

MEMORANDUM

Senate Document SD 22-27
Amended and Approved,
4/17/2023

TO: Fort Wayne Senate

FROM: Steven Hanke, Chair of the Educational Policy Committee

DATE: 03/20/2023

SUBJ: Purdue University Fort Wayne Absence Policies for Students

WHEREAS, Senate Reference 22-7 charged the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) with investigating the consideration and implementation of the Purdue University West Lafayette (PWL) Student Absence Policy into the Purdue Fort Wayne Academic Regulations; and,

WHEREAS, Purdue Fort Wayne does not have formal Student Absence Policies in its Regulations; and yet recognizes the importance in defending student rights; and,

WHEREAS, our current practices can result in inconsistencies and inequities for students who are taking more than one class at a time; and,

WHEREAS, Purdue Fort Wayne faculty desire to ensure that policies are specific to our campus; and,

WHEREAS, EPC discussed the Student Absence Policies at multiple committee meetings from October 2022 to March 2023 and developed multiple changes to the PWL policy to make the policy specific to our campus (e.g., an explicit statement that departments or colleges can have a supplemental absence policy that addresses issues unique to that unit; a subheading focused on specific course types with modified wording describing such course types; and a subheading explicitly describing the appeal process students can pursue); and,

WHEREAS, no policy can explicitly describe every absence that faculty may believe students should be reasonable excused for; and,

WHEREAS, the lack of an absence policy can result in negative repercussions for students; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following Absence Policies for Students be integrated into the Purdue Fort Wayne Academic Regulations; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this document supersede Senate Document SD 11-7 (2011), formalizing and recognizing students' rights related to specific absences.

Purdue University Fort Wayne Absence Policies for Students

Introduction:

The resources of Purdue University Fort Wayne are provided for the intellectual development of its students. Courses with defined schedules are provided to facilitate an orderly and predictable learning environment and to provide assurance of a registered student's right to access the course. Scheduled courses allow students to avoid conflicts and reflect the University's expectation that students should be present for every meeting of a class/laboratory for which they are registered. Faculty are responsible for organizing and delivering a course of instruction and for certifying student accomplishment on the basis of performance. Coursework is defined as the assessment(s) used by the instructor to determine the student's grade, as outlined in the course syllabus.

Additionally, the University recognizes that in some circumstances, absence from class is unavoidable or is necessary for personal reasons beyond students' control. As such, the University has established the following as reasons to be granted an excused absence from class:

- Grief/Bereavement
- Military Service
- Jury Duty
- Parenting Leave
- Medical Excuse

Procedures and remedies for granting these absences are specified in the sections below. The student is responsible for informing the instructor in a timely fashion, if possible. The instructor is responsible for accommodating the student either by excusing the student or allowing the student to make up work.

Departments or colleges may have supplemental policies for absences outside this policy. If a department or college has such a policy, the course syllabus must include the relevant policy. If a student wishes to request an excused absence for a reason outside of University Excused Absences or Department/College policy, they must communicate directly with their instructor. It is each instructor's right to decide whether to approve the request.

The grade appeals policy applies to all students enrolled at Purdue University Fort Wayne. It can be used by any student who has evidence or believes that evidence exists to show that a course grade was assigned, or a similar evaluation was made as a result of prejudice, caprice, or other improper condition such as mechanical error.

1. General Attendance Issues

Instructor Responsibility. Instructors are expected to establish and clearly communicate attendance policies relevant to individual courses in the course syllabus. Course attendance policies must be consistent with University policy. Individual course policies may state expected notification periods. Additionally, in their course syllabus, instructors must clearly and explicitly state procedures in which assignments and assessments can be made up. Only the instructor can excuse a student from a course requirement or responsibility.

Student Responsibility. The University expects each student to be responsible for class-related work missed due to an unavoidable absence; this work may be made up at the instructor's discretion. For unanticipated or emergency absences where advance notification to an instructor is not possible, the student or the student's representative should contact the Office of Student Conduct & CARE. A staff member in the Office of Student Conduct & CARE will notify the student's instructor(s) of the circumstances. The student should be aware that this intervention does not change the outcome of the instructor's decision regarding the student's academic work and performance in any given course.

