

## **Resolution 2024-6. On Amending the Policy on University Approved Absences**

The Faculty Council enacts:

*Section 1.* The Academic Regulation concerning University Approved Absences shall be as follows for all students, beginning with Fall Semester 2024:

### **Revised Class Attendance Policy**

This policy applies *only* to University Approved Absences, which are listed below. For absences related to final examinations, see the Policy on Final Examinations.

Regular class attendance is a student obligation. Students are responsible for all work, including assessments, tests, and written work, and for all class meetings, as outlined in each individual course syllabus. These policies apply for Fall, Spring and Summer Terms.

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University Activities;
2. Disability, religious observance, pregnancy, or short-term military service, as required by law or approved by the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC), or in the case of short-term military service, the Dean of Students;
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office

In situations when an absence is not University Approved (e.g., due to a job interview, club activity, common illness such as the flu, strep throat or Covid), instructors determine their own approach to missed classes and make-up assessments and assignments.

The University's policy regarding University Approved Absences and the instructor's course-level policies, including those for attendance, are communicated to students via the instructor's *course syllabus* on the first day of class.

Students are encouraged to communicate early and often with their instructors about potential absences, and are reminded that they are bound by the Honor Code to always be honest in making a request for a University Approved Absence.

### **Make-up Coursework and Assessments**

All students with University Approved Absences will be treated fairly and equitably, regardless of the reason for the absence. The rationale for the University Approved Absence will not be communicated in the notification to instructors.

Instructors will provide reasonable adjustments that permit course objectives and learning outcomes to be met. These adjustments must allow students to demonstrate what they have learned and not penalize the students' final grade in the course. Faculty will clearly define these adjustments in the syllabus. It is a University expectation that instructors be prudent, fair, and equitable when a student misses an assessment due to a University Approved Absence. The total number of allowable University Approved Absences per course will be based on individual

course learning methodologies and outcomes as determined by the student, their course instructor(s) and the designated university office/department (e.g., EOC, department chair). For further details on make-up policies, see implementation details on the University Approved Absence Office website as well as the review process described at the end of the policy.

### **Notification of University Approved Absences**

1. **Authorized University Activities:** Students acting as official representatives of the University who are participating in University-sanctioned activities will be granted a University Approved Absence. An absence is an Authorized University Activity if the absence serves a purpose for the whole university as *the university*, as a collective entity. An example would be if the student body president is attending a national conference of student body presidents, sponsored by the Dean of Students. A second example would be required participation in and support for NCAA varsity sports. An absence is not university-authorized if it is for one class, one major, one professor, or one student organization. The University Approved Absence Office will verify the validity of the request. In situations where the absence is planned the request for a UAA must be submitted as soon as the date is set; in situations where the absence is unplanned, the request should be submitted to the UAAO as soon as possible. If the UAAO approves the request, the student has the responsibility to inform their instructor prior to the next class attendance.
2. **Accommodations for disability/religious observances/pregnancy/short-term military service, as required by law:**
  - a. **Equal Opportunity and Compliance (EOC)** verifies University Approved Absences for students who have been identified and provided accommodations by their office. EOC contacts those students' instructors directly through a faculty notification.
  - b. **Religious Observance:** Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 116-11(3a), students are authorized a minimum number of University Approved Absence(s) according to state law for religious observance/practices required by their faith, and the University is required to consider requests for more than two absences as religious accommodation on a case-by-case basis. Students who wish to request University Approved Absences for religious observance required by their faith should review the University's Accommodations Policy and follow the procedure set out in that Policy for requesting such absences. Students are responsible to request a University Approved Absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance of the date(s), or as soon as possible if the date(s) occurs within the first two weeks of the semester, or within the first two days of a summer session. Primary holy days for religious observance are noted on the UNC web-based interfaith calendar. The web-based calendar should *not* be interpreted as an exhaustive list of holy days that the University will recognize for purposes of religious accommodations.
  - c. **Pregnancy and Related Medical Conditions:** Students who wish to request University Approved Absences for pregnancy and related medical conditions should review the University's Accommodations Policy and should contact the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office prior to the requested dates for review and approval.
  - d. **Short-Term Military Leave:** Federal or state military orders that require a student's absence should be submitted as soon as received to the UAAO. The documentation will be reviewed by the Veterans Resource Center. After the

documentation is verified, The University Approved Absence Office will communicate the University Approved Absence to course instructor(s). A student is eligible for University Approved Absence/s under this policy if, during an absence, the student performs uniformed service, voluntary or involuntary, in the Armed Forces, including the National Guard or Reserve, active duty, or active duty for training.

3. **Significant health conditions and/or personal/family emergencies** as approved by the Dean of Students office, Gender Violence Service Coordinators and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office. Significant health conditions are generally defined to be ones in which the student will be required to miss five or more consecutive days of class. Once the documentation has been approved, the approving office will request that the University Approved Absence Office issue a University Approved Absence notification to the student's instructor(s). The University Approved Absence Office will inform the course instructor in advance if the reason for the University Approved Absence is planned or as soon as possible if the reason for the absence was not foreseen.

## Review

**Review of faculty provided UAA academic adjustment(s):** Given the swift and cumulative nature of a semester, a plan for the adjustment should be made no later than five business days of the last absence. For planned or pre-approved university approved absences, the plan for adjustments will be determined prior to the absence dates. After receiving the final adjustment plan from the instructor, if the student feels that a reasonable adjustment plan was not provided, they may submit a review request about the academic adjustment only within three business days of receiving the adjustment plan from the instructor as described on the University Approved Absence Office Website. The review will be completed within three business days of submission of the review and be a true evaluation of the circumstances by the chair or chair designate.

Section 2. Resolution 2018-1 is repealed and replaced by this updated policy.

*Submitted by the Educational Policy Committee*

## Links to online resources, accessible April 2024

- Policy on Final Examinations
  - Faculty Council Resolution 2017-5. On Final Examinations: <https://facultygov.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/261/2017/04/Res2017-5FinalExams.pdf>
  - Undergraduate Catalog under Attendance, Grading and Examination: <https://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/attendance-grading-examination/>
- University Approved Absence Office website: <https://uaao.unc.edu/>
- Accommodations Policy: <https://policies.unc.edu/TDCClient/2833/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=131715>
- UNC web-based interfaith calendar: <https://diversity.unc.edu/holy-days-observances/>