

## Attendance and Participation

Attendance is a crucial aspect of academic success at our university. Regular attendance ensures that students fully engage with course material, participate in interactive discussions, and benefit from the expertise of our distinguished faculty. Being present in class fosters a collaborative learning environment, enabling students to exchange ideas and gain diverse perspectives. It also allows for timely feedback on assignments and a better understanding of complex concepts. Consistent attendance reflects a student's commitment to their education and prepares them for professional responsibilities. Ultimately, it is essential for achieving academic excellence and personal growth.

Whereas attendance is typically defined by statuses identifying a student's presence in a class, participation typically includes the assessment of activity within that course. In some cases, the methodology, subject matter, learning environment, or other factors may require attendance. Depending on the course delivery and format, participation may also take on different forms. Assessment of attendance and participation may vary between courses and include course forums, group work, interactive lectures, or other prescriptive assignments designed to measure engagement and help drive student success. Attendance and participation may be used by instructors to determine a portion of a student's grade for a particular course, which must be explained in detail in the syllabus.

As a general expectation, students should attend all scheduled sessions for their registered courses, actively participate in the learning process, interact respectfully with instructors and peers, and fulfill all course requirements. Students should understand the benefits of consistent engagement, take personal responsibility for their involvement, and be aware of the potential consequences of underperformance in any of these areas.

### **Course Delivery Methods**

Course delivery methods utilized are:

- *Directed Study* – Individual study of a course needed to satisfy a requirement; must be approved before being scheduled.
- *Hybrid* – At least one day of regularly scheduled in-person instruction or examination per week with additional online asynchronous and/or other self-directed work. The in-person class should be interactive and engaging and not a reiteration of the pre-recorded content. Additional online asynchronous and/or other self-directed work should be equivalent in time to the amount of an in-person class and cannot require student presence. The mix of delivery modes will depend on an instructor's teaching strategies and course learning objectives. Hybrid classes are not

counted as online classes for immigration purposes.

- **Online** – All online asynchronous instruction with no scheduled class sessions. Follows a week-by-week schedule and has assigned due dates. Does not require in-person attendance for classes, exams, or other purposes. Engagement occurs at any time through active participation by a student in an instructional activity related to the student's course of study.

Courses with specific requirements, such as internships, field experiences, and practicums, may not be hybrid.

## **Course Attendance**

Course attendance is a vital component of academic success and will be evaluated according to the specific modality of course delivery. The university offers courses in various formats, each with distinct attendance expectations, which are defined below.

### **Hybrid Attendance for Main Campus students**

Full-time main campus students are required to take hybrid classes and must physically attend any scheduled live, in-person, active-learning classroom session each week for each hybrid course in which they are enrolled. Full-time undergraduate students are required to take at least 3 hybrid courses (9 credit hours) each fall and spring semester; additional courses can be online or hybrid. Full-time graduate students are required to take at least 2 hybrid courses (6 credit hours) each fall and spring semester; additional courses can be online or hybrid.

Domestic students are permitted to take all hybrid courses in one session and all online courses in the alternate session whereas F-1 visa holders are not permitted to exclusively opt for online classes only in any seven-week session.

Faculty are required to document attendance through the entirety of the course and enter it in the LMS by the close of business on Monday for the previous week; module course attendance needs to be entered daily. Attendance must be accurate.

Courses are configured to notify students, the DSO, and advisors of each absence using the automated attendance notification in the LMS. F1 students must submit documentation for all absences to the DSO Office, as absences can impact their F1 status.

## **Online Attendance**

Attendance requirements for online students are designed to offer flexibility while upholding academic rigor, integrity, and parity with other students.

Attendance in an online course is defined as active engagement in instructional activities related to the student's course of study as directed by the course instructor. Instructional activities include but are not limited to:

- Submitting an academic assignment
- Posting in a course discussion board
- Taking an assessment or an exam
- Participating in an interactive tutorial, webinar, or other interactive computer-assisted instruction
- Participating in a study group, group project, or an online discussion that is assigned by the course instructor
- Interacting with the course instructor about academic matters

The course instructor shall monitor academic engagement through the entirety of the course and submit Early Alerts when a student becomes inactive and does not complete instructional activities.