When conflicts or absences can be anticipated, such as for many University sponsored activities or religious observances, the student should inform the instructor of the situation as far in advance as possible, and the instructor should strive to accommodate the student.

Specific Course Types. In certain laboratory-based, intensive short-term courses, or field-experiences, a student can jeopardize their academic status with an unreasonable number of absences, particularly in lab courses that cannot be made up later. In courses with extensive laboratory exercises, group projects, group performances, or participation requirements, equivalent exercises or assessments may not be possible as determined by the instructor and subject to review by the Dean of the school or college offering the course or their designee. In such a case, the student may be eligible for retroactive withdrawal. The student should always consult with the instructor to determine the potential impact of any absence.

Licensing & Standard Considerations. When making a decision about the length of a given absence, variables such as state licensing requirements or national professional standards for a program will be considered. At times, absences may be approved, but hours/experiences in the field, practicum, internships, etc., must be completed before the course is completed. An incomplete grade may be awarded by the instructor.

2. Conflicts with Religious Observances

The University values a community with diverse backgrounds and traditions and recognizes that conflicts between regularly scheduled curricular activities and religious observances of some members of our community can arise.

Instructors are urged to be sensitive to the fact that scheduling of examinations, class assignments, meetings, and other significant events on certain holidays or days of religious observance may place some members of the Purdue Fort Wayne community in a very difficult situation. Instructors' cooperation with students in rescheduling coursework missed due to absences resulting from participation in religious observances is appreciated.

Students requesting an absence for a religious observation are encouraged to make this known to instructors well in advance, in order to arrange alternative times to complete any assignments they might miss.

3. University Excused Absences

The University Faculty Senate recognizes the following as types of absences that must be excused:

- Absences related to those covered under the Grief Absence Policy for Students (GAPS)
- Absences related to those covered under the Military Absence Policy for Students (MAPS)
- Absences related to those covered under Jury Duty Policy for Students
- Absences related to those covered under the Parenting Leave Policy for Students
- Absences related to those covered under the Medical Excused Absence Policy for Students (MEAPS)

4. Grief Absence Policy for Students (GAPS)

Students will be excused with no penalty to their attendance and will be given the opportunity to make up coursework as defined in the course syllabus for bereavement leave. This also includes being granted leave even in incidences where a student does not travel from campus.

The following parameters are established related to the relationship to the student of the deceased loved one.

- Immediate Family: Students are eligible for up to five (5) days of excused absence, over a two-week period, of the semester in which the death occurs, for the death of a spouse, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild or sibling, or a corresponding in-law or step-relative.

- Other Relationships: Students are eligible for up to three (3) days of excused absence, over a two-week period, of the semester in which the death occurs, for the death of relatives or friends falling outside of the category of immediate family.

In unique circumstances, a bereaved student should petition for extended grief absence through the Office of Student Conduct & CARE (OSCC) by meeting individually with an OSCC staff member for case evaluation.

In addition, students may be granted additional absences to account for travel considerations, to be determined by the distance of the verified bereavement services from Fort Wayne, IN, as follows:

- Within 150 mile radius of Fort Wayne - no additional excused absence days
- Between 150-300 mile radius of Fort Wayne - one additional excused absence days
- Beyond a 300-mile radius of Fort Wayne - two additional excused absence days
- Outside the 48 contiguous United States - four additional excused absence days

A student should contact the OSCC to request that a notice of their leave be sent to instructors. The student will provide documentation of the death or funeral service attended to the OSCC. Given proper documentation, the instructor will excuse the student from class and provide the opportunity to earn equivalent credit and to demonstrate evidence of meeting the learning outcomes for missed assignments or assessments.

In cases of impending death, students should contact the instructor as soon as possible by e-mail, phone, or by contacting the main office of the department that offers the course. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor and is unable to leave word with the instructor's department because of circumstances beyond the student's control, the student or the student's representative should contact the Office of Student Conduct & CARE. A staff member in the Office of Student Conduct & CARE will notify the student's instructor(s) of the circumstances. Instructors should work to reasonably accommodate students in these unique circumstances.

