



**Policy Chapter:** Chapter 6 Faculty Affairs

**Policy Number and Title:** 06.039 Student Attendance and Authorized Absences

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**I. Policy Statement**

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

**II. Application of Policy**

Faculty and Students.

**III. Policy Definitions**

**A. Required Military Service**

“Required 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.

**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 a time frame specified in the syllabus or mutually agreed upon between the instructor and the student. In cases where an agreement between instructor and student cannot be reached or there is no specification in the syllabus, a reasonable time means typically no fewer than 10 business 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 the authority to establish department-wide or course-wide attendance standards. Students must be notified of the standards in writing.

**D. University Excused Absences**

The first point of contact for all students should be the instructor. Absences that do not fall under Title IX, Required Military Service, and Official University Functions, are deemed a matter between the student and their faculty member. If the absence is due to an extenuating circumstance that exceeds 5 consecutive days, the faculty member may request for the student to provide documentation through the Dean of Students’ office.

1. An absence will be excused by the university for:
  - a. religious holy day, including travel for that purpose;
  - b. participation in an official university function;
  - c. required military service, including travel for that purpose;
  - d. pregnancy and parenting under Title IX; and
  - e. when the University is officially closed.
2. A student is responsible for requesting in a reasonable time 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. 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.
4. A student will not be penalized for a university-excused absence and will be allowed, when practicable, to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable period after the absence.

***E. Student Absence Due to Religious Holy Day***

A student will 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 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, the student may appeal the decision using the process outlined in [UNT Policy 07.016, Student Complaint](#) or [UNT Policy 06.040, Grade Appeals](#).

***F. Student Absence Due to Required Military Service***

A student will be excused from attending classes or other activities for up to, but not to exceed, 25% of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent upon providing notice of participation in required military service, including travel to and from the place of duty.

1. A student who wishes to receive an excused absence due to required military service must provide a copy of the student's military orders or other documentation to the Dean of Students' office. The Dean of Students will verify the orders or other documentation and notify the faculty member about the military related absences. .
2. The syllabus for a course in which a student was enrolled when called to required military service must 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 required military service. All course work completed by a student prior to being called to required military service will be retained until the student returns.
3. A student who returns from required 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 required military service.
5. A student returning from required 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 required 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 must be approved in advance by the Dean of Students Office. Athletic team member absences must 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 must notify the Dean of Students' office regarding the excused absences. Within three business days of receipt of the absence notice, the Dean of Students will provide absence documentation to the student for them to present to all instructors.

#### ***H. Student Absence due to Pregnancy and Parenting***

For reasons related to a student's pregnancy, childbirth, or any resulting medical status or condition, UNT will provide reasonable course modifications including but not limited to:

1. excuse the student's absence;
2. allow the student to make up missed assignments or assessments;
3. allow the student additional time to complete assignment in the same manner as allowable for a student with a temporary medical condition; and
4. provide the student with access to instructional materials and video records of lectures for classes which the student has an excused absence under this section.

A faculty member, department, or other academic unit that establishes course-wide attendance standards must comply with this policy.

Pregnant and parenting students may contact the Dean of Students' Office and submit a pregnancy and parenting accommodation request. Upon completing the request and including medical documentation, a staff member will assist the student by discussing their options regarding their coursework and/or advocate to instructors regarding their situation.

***I. Student Absence Due to Illness and Extenuating Circumstance***

1. Absences that do not fall under Pregnancy and Parenting, Military Service, Religious Holy Days, and Official University Functions, are deemed a matter between the student and their faculty member. If the absence is an illness or extenuating circumstance that exceeds 5 consecutive days, the faculty member may request for the student to provide documentation through the Dean of Students’ office. Examples include but not are limited to:
  - a. temporary disability or injury;
  - b. extended medical absence or hospitalization;
  - c. illness of a dependent family member; or
  - d. major illness or death of a loved one.
2. For an extenuating circumstance not noted in IV.I.1, the Dean of Students’ Office may provide advocacy to students who has presented with other extenuating circumstances to the instructor. However, the decision to excuse an absence remains with the faculty member.

**V. Resources/Forms/Tools**

[Student Reporting Page](#)  
[Student Pregnancy and Parenting](#)

**VI. References and Cross-References**

[Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972](#)  
[Texas Education Code § 54.006\(f\)\(3\)](#)  
[Texas Education Code § 51.991](#)  
[UNT Policy 06.040, Grade Appeals](#)  
[UNT Policy 07.003, Student Health and Wellness Center](#)  
[UNT Policy 07.016, Student Complaint](#)

**VII. Revision History**

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|-----------------|---|
| Policy Contact: | Asst. Vice Provost, Faculty Success                         |
| Approved Date:  | 01/01/1983  |
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