



## Student Disability Services **DISABILITY-RELATED ABSENCES AND EXTENSIONS**

Adjustments to attendance policies and deadlines for assignments and tests can be reasonable accommodations under certain circumstances depending on the nature of the course. It is important that the student and the faculty discuss these issues early in the semester and determine a reasonable adjustment based on the nature of the course. Students should refer to the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester, and frequently during the semester in order to understand the attendance and make-up policies for the course.

### **Can my instructors require me to attend class the same as my peers?**

Yes, but with some restrictions. A class-attendance rule should be modified, if recommended by the faculty notification letter, when attendance is not academically essential to meet course requirements. However, federal regulators have indicated that instructors have the right to determine that class attendance is essential when:

- Class activities include interaction between students and instructor or among students.
- Student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process.
- The fundamental nature of the course relies upon student participation as an essential method for learning.
- The student's failure to attend class constitutes a significant educational loss to other students.
- Class participation is considered in the assignment of the course grade.

Decisions on whether or not attendance requirements should be modified are made on a case-by-case, course-by-course basis between the student and the instructor.

### **Can my instructor require that homework or research assignments be submitted by published due dates?**

Yes. However, when a disability factors into delayed completion, reasonable extensions may be appropriate. When determining whether an extension is reasonable, the SDS Assistant Director may assist in examining each request on a case-by-case, course-by-course basis (if requested by student or instructor) and reviews the following:

- Published due dates for projects, papers, and other graded activities in the syllabus. The longer students have to complete assignments, the less likelihood of an extension.
- Whether or not the extension is requested as a result of disability related issues. Students who fall significantly behind due to other factors may be denied an extension request.
- The length of time requested for making up work or exams. Extensions may not be granted that create an undue administrative burden on the instructor.
- Whether the extension is due to an exacerbation of a disability. Students in these cases may be required to produce additional documentation supporting that request.

Because some courses are less amenable to delays than others, accommodation requests in these cases may be denied. In effect, the inability to meet the published deadline makes the student unqualified to complete the course.



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**STUDENT PROCEDURES**

- Students are expected to meet with each faculty member early in the semester to discuss a plan which specifies how the accommodations can be implemented for the course.
- Student and instructor should discuss: the number of additional absences permitted before the grade is affected, reasonable deadline extensions for assignments, alternative assignments to substitute for attendance, possibility of attending a different section of the course with the same professor, etc.
- Student and instructor will determine specific timelines for submitting required work and tests. Extensions for deadlines and tests should be discussed and planned in advance. Instructors need to be informed with enough time to provide the adjustment.
- If the student will be absent for emergency hospitalization or illness, the student must communicate with the instructor in order to arrange make-up work or agreed upon extensions for any upcoming deadlines to complete assignments or tests.
- Student and instructor will specify how the student should communicate with the instructor regarding absences (email, D2L, phone, etc.)
- If medical documentation of absences is available, the student may submit that documentation to the SDS office, which will serve as verification to the instructor that the absence was disability-related. In cases where students self-manage their disorder and do not see a doctor for every absence, the student and faculty should decide in advance how determining whether absences are disability-related will be accomplished.
- Student and instructor will discuss how the student will obtain material missed during lecture, e.g. notes from another student, asking another student to audio record lectures, faculty notes/handouts, etc.
- Students should not assume that all absences will be excused and all extension requests will be granted.
- Accommodations are not retroactive; students are expected to meet with faculty and make arrangements in advance if attendance and meeting deadlines are expected to be an issue.
- Students who are unable to meet the course requirements due to lengthy absences related to medical emergencies or health complications may need to seek an Incomplete (if eligible based on the academic policies outlined in the Student Catalog), or seek an Administrative Emergency Withdrawal.

**I understand and agree to adhere to the policies and procedures regarding flexible attendance and make-ups for required course assignments and tests. I understand that it is my responsibility to fulfill the essential requirements for my courses and that I am encouraged to arrange a plan with my instructors regarding flexible attendance and make-ups. I am aware that I may contact my Disability Services Coordinator at any time to aid in the implementation of a plan in collaboration with my instructors.**

Student Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_