Guidance for Medical Exceptions

Fall 2020

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that many in-person classes will deviate from the traditional face-to-face format, it is anticipated that students will ask for exceptions related to the structure of the course, citing medical/psychological/personal reasons as the need for the exception.

Faculty are first asked to consider whether this request falls under the list of CDC categories for those at higher risk of COVID-19. Those conditions may include:

- Asthma -moderate-to-severe
- Being immunocompromised
- Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- Chronic lung disease
- Diabetes
- HIV
- Older adults (aged 65 years and older)
- Serious heart disease
- Severe obesity

Students who state that they fall under these categories, make a request related to pregnancy or child-birth, or have already presented the faculty member with an accommodation letter from the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC), should be referred to ARC directly for consultation. ARC can be reached at arc@wpunj.edu or 973-720-2853.

If none of the above apply, faculty are encouraged to demonstrate flexibility and have the right to use their own discretion in determining whether an exception will be made. There are some general issues to consider when making such a decision. These are:

- All students must meet the same academic standards for the course. Would making the exception change or lower the academic standards of the course?
- Are there ways to grant the request for the exception, while being equitable to the remainder of the students in the class?

If faculty feel that they are unable to make a determination without further consultation, students should be referred to the Dean of Students office for consultation and recommendation. Faculty or students should contact the Dean of Students office at DOS@wpunj.edu. Students should be encouraged to attach any relevant documentation to the email, in support of their request.