

To: The Fort Wayne Senate
From: A. Nasr, Chair of the Senate Executive Committee
Date: September 23, 2022
Subj: Purdue University West Lafayette Absence Policy

Please see below for a document on the Purdue University West Lafayette Absence Policy. The Executive Committee will be charging the Educational Policy Committee with investigating if this policy needs integrated into PFW's academic regulations.

Friday, September 23rd, 2022

TO: Purdue University Fort Wayne's Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate

FROM: Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Wellness, Dr. Kerrie Fineran,
Director of Student Conduct & CARE, Abby Blackmon

SUBJECT: Purdue System-Wide Student Absence Policy Implementation

Introduction

The Purdue University West Lafayette (PWL) Faculty Senate has established the following reasons for students to be granted an excused absence from class: Grief/Bereavement, Military Service, Jury Duty, Parenting Leave, and Medical Excuse. Per the Academic Regulations, these policies apply to all students currently enrolled on the Purdue University West Lafayette campus and State-Wide Purdue University locations. Policies and PWL Faculty Senate approval can be found here: <https://catalog.purdue.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=18634#classes>

Summary

As the Director of Student Conduct & CARE, Abby Blackmon is aware these policies have not been utilized or implemented by the current Office of Student Conduct & CARE or the former Dean of Students Office at Purdue University Fort Wayne (PFW). Currently, absence notifications are used only for COVID-related absences or hospitalization. These are used as FYIs only and do not include information about excused absences.

Within the last few years, many students have searched for information related to PFW absence policies, only to find that PFW does not allow students the same rights and opportunities for excused absences as PWL and PNW. Students often relay frustration to the Office of Student Conduct & CARE that instructors have different standards and do not enforce the same type of policies related to excused/unexcused absences. Without these policies, students must also manage class attendance with each instructor while attending to personal matters.

Proposal & Impact

Therefore, the Office of Student Conduct & CARE will be implementing these policies for students to utilize beginning in Spring 2023. All processes implemented will reflect the exact policies put forth by the West Lafayette Faculty Senate and copy the procedures as implemented by the Office of the Dean of Students both at PWL and PNW.

Many PFW Faculty and Instructors may not know this over-arching policy for all Purdue campuses. While many faculty try to be fair in their syllabus policies, there are varied policies across campus. The Office of Student Conduct & CARE and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Wellness are aware that these policies may disturb many faculty who will be required to allow a very specific number of absences from their courses. The goal of bringing this to the Senate Executive Committee's attention is to determine how faculty should be alerted of this change and to include faculty in how this should move forward.

Purdue University System-Wide Absence Policies for Students

Purdue University West Lafayette Faculty Senate Approval: (University Senate Document 6-5, March 19, 2007; University Senate Document 10-6, March 21, 2011; University Senate Document 10-8, March 21, 2011; University Senate Document 13-4, March 24, 2014; and University Senate Document 19-14, February 17, 2020; Senate Document 21-12, February 21, 2022)

Formal Document located: <https://catalog.purdue.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=18634#classes>

Introduction:

The resources of Purdue University are provided for the intellectual development of its students. Courses with defined schedules are provided to facilitate an orderly and predictable environment for learning, as well as 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.

The University recognizes that the learning mission can be enhanced significantly by co-curricular experiences. Students participating in University-sponsored activities should be permitted to make up class work missed as a result of this participation. Ultimately students are responsible for all required coursework and bear full responsibility for any academic consequences that may result due to absence.

Additionally, the University recognizes that in some circumstances, absence from class is unavoidable or is necessary to fulfill a required obligation. 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 is specified in the sections below. The student bears the responsibility of informing the instructor in a timely fashion, if possible. The instructor bears the responsibility to accommodate the student either by excusing the student or allowing the student to make up work.

1. General Attendance Issues

Instructors are expected to establish and clearly communicate in the course syllabus attendance policies relevant to individual courses. Course attendance policies must be consistent with University policy. It is recognized that occasionally it may be necessary for students to be absent from a scheduled course activity for personal reasons beyond their control. The University expects each student to be responsible for class-related work missed as a result of an unavoidable absence; this work may be made up at the discretion of the instructor.

Only the instructor can excuse a student from a course requirement or responsibility. 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. Individual course policies may state expected notification periods. Additionally, instructors must clearly and explicitly state, in their course syllabus, procedures in which assignments and assessments can be made up. For unanticipated or emergency absences where advance notification to an instructor is not possible, the student 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 the Dean of Students. A member of the Dean of Students staff 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 students' academic work and performance in any given course.

