

North Dakota State University

Policy Manual

SECTION 333

CLASS ATTENDANCE

SOURCE: NDSU Faculty Senate Policy

1. ATTENDANCE

Attendance in classes is expected and important. (The term “class” includes class, online class, laboratory, field trips, group exercises, or other activities directly associated with participation in a course.) However, there are instances in which students are unable to attend class and in which those absences must be excused (“Excused Absences”). Specifically, Excused Absences are those identified in section 4 below. All absences not covered by section 4 are excusable at the discretion of the instructor, and reasonable flexibility is encouraged. If an instructor believes verification is necessary to address unexcused absences, short-term common illnesses, childcare responsibilities, vacation/travel, they are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office for consultation. While documentation may be required in some instances, it will not generally be required in order to account for common illnesses that are best cared for by rest and self-care.

Class attendance policies may not have discriminatory effect (intentional or unintentional) on members of a protected class (see [NDSU Policy 100](#)).

Students are expected to notify their instructor about absences in a timely and effective manner. When a student is unable to communicate about an absence due to an emergency or crisis, a family member or other responsible party, may notify the Dean of Students Office, who will then provide notification to instructors. The Dean of Students Office will also provide Excused Absence notifications, when it is required for the student to contact the Dean of Students Office and/or provide verification (jury duty, subpoena, military, bereavement, hospitalizations, long-term illnesses, and emergencies).

2. INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITY

- a. Each syllabus must contain instructor expectations regarding class absences and for making up missed coursework in the class. It is recognized that sometimes an assignment is impossible to make-up.
- b. Excused students must be given an opportunity to address any missed coursework in a reasonable amount of time.
- c. If an instructor is uncertain of how to respond to or assist students, they are welcomed to contact the Dean of Students Office. Additionally, if an instructor receives information from a student regarding bereavement, long-term illness, or personal emergency, they are encouraged to complete the [Care Team](#) reporting form.

3. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND RECOURSE

Students who anticipate excusable absences shall notify the instructor as soon as information about the absence is known. In the case of unanticipated absences or events, the student needs to contact the instructor as soon as possible. Students have the responsibility to communicate with the instructor if graded work is scheduled during times where absences are required. If a student needs assistance navigating a class absence with their instructor, they are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office or complete a [“Concern or Complaint” form](#).

4. EXCUSED ABSENCES

North Dakota State University values and supports students during required participation in university sanctioned activities, while navigating health concerns and emergency situations, during religious observances and bereavement, and while attending to civic or military obligations. Students should contact the Dean of Students Office for assistance with any of the Excused Absences listed below and to initiate any necessary notifications. The Dean of Students Office may require documentation to support and verify excused student absences.

4.1 University Sanctioned Events

Absences due to a university sanctioned event or activity (as defined by the Congress of Student Organizations as Tier 1 or Tier 2), shall be excused. Sanctioned activities also include mandatory participation as a student athlete in NCAA-sanctioned competition, performing arts outreach, exhibitions, competitions, academic meetings, and conferences. Verification may come from the Dean of Students Office, Athletics, Student Activities, or individual staff/faculty members who has oversight or an advisory role within a particular sanctioned event or activity.

4.2 Pregnancy or Related Conditions

Absences due to pregnancy or related conditions, including pregnancy, childbirth, termination or loss of pregnancy, lactation, or recovery from childbirth, shall be excused for as long as the student’s health care provider deems the absences medically necessary. Please visit NDSU [Policy 162: Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#), Section 12.3 and NDSU Policy 156.2 for additional information. In addition to being provided the opportunity to make up missed work, students may be offered alternatives including allowing the student to take an incomplete and complete the course at a later date, retaking the course, or transitioning to an online course. Pregnant students should be provided referral information to the [Equal Opportunity and Title IX Compliance Office](#) to ensure the student is aware of services, resources, and their rights.

4.3 Religious Observances

Religious observances may require absence, tardiness, or early departure from a class session and other required class activities. A student who is to be excused from class for a religious observance is not required to provide documentation of the reason for the absence.

4.4 Jury or Other Legal Duty

Legally mandated absences, such as jury duty or court subpoena, shall be excused.

4.5 Military Duty/Veteran Status

Absences due to military duty or veteran status, including service-related medical appointments, where failure to appear might result in a loss of benefits, shall be excused.

4.6 Student Bereavement

Students who experience a death in their family must contact the Dean of Students Office to implement a student bereavement excused absence. Typically, this death involves that of an immediate family member, as defined by funeral leave in NDSU [Policy 139](#) for employees. However, it is up to the discretion of the Dean of Students Office to determine if a death outside of the immediate family warrants implementation of an excused absence. Upon approval from the Dean of Students Office, students are allowed one week, commencing from the date of notification to the Dean of Students Office. Should a student feel that additional days are necessary, this should be discussed with Dean of Students personnel.

4.7 Hospitalizations, Long-term Illnesses, and Family or Personal Emergencies

Students who are hospitalized, experiencing long-term illnesses, or have emergencies arise, must contact the Dean of Students Office to seek approval of an excused absence.

HISTORY:

New	May 20, 1970
Amended	December 12, 1977
Amended	April 1992
Amended	October 2004
Amended	June 2007
Housekeeping	February 14, 2011
Amended	January 28, 2014
Amended	April 24, 2014
Amended	August 20, 2018
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