

Accommodation Guideline: Flexible Attendance

Attendance is recognized as an important component to the learning process in higher education. Strict attendance policies allowing a specific number of absences before grades are sanctioned may foster student accountability and intra-class responsibility for many students. However, for students with ongoing episodic disabilities, it may be difficult to fulfill the attendance requirements due to symptom fluctuation. Therefore, the Office of Disability Services (ODS) has established a protocol for considering and assigning leniency in such classroom attendance policies.

1. Students seeking consideration for leniency in attendance due to a disability must receive approval from the ODS prior to any absences.
2. Consideration for leniency in an attendance policy is based on the curricular impact and the appropriateness of the request, and will be considered for each class individually. In other words, this accommodation, if granted, is based on consideration of the course's attendance policy as determined by the professor, as well as other factors such as class schedule and time of day.
3. All requests for leniency in attendance will be evaluated carefully with due consideration from faculty of the following:
 - a. Is there regular classroom interaction between the instructor and the students, and/or among the students themselves?
 - b. Do student contributions in the class constitute a significant component of the learning process?
 - c. Does the fundamental nature of the course rely upon student participation as an essential method of learning?
 - d. To what degree does a student's failure to attend class constitute a significant loss of the educational experience of other students in the class?
 - e. What does the course description and syllabus say regarding attendance?
 - f. What is the method by which the final course grade is calculated?
4. If it is determined that it is not possible to consider leniency based on faculty responses to the above questions, the student will be informed immediately and will be given the opportunity to discuss other accommodation options.
5. Students are responsible for contacting their instructors as soon as possible when a disability related absence will occur and a possible date of return. If the student is unable to reach the faculty member directly, s/he or someone acting on their behalf may contact the ODS and the information will be relayed to the faculty member.
6. Students are responsible for contacting their instructors regarding any missed material and assignments during a disability related absence. Neither extension of deadlines for assignments due, nor arrangements for making up missed exams during such absence

are to be assumed with this accommodation. These issues must be reviewed individually with instructors.

7. If, at any time, the faculty member believes that the student's absences from class threaten the academic integrity of the curriculum or the accomplishment of learning objectives, the faculty member should contact the ODS as soon as possible. After consulting with the faculty member, the ODS staff will contact the student to review available options.