5. Military Absence Policy for Students (MAPS)

Students will be excused, and no penalty will be applied to a student's absence for mandatory military training and be given the opportunity to make up coursework as defined in the course syllabus.

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester of the potential for mandatory military training conflicts. Students should expect that absences from heavier course loads will be more difficult to recover from than absences from lighter course loads.

Students are eligible for up to fifteen (15) days for military-required absences per academic year with no more than ten (10) academic calendar (during the fall and spring semesters) days taken consecutively for their mandatory military training. Total absences, including travel, may not exceed 1/4 of the course meetings for any course.

Students may be granted additional absences to account for travel considerations, to be determined by the distance of the verified military training from the Purdue Fort Wayne campus, as follows:

- Within 150-mile radius of Fort Wayne - no additional excused absence days
- Between 150-300 mile radius of Fort Wayne - one additional excused absence days
- Beyond 300-mile radius of Fort Wayne- two additional excused absence days
- Outside the 48 contiguous United States - four additional excused absence days

A student should contact the Office of Student Conduct & CARE (OSCC) to request that a notice of the leave be sent to instructors when informed of the dates of mandatory military training. The student will provide documentation of the mandatory military training in the form of orders or equivalent documents as proof of legitimate absence to the OSCC as soon as these documents are available. If necessary, the OSCC may consult with Military Student Services about the nature of the documentation. When documentation is presented to the Office of Student Conduct & CARE, a verified absence notification will be sent to the student's instructors.

The student may provide verbal information about the leave to the OSCC, and an unverified preliminary (non-MAPS) notice will be sent to instructors for planning purposes only. MAPS will be applicable only when the student has returned to the OSCC with substantiating documentation and OSCC has sent a verified absence notification to the instructors.

With a verified absence notification from the OSCC, no penalty will be applied to a student's absence for mandatory military training, and the student will be given the opportunity to make up coursework as defined in the course syllabus.

Unique or variant exceptions should be dealt with in a negotiated manner between the student and professor, which may include involving the Department Head, Dean of the school or college, OSCC, or Military Student Services to review and consult on their situation.

6. Jury Duty Absence Policy For Students

Students will be excused, and no penalty will be applied to a student's absence for Jury Duty and given the opportunity to make up course work as defined in the syllabus in the event that a student is summoned to serve as a potential juror and/or who have been empaneled as a juror in a criminal and/or civil trial. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor at the earliest possible opportunity of the potential for jury duty conflicts. Students should expect that absences from heavier course loads will be more difficult to recover from than absences from lighter course loads.

Students are eligible for up to ten (10) days for jury duty required absences per academic semester. Total absences, including travel, may not exceed 1/4 of the total course meetings for any course.

Students may be granted additional absences to account for travel considerations, to be determined by the distance of the jury duty from the Purdue University Fort Wayne campus as follows:

- Within 150-mile radius of Fort Wayne - no additional excused absence days
- Between 150-300 mile radius of Fort Wayne - one additional excused absence days
- Beyond 300-mile radius of Fort Wayne - two additional excused absence days
- Outside the 48 contiguous United States - four additional excused absence days

A student should contact the Office of Student Conduct & CARE (OSCC) to request that a notice of the leave be sent to instructors as soon as the student is aware of the dates of the summoned jury duty. The student will provide documentation of the jury duty in the form of a court summons.

With a verified absence notification from the OSCC, the instructor will not penalize the student for missing class and will provide the opportunity to earn equivalent credit and demonstrate evidence of meeting the learning outcomes for missed assignments or assessments.

Unique jury duty situations (sequestered, empaneled as a Grand Jury member, etc.) should be dealt with in a negotiated manner between the student and professor, which may include involving the Department Head, Dean of the school or college, or OSCC, to review and consult on the student's situation.

