university-sponsored activities such as field trips, musical performances, judging teams, intercollegiate athletic events, etc., should obtain an official Class Absence Request form from the faculty or staff member supervising the off-campus activity. The form must contain specific information concerning the activity and date, be signed by the supervising faculty or staff member, and be submitted by the student at least one week in advance to the individual instructors of the student's classes. It is ~~requested~~ recommended, but not required, that a student not be penalized for absence from class provided a properly signed Class Absence Request form has been filed with the instructor prior to the absence. These university-sponsored absences are subject to an instructor's attendance policy and are not intended to imply additional acceptable absences. In all instances, it is the student's

responsibility to make up all work missed. ~~Problem cases should follow the Academic Complaint Procedures, Rule 104.~~

- b. **MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS.** Students who are members of the National Guard or a reserve branch of a military service are occasionally required to miss class for weekend drills, active duty, and related responsibilities. In such a case, instructors should not penalize students for the absences and should allow work with the student/s them to make-up the missed work assignment or examination. In each instance, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of the duty before the absence and complete the missed work as soon as reasonably possible.
- c. **FLEXIBLE ATTENDANCE AS AN ACCESS ACCOMMODATION.** Due to certain disabilities or chronic medical conditions, flexibility with attendance may be regarded as a reasonable accommodation. In these situations, instructors will receive notification of approved accommodations and procedures from the Access Center. The Access Center also provides accommodations on a temporary basis for injuries such as broken limbs or concussions but does not provide accommodations for acute illnesses.
- d. ~~c.~~ **OTHER EXCUSED ABSENCES.** Students must sometimes miss class meetings, examinations, or other academic obligations affecting their grades due to personal circumstances because of illness, personal crises, mandated court appearances, parental responsibilities, and the like. It is the responsibility of the student to provide a written explanation for the absence to the instructor as soon as it is reasonable to do so. When possible, students should provide appropriate documentation for their absence but instructors cannot require written excuses from health care professionals.

As long as such absences are not excessive, it is recommended, but not required, that the instructor provide and document reasonable arrangements accommodation. Determinations regarding the acceptance of an absence are the discretion of the instructor based on the attendance policy as stated in the class syllabus. ~~The instructor may require the student to submit a written explanation of the absence, but written excuses from health care personnel should not be required since these requests frequently put the health care personnel in untenable positions.~~

~~3e.~~ Students who attempt to gain advantage through abuse of this policy (e.g., by providing an instructor with false information) may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct Standards and Accountability for disciplinary action.

~~d.~~ ~~A student~~ ~~Students who are~~ is dissatisfied with the instructor's accommodation may follow the Academic Complaint Procedure, Rule 104. It is recommended that the instructor explain the procedures for excused absences early in the semester, preferably in a written syllabus distributed to all students in each class. Once announced, these procedures should be scrupulously followed unless extraordinary circumstances require an exception.

~~e.~~ Students who attempt to gain advantage through abuse of this policy (e.g., by providing an instructor with false information) may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct Standards and Accountability for disciplinary action.

- 4. **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS:** While the Office of the Dean of Students does not excuse or verify student absences, in the event a student is going to be away from class for an extended period and is unable to contact the instructor in a timely manner, the Office of the Dean of Students may provide an

emergency notification on the student's behalf to the instructors, informing them of the student's absence and the planned duration of the absence. An emergency notification should not be required or used to excuse a student's absence.

It is the responsibility of the student to make contact with their instructors as soon as possible to make arrangements for missed work. It is up to the instructor to determine what if any arrangements will be made for the student based upon the attendance policy as stated in the course syllabus.

5. **REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION:** The Office of the Dean of Students and/or the Office for Equal Opportunity may contact instructors on a student's behalf when the student's involvement in a matter implicating the WSU Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct, Executive Policy #15, is having a significant impact on the student's academic progress. In such cases, the instructor is strongly encouraged to work with the student to address the student's needs without compromising learning objectives.

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor to make these arrangements.

6. ~~3d. –A student~~ Students who are is dissatisfied with the instructor's arrangement accommodation may follow the Academic Complaint Procedure, Rule 104. ~~It is recommended that the instructor explain the procedures for excused absences early in the semester, preferably in a written syllabus distributed to all students in each class. Once announced, these procedures should be scrupulously followed unless extraordinary circumstances require an exception.~~

72. CLASS ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

Students are responsible for ensuring that they attend all class meetings and complete all in-class and out-of-class work as assigned by the instructor. Students are also responsible for communicating with the instructor should they need to be absent.

