

Disability Related Attendance Policy

When a student has a chronic condition with unpredictable episodes, modifications to the University's attendance policy might be appropriate. If a student feels he or she might need this accommodation, the procedures for registering for reasonable accommodations must be followed.

Determination of eligibility for a disability related modification to the attendance policy is made on a case-by-case basis though consultation between the instructor of the course and the Coordinator of Disabilities and Accessibility Services.

It should be noted, altering learning objectives of a course is not considered reasonable. Faculty members, in conjunction with Department Chairs, are ultimately responsible for identifying and defining essential academic requirements for their course and may establish an acceptable number of excused absences in light of these essential requirements.

The following questions developed by the **United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights** need to be considered when determining the extent to which attendance is an essential requirement of a course, and whether a Disability Related Attendance Policy might be appropriate:

- What is the stated attendance policy in the course description and syllabus?
- By what method is the final grade calculated?
- Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students, and among the students themselves?
- Do student contributions in class constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- Does the fundamental nature of the course rely on student participation as an essential method of learning?
- To what degree does a student's failure to attend class constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?

The granting of a disability related modification to the attendance policy does not mean that unlimited absences can be permitted. The number of additional absences a student may be allowed as a reasonable accommodation will be determined on a case-by-case basis for each course in consultation with the instructor, utilizing the above criteria.



Students should be aware that **absences may have a negative impact on their academic performance even if a disability based modification to the attendance policy has been granted.** This can happen because of the content and experiential learning that might have been missed by not attending class.

Further, **a disability based modification to the attendance policy is not possible in every course because class attendance is an essential and integral part of the learning experience.** In the event a modification cannot be granted, the student should consult with his or her Academic Advisor and/or Department Chair to discuss alternatives.

Attendance based accommodations are only applicable after the above-mentioned process is completed. Attendance requirements for the course are enforceable until then. Because of this, it is best that consultation between the instructor, student and Disabilities and Accessibility Services Coordinator happen as close to the start of the course as possible.

International Students- Because there may be attendance requirements related to an international student's visa, the Designated School Official (DSO) must be consulted before a disability related modification to the attendance policy can be granted. Students seeking this accommodation are responsible for notifying of the International Student Advisor.

