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## **Policy AC013: Class Attendance**

**Recommended for Approval by:** Scott E. Miller, Senior VP for Academic Affairs and Provost

**Approved by:** Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson, President

**Effective Date:** 07/01/2022

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### **A. Intent**

To establish expectations for student class attendance and a system for monitoring such attendance to ensure compliance with federal financial aid regulations.

### **B. Definition(s)**

None.

### **C. Policy**

Prior to the beginning of the semester, each student is required to confirm their attendance in each course through the student self-service portal.

Students are expected to attend each class meeting in its entirety. Faculty members shall maintain a record of classroom attendance throughout the semester, and the student is responsible for verifying their attendance when arriving late to class and/or justifying early departure.

Class absences are excused for medical reasons documented by medical personnel, university activities approved by the appropriate vice president or designee, and/or for personal exigencies, as defined by the faculty member. Activities to be recognized as an excused absence include, but are not limited to: scheduled athletic competitions; academic competitions in which the student is a participant; military duties; auto accidents; death of an immediate family member; and medical emergencies. Verification of such absences may be required by the instructor, and the student is responsible for make-up work as required by the instructor. Students with excused absences are permitted to make up missed work and are responsible for all missed assignments without penalty. In cases where there have been significant absences, the student should consult with the instructor and academic advisor to determine if completion of course requirements is possible or reasonable.

Faculty members are encouraged to consider unexcused absences in their grading. Unless otherwise provided in writing in the course syllabus and approved by the Provost, a student shall have the privilege of unexcused absences equal to the number of classes held in a week, or to one absence per credit hour associated with the course, whichever is less. However, this shall not excuse the student from any stated deadlines for assignments or other work in the course, and the student is

responsible for completing all course requirements missed as indicated in the syllabus. The instructor shall state in the course syllabus the ramifications of unexcused absences beyond those provided for in this policy. The academic dean must approve alternative attendance requirements associated with individual programs within the college.

### **Faculty Records of Attendance**

All faculty shall perform class roster verification each semester or term as follows:

- Class Roster Verification at the end of the Add-Drop Period: The instructor will verify class rosters at the end of the Add-Drop period. This verification affirms that the listed students have been involved in academically-related activities associated with the course. (See the academically-related activities definition below.) For online courses, the instructor will advise students to log into the course and begin course activity during the Add-Drop period. The registrar will provide notification of the roster verification with instructions on how to remove non-participants via the self-service portal. Students registered but not attending will be reported as non-attends and will be removed from the roster.
- Class Roster Verification at Midterm: A second verification of the course roster will be accomplished at the time of midterm grade entry.
- Class Roster Verification at Final Grading: The final verification of the course roster will be accomplished at the time of final grade entry.

### **Date of Last Attendance (Failing Grades Only)**

For all students assigned failing grades at the end of the semester, the instructor must include a date of last attendance for each student. This date allows the university to compute the portion of each student's financial aid that must be returned to the federal government. Return of aid is required for any student who stopped attending on or before the 60% point of the semester.

For students who completed the semester, the date of last attendance should be recorded as the date of the final examination.

For students who did not complete the semester, the date of last attendance can be established by classroom attendance records or through records of students' participation in activities such as the following: tests, quizzes, assignment submissions, online discussion posts, or any other meaningful interaction with the faculty. The following guidance is provided in federal regulations:

### **Academically-related Activity for Face-to-Face Instruction**

Academically-related activities include, but are not limited to:

- Physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students.
- Submitting an academic assignment.
- Taking an exam, an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction.
- Attending a study group that is assigned by the university.
- Participating in an online discussion about academic matters.

- Initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

Academically-related activities **do not include** activities where a student may be present but not academically engaged, such as:

- Living in institutional housing.
- Participating in the university's meal plan.
- Logging into an online class without active participation.
- Participating in academic counseling or advisement.

#### **Academically-related Activity for Online Courses**

In an online context, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. It must be demonstrated that a student participated in class or was otherwise engaged in an academically-related activity. Academically-related activities in a distance education course include, but are not limited to:

- Student submission of an academic assignment.
- Student submission of an exam.
- Documented student participation in an interactive tutorial or computer- assisted instruction.
- A posting by the student showing the student's participation in an online study group that is assigned by the institution.
- A posting by the student in a discussion forum showing the student's participation in an online discussion about academic matters.
- An email from the student or other documentation showing the student-initiated contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

#### **D. Procedure(s)**

1. Financial Aid will review the last date of attendance for all deficit grades, and the return of Title IV funds will be based on the latest date.
2. Faculty shall include in their syllabus the grading consequences of class attendance/non-attendance.
3. It is the student's responsibility to provide to the instructor, in advance when possible, documentation for all excused absences. Faculty will accept medical excuses for missed class as valid if from a medical or psychological professional. When in doubt, the faculty member should consult with the Office of the Provost and/or Office for Students with Disabilities.
4. A student participating in an official university activity shall obtain a letter from the appropriate University official, or their designee, authorizing the absence and provide it to the course instructor in advance.
5. A student with an excused absence shall promptly arrange with the course instructor to make up missed assignments in advance of the excused absence whenever possible.

**E. Related policies**

Add-Drop Policy (AC036)

Class Withdrawal (AC046)

Grading Policy (AC019)

University Withdrawal Policy (AC035)

**F. Contact Information**

For additional information, please contact the Office of the Registrar or Financial Aid Office.

**G. Policy Review Schedule**

All policies will be reviewed every two years or on an as needed basis if a change in BOG, PASSHE or Pennsylvania law would create the need for an immediate change.