STUDENT ABSENCE FROM CLASS DUE TO ILLNESS OR PERSONAL EMERGENCIES

Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities

A. A student may miss class on occasion due to medical issues. The following statement intends to describe the expectations, rights, and responsibilities of all involved including students, Office of Student Life, instructors, and health care providers. The information is intended to give students better direction as to how they should proceed to notify instructors when they are ill and need to miss class and what kind of documentation they should provide and to whom. The information is intended to provide faculty, instructors, information that will be more useful to them in determining the student's options for making up the work, or understanding the implications on their grade in the class. The information is intended to provide some guidance to the on-campus health services staff and off-campus health care providers in terms of what kinds of documentation is needed and how it will be handled once provided.

1. **Students: Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities**

Students who need to miss class due to illness should be aware of the following:

a. If ill, and possibly contagious, students are expected to take appropriate action including not coming to class and seeking medical treatment.
b. Students have the right to expect that their privacy will be protected under HIPAA but they must follow proper procedures in order to ensure that health care information is kept private.
c. Students are responsible for seeking medical attention and for obtaining some type of documentation that would include the following minimal information:
    i. Date of the visit
    ii. Name of medical facility where treatment occurred
    iii. Diagnosis or indication of whether class absence is recommended or required
    iv. Expected duration of the recovery
d. Students are responsible for providing the documentation to the Office of Student Life where it will be treated and handled confidentially with necessary information being submitted to the student's instructors for that term.

2. **Office of Student Life: Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities**

In regard to supporting students who need to miss class due to illness the Office of Student Life is expected to remain aware of the following:

a. It will serve as the collection point for medical documentation and treat it in a confidential manner.
b. It will share the medical documentation with appropriate instructional faculty. Sufficient information from the medical documentation to ensure that the dates of illness or of treatment for the illness occurred will be shared with the instructional faculty.
c. It will share sufficient information as to help determine whether the illness was of sufficient concern that missing class was recommended or required.
d. It will answer questions that instructional faculty may have if they are unclear about what to do with the information.

3. **Instructors of Classes: Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities**

In regard to supporting students who need to miss class due to illness, instructors are expected to remain aware of the following:

a. It is the responsibility of the instructors to respect the student's right to confidentiality and understand that medical documentation will be handled by the Office of Student Life in an appropriate manner.
b. It is expected that instructors will not ask the student directly for medical documentation. If it is provided without being requested, the instructors should return it to the student or destroy it.
c. Instructors are expected to:
    i. Work with the student to make up the missed assignments, when possible.
    ii. Work with the student to find alternatives, if possible, if the assignments missed cannot be made up.
    iii. Do so within a reasonable timeframe.

4. **Medical Professionals: Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities**

In regard to supporting students who need to miss class due to illness, medical professionals are expected to remain aware of the following:

a. At the request of the student (patient), it is expected that some type of document be provided that indicates at minimum the date of the visit or treatment. If the student is to miss class, it is expected that the student would have sufficient information from the medical facility to support that need.
b. It is expected that the medical professional will provide sufficient information to the student so that the student can then provide it to the Office of Student Life.
c. The medical professional can expect the information to be handled in a confidential manner.
d. The medical documentation must be on official letterhead of the facility and contain a date.

B. A student may miss class on occasion due to personal emergencies. Whatever the type of personal that exists, there are expectations on

part of the students, the Office of Student Life, and the instructional faculty.

1. **Students: Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities**

Students who need to miss class due to personal emergencies should remain aware of the following:

a. Some type of documentation is required by the Office of Student Life. This could take the form of an obituary, travel itinerary, or other type of document that would include a date and possibly some type of explanation for the absence.
b. The length of the absence needs to be clear as part of the documentation.
c. Student have the right to expect that their privacy will be protected under FERPA.

2. **Office of Student Life: Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities**

In regard to supporting students who need to miss class due to personal emergencies the Office of Student Life will remain aware of the following:

a. It will serve as the collection point for documentation and treat it in a confidential manner.
b. It will share with appropriate instructors sufficient information from the documentation to ensure that the dates of the incident or event are clear and that it was a severe enough life interruption to cause absence from class.
c. It will answer questions that instructional faculty may have if they are unclear about what to do with the information.

3. **Faculty/Instructors of Classes: Expectations, Rights, and Responsibilities**

In regard to supporting students who need to miss class due to personal emergencies, instructors are expected to remain aware of the following:

a. It is the responsibility of the instructors to respect the student's right to confidentiality and understand that the documentation will be handled by the Office of Student Life in an appropriate manner.
b. It is expected that instructors will not ask the student directly for documentation. If it is provided without being requested, the instructors should return it to the student or destroy it. Depending upon the kind of documentation it is, there could be other information in it that could compromise the privacy of others, including other family members.
c. Instructors are expected to:

i. Work with the student to make up the missed assignments, when possible.
ii. Work with the student to find alternatives, if possible, if the assignments missed cannot be made up.
iii. Do so within a reasonable timeframe.

Forms:

- Application to Request a Leave of Absence
- Application to Request to Return from a Leave of Absence