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 required to cooperate with students in dealing with course work missed due to absences resulting from participation in religious observances.

Students requesting special consideration in scheduling are encouraged to make this known to instructors well in advance, minimize the length of the absence, and be flexible in arranging alternative times to complete any assignments they might miss.

3. University Excused Absences

The University 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)

These policies apply to all students currently enrolled on the Purdue University West Lafayette campus and State-Wide Purdue University locations.

4. Grief Absence Policy for Students (GAPS)

Students will be excused with no penalty to a student's attendance and the student 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 those 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 the Dean of Students (ODOS) by meeting individually with an ODOS 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 West Lafayette, IN, as follows:

- Within 150 mile radius of West Lafayette - no additional excused absence days
- Between 150-300 mile radius of West Lafayette - one additional excused absence days
- Beyond 300-mile radius of West Lafayette - two additional excused absence days

- Outside the 48 contiguous United States - four additional excused absence days.

A student enrolled at other Purdue University locations shall be granted additional leave based upon the traveled distance from the State Wide location in which the student is enrolled.

A student should contact the ODOS to request that a notice of his or her leave be sent to instructors. The student will provide documentation of the death or funeral service attended to the ODOS. 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 the Dean of Students. A member of the Dean of Students staff 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 semester) days taken consecutively, for their mandatory military training. Total absences, including travel, may not exceed 1/3 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 campus, as follows:

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

A student enrolled at other Purdue University locations shall be granted additional leave based upon the traveled distance from the State Wide location in which the student is enrolled.

A student should contact the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) 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 ODOS as soon as these documents are available. If necessary, the ODOS may consult with the Veterans Success Center about the nature of the documentation. When documentation is presented to the Office of the Dean of Students, a verified absence notification will be sent to the student's instructors.

The student may provide verbal information about the leave to the ODOS 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 ODOS with substantiating documentation and ODOS has sent a verified absence notification to the instructors.

With a verified absence notification from the ODOS, 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 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, ODOS, or the Veterans Success Center to review and consult on his or her situation.

In certain laboratory-based or intensive short-term courses, a student can jeopardize his/her 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.

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 1/3 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 campus as follows:

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

A student enrolled at other Purdue University locations shall be granted additional leave based upon the traveled distance from the State Wide location in which the student is enrolled.

A student should contact the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) 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 ODOS, the instructor will not penalize the student for missing class and will provide the opportunity to earn equivalent credit and to 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 ODOS, to review and consult on the student's situation.

In certain laboratory-based or intensive short-term courses, a student may 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.

7. Parenting Leave Policy for Students

Students who are pregnant, have recently given birth, 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 Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) by meeting individually with an OIE staff member. 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 students who are pregnant or have recently given birth 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)

(Senate Document 21-12, revised for February 21, 2022)

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 ODOS 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 then follow up with the instructor to seek arrangements as 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 semester) days taken consecutively, for the Medical Excused Absence Policy. Total absences, including travel, may not exceed 1/3 of the course meetings for any course. A student can contact the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) 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 ODOS as soon as these documents are available.

When documentation is presented to the Office of the Dean of Students, a verified absence notification will be sent to the student's instructors. With a verified absence notification from the ODOS, 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 ODOS, to review and consult on his or her situation.

In certain laboratory-based or intensive short-term courses, a student can jeopardize his/her 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.

Students with long-term or chronic medical needs are strongly encouraged to work with the Disability Resource Center to arrange for needed accommodations.

9. Procedures

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.

Students requesting excused absences or leaves under the above policies should expect that absences from heavier course loads or those in certain laboratory-based or intensive short-term courses will have a greater impact on a student than those with a lighter course load. In courses with extensive laboratory exercises, group projects, group performances, or participation requirements, make up coursework 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 is advised to always consult with the instructor to determine the potential impact of any absence.

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-administered fellowships and scholarships.

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, and department head and Dean of the College or School that the course is offered. Additionally, the ODOS, 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.

10. Conclusion

The University expects that students will attend classes for which they are registered. At times, however, either anticipated or unanticipated absences can occur. The student bears the responsibility of informing the instructor in a timely fashion, when possible. The instructor bears the responsibility of trying to accommodate the student either by excusing the student or allowing the student to make up work, when possible. The University expects both students and their instructors to approach problems with class attendance in a manner that is reasonable.