7. Parenting Leave Policy for Students

Students who are pregnant, have recently given birth, have experienced loss of pregnancy, or need a leave of absence to care for a newborn, adopted, legal guardian, or foster care, may petition for a leave of absence through the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The student will be expected to provide documentation related to the petition for leave. If approved, the student will be excused, and no penalty will be applied to a student's absence and given the opportunity to make up course work as defined in the syllabus. The student will be excused from classes. The University will approve all absences due to pregnancy or childbirth for as long as a student's medical provider states that it is medically necessary and may approve other absences as appropriate.

The University will provide services for pregnancy, pregnancy-related, and post-partum conditions with the same special services it provides to students with temporary medical conditions.

The instructor will not penalize the student for missing class during an approved absence and will provide opportunity to earn equivalent credit and to demonstrate evidence of meeting the learning outcomes for missed assignments and assessments.

8. Medically Excused Absence Policy for Students (MEAPS)

Students will be excused, and no penalty will be applied to a student's absence for situations involving hospitalization, emergency department, or urgent care visit, and be given the opportunity to make up coursework as defined in the course syllabus. Students experiencing hospitalization, emergency department, or urgent care visits can provide documentation to OSCC who will then assess the student's request for a Medical Excused Absence and issue notification of the start and end of the absence to the student's instructors. The student should follow up with the instructor to seek arrangements per the policy.

Students are eligible for up to fifteen (15) days for medically excused absences per academic year with no more than ten (10) academic calendar (during the fall and spring semesters) days taken consecutively for the Medical Excused Absence Policy. Total absences, including travel, may not exceed 1/4 of the course meetings for any course. A student can contact the Office of Student Conduct & CARE (OSCC) to request that a notice of the leave be sent to instructors when a situation involving hospitalization, emergency department, or urgent care visit emerges. The student can then provide documentation of hospitalization, emergency department, or urgent care visit as proof of legitimate absence to the OSCC as soon as these documents are available.

When documentation is presented to the Office of Student Conduct & CARE, a verified absence notification will be sent to the student's instructors. With a verified absence notification from the OSCC, no penalty will be applied to a student's absence for reasons of hospitalization, emergency department, or urgent care visit, and the student will be given the opportunity to make up course work as defined in the course syllabus. Unique or variant exceptions should be dealt with in a negotiated manner between the student and professor, which may include involving the Department Head, Dean of the school or college, or OSCC to review and consult on their situation.

Extended Medical Absences. A student who has or acquires a disability-related medical condition requiring extended absences from class must contact the Disability Access Center (DAC) to request an official University accommodation. The student will be expected to provide medical documentation related to the request for an absence-related accommodation. If approved by the DAC, instructors are required to work with students to implement the accommodation and provide reasonable alternatives to meeting course requirements.

In certain laboratory-based, intensive short-term courses, or field-experience courses, an unreasonable number of absences can fundamentally alter the course objectives and a student can jeopardize their academic status, particularly in lab courses that cannot be made up later. In courses with extensive laboratory exercises, group projects, group performances, or participation requirements, equivalent exercises or assessments may not be

possible as determined by the DAC, in collaboration with the instructor, and subject to review by the Dean of the school or college offering the course or their designee. In such a case, the student may be eligible for retroactive withdrawal. The student should always consult with the DAC and their instructor to determine the potential impact of any absence.

When making a decision about the length of a given absence the DAC, in collaboration with the instructor, will consider variables such as state licensing requirements or national professional standards for a program. At times, absences may be approved, but hours/experiences in the field, practicum, internships, etc., must be completed before the course is completed. The instructor may award an incomplete grade.

9. Other Considerations

Student Status. Students who have received an approved leave of absence will be permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before the absences began. Additionally, students who have had an approved leave of absence will maintain their fellowship and scholarship status for all Purdue University Fort Wayne-administered fellowships and scholarships.

Appeal Procedures. Students who believe that they have not been provided an excused absence(s) or the opportunity to complete make-up work are encouraged to attempt to resolve the matter informally with the instructor, chair, and Dean of the College or School that the course is offered. Additionally, the OSCC, or the OIE, in cases involving the Parenting Leave policy, may be consulted by the student for further review of their case. In a case where grades are negatively affected, the student may follow the established grade appeals process.