

CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY

Preamble
August 11, 2021

Although the attendance policy of the institution remains in effect, faculty are encouraged to not create course policies that incentivize students' attendance while ill. Thus, for fall 2021 faculty may build in some flexibility in the "Attendance and Engagement expectations" they develop for their courses so that students can be academically successful. Students are advised that some learning cannot be easily moved online or reconstructed outside of the in-person classroom, or that an instructor is required to do so. In the event that absences are accumulating and/or the student feels unable to learn the material, they should consult with their academic adviser or the instructor as soon as possible to determine the best course of action.

Revised and Approved by the UNL Faculty Senate
April 3, 2018

- I. Students are expected to attend all classes, including lectures, recitations, quizzes, assessments, exams, and laboratories. Each faculty member has the authority and responsibility to set an attendance policy for their class and it is the responsibility of all students to learn and adhere to those policies, which will vary from instructor to instructor and class to class. Faculty are responsible for setting out their attendance policy at the start of the semester either in the syllabus for the class or in another mode that ensures that all students registered for the class have access to the policy and have the opportunity to ask questions regarding its application and implementation. Attendance policies should clearly spell out the level of class attendance tolerated and penalties for failing to adhere to them.

- II. Regular class attendance is expected of all students of the University. The authority to excuse absences rests with the course instructors, bearing in mind that the following list (II.A-II.E) includes potential excusable absences. While instructors should seek to accommodate student absences specified in this list, (II.A-II.E) students should recognize that certain portions of courses such as labs and discussions can be difficult/impossible to accommodate or makeup. Reasonable accommodation is determined by the course instructor; however, separate accommodations can be registered with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Instructors are not expected to accommodate a student who has missed so much of the critical components of a course, even for legitimate reasons, that arrangements for makeup work would not be reasonable. An excused absence does not absolve the student of their responsibility for the material/content covered in the missed class(es).

II.A. Illness, physical or mental, of the student or a student's dependent

Acute illness or injury of a student or a student's dependent of three calendar days or more (typically two class periods or more) must be formally documented by a healthcare provider who has provided the student or the student's dependent treatment. Illness or injury of a student or a student's dependent of two calendar days or less may still be required to be formally documented, subject to the discretion of individual course instructors. Students with chronic health conditions and/or disabilities that may affect their class attendance should register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in 232 Canfield Administration Building on City Campus. Acute or chronic medical conditions related to the pregnancy of a student or a student's spouse are covered by this policy.

II.B. Participation in intercollegiate athletic events and other UNL sponsored activities

Students involved in University-sponsored activities may need to be excused from a class, lab, or studio meeting. University-sponsored activities are defined as those that a University department are able to verify. In all instances it is the student's responsibility to request permission for the absence (preferably in writing) from the instructor and to discuss how the absence will affect their ability to meet the course requirements. Students should do this as soon in the semester as possible.

II.C. Federal, State, and Local law obligations such as military service and jury duty

II.D. Bereavement

A student grieving from a personal tragedy, such as the loss of a loved one, may need to be excused from a class, lab, studio meeting, or required class activity to attend a funeral or manage grief. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs to request that a notice of their leave be sent to instructors. This notice is for the instructor's information only and does not relieve the student of contacting instructors as soon as possible. Upon their return, the student will provide documentation of the loss to each instructor and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. Consistent with course requirements, instructors should seek to make reasonable accommodations for the grieving student, and should attempt to provide the opportunity to earn similar or equivalent credit for missed assignments or assessments. Upon their return, the student should consider visiting the [Counseling and Psychological Services Office](#) in the UNL Health Center on City Campus or the [Family Resource Center](#) on East Campus to discuss the best methods of returning to normality and integrating once again into the classroom and college life.

II.E. Religious observances

In recognition of the diversity of the student body, the University provides that a student may request an excused absence from class for participation in religious observances. In all such instances, it is the student's responsibility to request, preferably in writing, that the instructor excuse the absence and to discuss how the absence will affect the student's ability to meet the course requirements. A student should make any such requests by the end of the second week of classes.

III. For circumstances not listed in (II), the instructor has the primary responsibility to decide on a case-by-case basis if an absence is due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances.

IV. Notification Requirements

IV.1. In all cases where applicable, it is the responsibility of the students to provide their instructors prior notice to their absence. Each student must submit in writing the class dates which they will miss and the cause that they believe warrants an excused absence, unless the course instructors have expressed their wishes to not be notified. However, in some cases it may be impossible to provide prior notice.

IV.2. In cases where a student is unable to contact their instructors due to major illness, serious injury, or hospitalization, or when given military orders which are effective immediately, a notice may be sent to the student's instructors by a

family physician or the Student Affairs Office, 106 Canfield Administration Building (402-472-3755). This notice is for the instructor's information only and does not relieve the student of contacting instructors as soon as possible.

IV.3. An optional student absence form can be found at:

<http://www.unl.edu/facultysenate/student-absence-policy-form>.

An explanatory statement to be used for students needing to document their absence(s) for illness or injury can be found at:

<https://health.unl.edu/forms/StudentAbsenceForm.pdf>.

IV.4. An instructor has the right to request further information to verify all absences and to not provide an excused absence if the information is not provided within a reasonable time period.

- V.** Not attending a course does not constitute an official drop. You must process the drop or withdrawal through MyRED (go <https://registrar.unl.edu/student/registration/add-drop-withdraw/#dropclasses> to see procedures) or process a Schedule Adjustment Form, or a Cancellation/Withdrawal Form with Registration and Records, 107 Canfield Administration Building. The drop or withdrawal will become official and tuition will be assessed based on the date of the transaction on MyRED, or the date the form is processed in Registration and Records, 107 Canfield Administration Building.

DEPARTMENTS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CANCEL A COURSE RESERVATION FOR A STUDENT WHO DOES NOT ATTEND THE FIRST CLASS MEETING FOR THE SEMESTER, OR DOES NOT MEET THE PREREQUISITES FOR THE COURSE. THE SPACE MAY BE REASSIGNED TO ANOTHER STUDENT APPLYING FOR ADMISSION TO THE COURSE. IF DROPPED FROM THE COURSE BY THE DEPARTMENT, YOU ARE STILL RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING SURE THE COURSE IS DROPPED FROM YOUR REGISTRATION.

VI. Appeals

If a student believes they have been treated unfairly in regards to a requested absence, the student should pursue their complaint using the usual process for appeals of student grievances (contacting the corresponding department chair). Students should reference the course attendance policy and the University Class Attendance Policy, indicating where they perceive a violation. Chairs and deans who have questions about what constitutes reasonable accommodation should consult with the senior academic officer for the campus for resolution of the disagreement.

Additionally, students with issues pertaining to class attendance should feel encouraged to visit the ASUN Student Government office in 136 Nebraska City Union to discuss their situation.