1. **ATTENDANCE POLICY:** The instructor is responsible for determining the attendance policy and for making decisions regarding the policy, including the consequence of missed classes, within guidelines established by the academic unit. The instructor is responsible for communicating the policy to the students, both in the classroom and on the course syllabus.
2. **ADMINISTRATIVE DROPS FOR NON-ATTENDANCE:** Students who have not attended class meetings (including lectures, laboratories, and other meetings) during the first week of the semester or according to a prorated schedule for shorter sessions may be dropped from the course by the department. Students enrolled in online classes may be dropped if they have not logged into the class during the first week.

Students should not assume that they have been dropped without checking their class schedules.

3. **ABSENCES:** Students should make all reasonable efforts to attend all class meetings. However, in the event a student is unable to attend a class, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor as soon as possible and make arrangements for any missed work. Missing class meetings may result in reducing the overall grade in the class.
 - a. **UNIVERSITY SPONSORED.** Any student who is required to participate in off-campus, university-sponsored activities such as field trips, musical performances, judging teams, intercollegiate athletic events, etc., should obtain an official Class Absence Request form from the faculty or staff member supervising the off-campus activity. The form must contain specific information concerning the activity and date, be signed by the supervising faculty or staff member, and be submitted by the student at least one week in advance to the individual instructors of the student's classes. It is recommended, but not required, that a student not be penalized for absence from class provided a properly signed Class Absence Request form has been filed with the instructor prior to the absence. These university-sponsored absences are subject to an instructor's attendance policy and are not intended to imply additional acceptable absences. In all instances, it is the student's responsibility to make up all work missed.
 - b. **MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS.** Students who are members of the National Guard or a reserve branch of a military service are occasionally required to miss class for weekend drills, active duty, and related responsibilities. In such a case, instructors should not penalize students for the absences and should allow them to make-up the missed work. In each instance, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of the duty before the absence and complete the missed work as soon as reasonably possible.
 - c. **FLEXIBLE ATTENDANCE AS AN ACCESS ACCOMMODATION.** Due to certain disabilities or chronic medical conditions, flexibility with attendance may be regarded as a reasonable accommodation. In these situations, instructors will receive notification of approved accommodations and procedures from the Access Center. The Access Center also provides accommodations on a temporary basis for injuries such as broken limbs or concussions but does not provide accommodations for acute illnesses.
 - d. **OTHER ABSENCES.** Students must sometimes miss class meetings, examinations, or other academic obligations affecting their grades due to personal circumstances. It is the responsibility of the student to provide a written explanation for the absence to the instructor as soon as it is reasonable to do so. When possible, students should provide appropriate documentation for their absence but instructors cannot require written excuses from health care professionals.

As long as such absences are not excessive, it is recommended, but not required, that the instructor provide and document reasonable arrangements. Determinations regarding the acceptance of an absence are the discretion of the instructor based on the attendance policy as stated in the class syllabus.

Students who attempt to gain advantage through abuse of this policy (e.g., by providing an instructor with false information) may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.

4. **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS:** While the Office of the Dean of Students does not excuse or verify student absences, in the event a student is going to be away from class for an extended period and is unable to contact the instructor in a timely manner, the Office of the Dean of Students may provide an emergency notification on the student's behalf to the instructors, informing them of the student's absence and the planned duration of the absence. An emergency notification should not be required or used to excuse a student's absence.

It is the responsibility of the student to make contact with their instructors as soon as possible to make arrangements for missed work. It is up to the instructor to determine what if any arrangements will be made for the student based upon the attendance policy as stated in syllabus.

5. **REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION:** The Office of the Dean of Students and/or the Office for Equal Opportunity may contact instructors on a student's behalf when the student's involvement in a matter implicating the WSU Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct, Executive Policy #15, is having a significant impact on the student's academic progress. In such cases, the instructor is strongly encouraged to work with the student to address the student's needs without compromising learning objectives.

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor to make these arrangements.

6. Students who are dissatisfied with the instructor's arrangement regarding missed work may follow the Academic Complaint Procedure, Rule 104.