

Excused Absence Policy & Class Attendance

Plymouth State University students are held accountable for meeting all course requirements, which may include both in-class and out-of-class experiences, as well as both individual and group-based activities. Students must therefore realize that they are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of courses in which they are enrolled. Instructors outline attendance policies and explain the effect multiple absences have on final grades—whether or not unexcused absences will be used in computing grades—in the course syllabus. Course syllabi are distributed during the first class meeting, posted online, or can be requested from the instructor in advance. In classes that use online classroom management software (such as Moodle), online student activity is recorded and may be used to determine participation. Instructors maintain records to show the attendance policy is being followed. Students are urged to recognize the importance of participation in class activities and to be aware that grades may be affected by absences or lack of participation during online coursework. Instructors shall determine the class attendance policies and to decide whether to allow students to make up missed work for unexcused absences. Unless the course instructor states otherwise, students should assume that there will be academic consequences for every absence deemed unexcused by the instructor.

Excused vs. Unexcused Absences

Student absences are defined as excused or unexcused. Unexcused absences are those that occur without adequate reason. Unexcused absences may be used in the computation of grades. Excused absences are defined as absences stemming from (a) participation in University-sponsored activities and (b) compelling and extenuating circumstances beyond a student's control. Documented excused absences may not be used in the computation of grades. Instructors must allow students to make up missed examinations, quizzes, writing assignments, and other coursework for documented excused absences. Any make-up work must be offered to students in as timely a manner as possible during the regular semester. Faculty should not delay make-up work to final exam week if it is feasible to schedule it earlier and if delaying it to final exam week is detrimental to a student's academic progress. Make-up work may be scheduled during final exam week if no earlier arrangement is possible in light of extenuating circumstances for a faculty member or a student.

Examples of excused absences include, but are not limited to, the following:

- documented student's participation in University-sponsored events,
- student's documented illness,
- student's documented injury,
- documented death in a student's immediate family,
- documented illness or injury in a student's immediate family,
- documented student's required military duty, or
- documented student's required jury duty.

Instructors are not obligated to excuse an absence if a student fails to provide requested documentation. Instructors also reserve the right to determine when the number of excused absences exceeds a reasonable limit to the extent that it significantly interferes with a student's satisfactory

mastery of course content/skills. Excused absences do not exempt a student from course requirements, and therefore in circumstances that entail excessive excused absences the instructor may reasonably recommend that a student consider withdrawal from a course.

Procedures for Reporting Absences

It is the responsibility of the student, where possible, to notify instructors regarding absences for whatever reason or period of time. This should take place before leaving campus, during an illness, or upon return to campus. If there are extenuating circumstances that make such communication difficult, students should contact the Academic Student Advocate's Office. The Academic Student Advocate will send absence notices to a student's instructor.