



Policy Chapter: Chapter 6 Faculty Affairs

Policy Number and Title: 06.039 Student Attendance and Authorized Absences

I. Policy Statement

The University of North Texas recognizes that student success is promoted by regular attendance and participation in class. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to notify students in writing of any special attendance requirements for the class. This policy applies to all modes of course delivery.

II. Application of Policy

Faculty and Students

III. Policy Definitions

A. Active Military Service

“Active military service,” in this policy, means military service performed by a member of the Texas National Guard, or the Texas State Guard, or federally funded state active service, or federal active service, but excludes service performed exclusively for training, including basic combat training, advanced individual training, annual training, inactive duty training, and special training periodically made available to reserve members.

B. Faculty

“Faculty,” in this policy, means any person who is the teacher of record for a course offered for academic credit, including adjuncts, teaching fellows (TFs), instructors, lecturers, senior lecturers, principal lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors.

C. Official University Function

“Official university function,” in this policy, means all activities, events and programs sponsored by an academic or administrative unit of the University and all activities and on-campus programs sponsored by student or employee organizations.

D. Place of Duty

“Place of duty,” in this policy, means location to which the student receives official orders to perform military service.

E. Reasonable Time

“Reasonable time,” in this policy, means no fewer than 10 days.

F. Religious Holy Day

“Religious Holy Day,” in this policy, means a holy day observed by a religion whose place of worship is exempt from state property tax.

G. Student

“Student,” in this policy, means a person who is enrolled in one or more courses offered for academic credit.

IV. Policy Responsibilities

A. Student Responsibility

The student is responsible for regular and punctual attendance and is expected to participate in all courses in which the student is enrolled.

B. Notice of Attendance Expectations

Faculty members must clearly state in their syllabus the requirements for class absence and/or participation and the impact of absences/participation on course grades.

C. Class Attendance

1. Faculty members must record student class attendance through the reported Census date.
2. Absences may lower a student’s grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member.
3. Departments and similar academic units have authority to establish a department-wide or course-wide attendance standards. Students must be notified of the standards in writing.

D. Excused Absences

1. An absence may be excused for the following reasons:
 - a. religious holy day, including travel for that purpose;
 - b. active military service, including travel for that purpose;
 - c. participation in an official university function;
 - d. illness or other extenuating circumstances;
 - e. pregnancy and parenting under Title IX; and
 - f. when the University is officially closed.
2. A student is responsible for requesting an excused absence in writing, providing satisfactory evidence to the faculty member to substantiate excused absence and delivering the request personally to the faculty member assigned to the course for which the student will be absent.
3. When an absence is excused, the faculty member will provide a reasonable time after the absence for the student to complete an assignment or examination missed.

4. Faculty members are required to find a fair resolution if a student missed an examination or assignment on days when the university is officially closed.
5. A student will not be penalized for an excused absence and will be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable period after the absence.
6. A student needing assistance verifying absences due to illness or extenuating circumstances for all courses should contact the Dean of Students office. The Dean of Students office will verify the student's documentation and advocate on the student's behalf, as appropriate, to instructors for excused absences.

E. Student Absence Due to Religious Holy Day

A student may be excused from attending classes or other activities, including examinations, for observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose.

1. A student should notify a faculty member of anticipated absence to observe religious holy days as early in the semester as possible.
2. An excused student may not be penalized for the absence and must be allowed to complete any examination or an assignment missed during the absence within a reasonable period after the absence. The faculty member may take appropriate action if a student fails to satisfactorily complete an assignment or examination within a reasonable time.
3. If a student and faculty member disagree about whether the absence is due to observance of a religious holy day or whether the student has been given reasonable time to complete any missed assignment or examination, they may appeal the decision using the process outlined in UNT Policy 07.016, Student Complaint Policy or UNT Policy 06.040, Grade Appeals.

F. Student Absence Due to Military Service

A student will be excused from attending classes or other activities upon providing notice of participation in active military service, including travel to and from the place of duty.

1. A student called to active military service must provide a copy of the student's military orders to the Dean of Students office who will verify the orders and advocate to the student's instructors for excused absences based on the Texas Education Code.
2. The course syllabus for a course in which a student was enrolled when called to active military service will be retained so that the student may complete the course without prejudice and pursuant to the course requirements that were in effect when the student enrolled in the course upon the student's return from active military service. All course work completed by a student prior to being called to active military service will be retained until the student returns.

3. A student who returns from active military service who will not be able to satisfactorily complete any outstanding assignments or examinations within a reasonable period of time must work with the faculty member to develop a written plan and timeframe for completing all outstanding assignments or to make any other arrangements as may be appropriate under the circumstances.
4. The maximum period for which a student may be excused will be no more than 25% of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent (not including the final examination period) for the specific course or courses in which the student currently is enrolled at the beginning of the period of active military service.
5. A student returning from active military service who believes that they have not been given full and fair treatment in accordance with this policy, or all other relevant state or federal laws relating to return from active military service, may seek review under UNT Policy 07.016, Student Complaints or UNT Policy 06.040, Grade Appeals.

G. Student Absence for Official University Functions

Student absences due to participation in an official university function or activity must be approved in advance by the department chair and the academic dean. Athletic team member absences will be approved by the athletic director or designee. Excused students will be permitted to make up missed work when practicable or will be given special consideration so they are not penalized for their absence. The academic dean/athletic director or designee will notify the Dean of Students office regarding the excused absences and the student will pick up the approved absence card within three (3) business days to present to all instructors.

H. Pregnancy and Parenting under Title IX

1. A student who is pregnant or who has given birth must be excused from class for as long as the student's doctor certifies the absences is medically necessary.
2. A faculty member, department, or other academic unit that establishes course-wide attendance standards must comply with this policy.

I. Student Absence Due to Illness

In case of an illness that will require absence from class for more than one (1) week, the student should notify his or her faculty member.

V. References and Cross-References

[Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972](#)

[Texas Education Code § 54.006\(f\)\(3\)](#)

[UNT Policy 06.040, Grade Appeals](#)

[UNT Policy 07.016, Student Complaint](#)

Approved Absence Card

VI. Revision History

Policy Contact:	Policy Director, Office of the Provost and VP for Academic Affairs
Approved Date:	01/01/1983
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