



**WILLIAM  
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UNIVERSITY**

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## **ATTENDANCE ACCOMMODATION POLICY**

When a student has a chronic condition with random or cyclical acute episodes, modifications to attendance policies may be appropriate as an accommodation.

Attendance accommodations need to be established in advance with Accessibility Resource Center and cannot be applied retroactively.

A recent diagnosis, onset, or change in condition is comparable to an unexpected illness or injury and may not warrant accommodations in attendance policy. These events may warrant a withdrawal or a retroactive medical withdrawal under some circumstances. All withdrawal procedures and policies are handled by the office of the Registrar.

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the accommodations process with the Accessibility Resource Center. Once attendance accommodations are deemed warranted by the Accessibility Resource Center, the student is responsible for taking the official Contract to each of their professors to discuss course attendance and participation requirements, notifications of absences, and make-up assignment and test policies.

The student is responsible for fulfilling the essential requirements for the course. The Office of Civil Rights has developed the following questions to use as guidelines in determining whether or not attendance is an essential requirement for the course:

1. Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students, and among students?
2. Do student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process?
3. Does the fundamental nature of the course rely upon student participation as an essential method for learning?
4. To what degree does a student's failure to attend constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?
5. What do the course description and syllabus say?
6. Which method is used to calculate the final grade?
7. And what are the classroom practices and policies regarding attendance?

Faculty should review these questions to determine whether attendance is an essential requirement for the course and what flexibility is permissible in discussing the issue with the individual student as needed. In order to meet the obligations to the student who has been accommodated with flexible attendance, faculty members need to be able to show that an interactive process with the student occurred in addressing the student's request for flexible attendance in a particular class. Accessibility

Resource Center staff are available for consultation in these matters. Once the faculty member and student have discussed the issue of attendance and the faculty member has determined and communicated to the student the appropriate level of flexibility for the class, the student is responsible for complying with the attendance plan established. The student is responsible for following up with the faculty member if the attendance plan requires adjustment.

In the event that a student with the flexible attendance accommodation is unable to attend class, he or she must notify their faculty members. In extreme cases, such as a hospitalization, the student may contact the office of Accessibility Resource Center to send a notice to all of his or her professors. The student should make every attempt to deliver or have delivered any work that has been completed and is due to the professor. It may not be appropriate to discuss make-up work at the time the student notifies the professor of the need to be absent. The student is responsible for initiating conversation with the professor once he or she is able to determine what work or participation needs to be made up and how it will be completed.

## **Attendance Accommodation Policy and Agreement: Questions to Discuss**

Students are accommodated with Flexible Attendance when they have documentation that their disability requires a need for flexibility in attendance. The Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) require students with this accommodation to meet with their faculty member(s). Following this meeting, the student and instructor should have a clear understanding of what accommodations can be made for a disability related absence. To facilitate this discussion, the following document should be reviewed and completed so that all instructions are clear.

1. Maximum number of disability related absences allowed for this student in this course: (please be as specific as possible and avoid vague language.
2. How and when will the student notify the instructor when a disability-related absence occurs: (depending on the nature of the disability is it reasonable to notify the instructor immediately before or after the missed class? How should the student notify you?)
3. Procedure for turning in homework/assignments/projects due the day of the disability-related absence. (If allowed, include the maximum number of days that assignments may be late and how they should be submitted to you. In most cases the extension may be equal to 24 hours. These dates need to be approved of by the professor before the actual due date.
4. Procedure for making up a missed quiz, examination or in-class graded assignment (on a day when it is necessary to have a disability related absence.)

This agreement is valid with an approved disability–related attendance accommodation and only when the student and instructor have discussed these questions, and the student submits their agreement in the ARC Portal. If necessary, Accessibility Resource Center staff, the department chair or other administrator may also be included in the conversation. Both the instructor and student will receive a copy of the final agreement via email once the student completes. If the maximum number of absences is exceeded, the student and instructor should meet to discuss further options (i.e. incomplete, withdrawal).

If it is thought that attendance can be justified as an integral part of how the course is taught and/or how learning is to be demonstrated and measured, there can be a point at which disability-related absences cannot be reasonably accommodated. If at any point the faculty member or student have any questions, please contact ARC so they can address and work to resolve them.