## **Excused Absences**

The university sees the following absences as excused and immediately available for make-up work: (a) participation in university activities at the request of university authorities, (b) illness or injury and the student is unable to attend class, (c) funerals, (d) selected school-sponsored class trips or projects that meet divisional or degree requirements, (e) compelling circumstances beyond the control of the student, (f) other situations the Academic Council Committee collectively deems as having merit or basis, and (g) all other course make-up work policies included in the course syllabus. Absences that do not fall into one of the aforementioned categories are unexcused.

For an absence to be excused from a hybrid class, students must notify the professor by email, phone, or another method approved by the professor before the class begins. Online students must notify the professor by email, phone, or another method approved by the professor prior to the due date of any assignment affected by the absence. In both circumstances, students should provide sufficient information to enable the professor to make an informed decision regarding whether the absence will be excused or unexcused. If prior notification is not possible due to the nature of the absence, students must contact the professor as soon as reasonably possible. When notified late, faculty are encouraged to use their discretion to determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused, and should consult their supervisor if they have any questions or need further guidance.

Faculty members are not permitted to request medical documentation, such as doctor's or nurse's notes, from students to excuse an absence. In the event that a student misses more than one class, faculty shall report the absences through the Early Alert system.

## **Unexcused Absence Penalties**

Students will receive a 4% reduction in the final grade for each unexcused absence beyond the following:

- 1 unexcused absence in a class that meets 1 time a week for a session
- 2 unexcused absences in a class that meets 1 time a week for a semester

Students will receive a 6% reduction in the final grade for each unexcused absence beyond the following:

- 1 unexcused absence in a 5 day module class

## **Tardy, Early Departure, and/or Partial Attendance (Hybrid only)**

When a student is late to an in-person class two times and/or departs early two times, this will count as one absence. The absence may be excused or unexcused depending on the circumstances.

Students who miss more than 25% of a single class meeting will be counted absent for the entire class. Percentages per single class meeting are as follows:

- 20 minutes of a 75-minute class
- 2 hours in an 8-hour class

## **Course Abandonment**

Course abandonment is defined as when a student stops attending class and remains inactive for 2 consecutive weeks in a seven-week course, OR 3 consecutive weeks in a 15-week course, OR 2 consecutive days in a module course, without any communication from the student to the instructor during that period. Simply logging into a course is not evidence of academic activity.

Course abandonment will result in the student being withdrawn from the course. For F1 students, course abandonment (Unauthorized Withdrawal) will result in termination of their SEVIS record.

\*Comprehensive exams are exempt from course abandonment due to the course being 0 credit hours.

## **Faculty Course Policies and Student Responsibilities**

Faculty may establish specific course requirements and policies, provided they align with university policies, departmental directives, and federal regulations. These requirements should be clearly

communicated to students in the syllabus and verbally at the beginning of each term.

Students are responsible for reviewing the course syllabus, which includes the grade weighting table and course-specific policies regarding the grading of each component, such as attendance and participation. It is the student's responsibility to understand these policies, monitor their own attendance, and adhere to the course rules.

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Familiarize themselves with each instructor's course syllabus, course requirements, and online course room layout. Each faculty member will have different expectations. It is the responsibility of the student to understand the expectations for each class/professor.
2. Regularly monitor class absences throughout the term.
3. Obtain all materials covered in each course during absences and make-up any work required by the instructor.
4. Inform each instructor as far in advance as possible when conflicts or absences can be anticipated (e.g., athletic travel, work, medical procedures, religious observances, etc.) by email, phone, or other means deemed appropriate by the instructor.
5. Provide appropriate information to the instructor so an informed decision can be made as to whether the absence is excused or unexcused. F1 students also need to submit documentation to the DSO Office for all absences. What is acceptable and excusable by the instructor may differ from the DSO Office and students should contact the DSO Office with questions.
6. Submit documentation to the instructor and Registrar in instances of prolonged absences due to illness, injury, or other emergency.

### **Instructor Responsibilities**

1. Outline attendance policies in course syllabi and announce in class at the beginning of each term.
2. Set reasonable expectations for class based on class content, organization, methodology, and size.
3. Hybrid classes - Maintain accurate class attendance records. Update the LMS by the close of business on Monday for the previous week's class and daily for module courses. Records should be accessible and current in the LMS for students to review their progress.
4. Report course abandonments to the Registrar as they occur.
5. State within the syllabus any required activities outside of class hours that are used for graded participation. If the required activity falls on a specific date/time, the instructor must provide an alternative assignment, unless the activity is foundational to the course. If the activity can be completed over the course of the term and is not limited to a specific date/time, no alternative assignment is required.