



COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Attendance Policy

Policy Number [X-XX]

Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania

Approved by University Senate, [Date of Approval]

Revised [Date of Revision]

Responsible Office: [Insert Division or Office]

1. Purpose

Class attendance is a critical component of student success and one of the primary ways students engage with and understand course materials. Regular and punctual attendance is expected in all course delivery modalities and teaching locations, as it forms the foundation for academic achievement. Students may need to miss class to participate in a regularly scheduled, university-sanctioned curricular or extracurricular activity or due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances, including illness, serious mitigating situations, official military service, official University representation, participation in local, state, or federal elections, or religious observances.

This policy provides guidance to faculty and students as it relates to student attendance in all course delivery modalities and teaching locations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Commonwealth University students and instructors in all courses, including in-person, online, and hybrid formats, across all University programs and locations.

3. Definitions, Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Definitions

- 3.1.1. **University-Excused Absences:** are defined as those sanctioned by the university and afford students the opportunity to make up missed work when proper university documentation is provided.
- 3.1.2. **ADA Accommodations – Attendance Flexibility:** Excused absences are granted only with a UDS Letter of Accommodation approving absences for medical or disability-related reasons. Reasonable absences are determined case by case; excessive absences may require consultation with University Disability Services.



COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

- 3.1.3. **Absence Memo:** Absence memos may be requested via the Dean of Students office for non-medical absences of one day or more for the following:
- 3.1.3.1. Family Emergency – Death or hospitalization of Family/supporters, Funerals, Traumatic Events such as house fires or car accidents
 - 3.1.3.2. Non-University Requirements – Legal reasons (Jury Duty, Legal Proceedings, or Court Attendance) or Military Orders/Trainings
 - 3.1.3.3. University Requirements – Students who are required to participate in a university process or activity as directed by a university official
- 3.1.4. **Extended Medical Illness (EMI):** An EMI is a formal notice sent over CU Succeed by the SHS staff if three (3) or more consecutive days of missed classes are due to an illness or injury.
- 3.1.5. **Instructor of Record:** Faculty member responsible for assigning a final grade for students in a course.
- 3.2. **Roles and Responsibilities**
- 3.2.1. **Instructor of Record:**
- 3.2.1.1. Clearly communicate attendance expectations and excused absence procedures in the syllabus.
 - 3.2.1.2. Provide students with reasonable opportunities to make up missed work for excused absences.
 - 3.2.1.3. Collaborate with UDS, DOS, and SHS to support students with verified needs.
- 3.2.2. **Students:**
- 3.2.2.1. Attend classes regularly and participate actively.
 - 3.2.2.2. Communicate absences promptly and provide required documentation.
 - 3.2.2.3. Complete missed work in consultation with the instructor, following excused absence guidelines.
- 3.2.3. **Office of the Dean of Students (DOS):**
- 3.2.3.1. Assist students with situations that may affect academic success or holistic growth.
 - 3.2.3.2. Provide Absence Memos when appropriate.
- 3.2.4. **Student Health Services (SHS):**
- 3.2.4.1. Provide physical and mental health care to support students' well-being.
 - 3.2.4.2. Promote holistic health to enhance academic and co-curricular success.
 - 3.2.4.3. Issue EMI notices when appropriate.
- 3.2.5. **University Disability Services (UDS):**
- 3.2.5.1. Collaborate with students, faculty, and campus partners to promote self-advocacy and accessibility.



COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

3.2.5.2. Assist in determining the reasonableness of absences on a case-by-case basis.

4. Policy

- 4.1. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes punctually and participate actively in course activities.
- 4.2. Faculty must clearly outline course-specific attendance and participation requirements in the course syllabus, consistent with this University policy.
- 4.3. University departments or programs may establish common attendance policies to govern their sections as long as those policies fall within these guidelines.
- 4.4. Students may be excused from class for legitimate reasons, including but **not limited** to:
 - 4.4.1. Illness or serious medical conditions
 - 4.4.2. Absences Related to Accessibility or Health Needs
 - 4.4.3. Official University representation or service
 - 4.4.4. Official military service
 - 4.4.5. Participation in local, state, or federal elections
 - 4.4.6. Legal summons or obligations that cannot be postponed
 - 4.4.7. Religious observances
- 4.5. For excused absences, students must be allowed to make up all graded work without penalty within a reasonable timeframe agreed upon with the instructor.

5. Procedures, Standards, and Guidelines

- 5.1. The instructor's attendance policy should clearly state expected communication timelines for students to report absences, recognizing that in some situations prior/immediate notification may not be possible.
- 5.2. There may be situations in which students are able to attend their courses that are listed by the registrar as a distance education modality but cannot attend their courses that are listed by the registrar in a face-to-face modality. The reasonableness of such requests can be evaluated through University Disability Services (UDS), the Office of Dean of Students (DOS), or Student Health Services (SHS), **as appropriate**. It is incumbent upon the student to provide the university with documentation and communicate in a timely manner to ensure compliance with this policy. In these cases, faculty will provide the opportunity to make up scheduled examinations or quizzes, or a fair alternative to the missed work.



COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

- 5.3. Students must notify instructors as soon as the need for absence is known. Documentation may be requested to verify the reason for the absence.
- 5.4. Faculty will accept verification from the Dean of Students (DOS), University Disability Services (UDS), or Student Health Services (SHS) when students are unable to provide documentation directly.

6. Compliance and Enforcement

- 6.1. Every University policy will undergo a regular review on a five-year cycle, with approximately 20% of the total policies inventory being reviewed each year.
- 6.2. All policy reviews will be conducted by the responsible Senate Committee to assure that the policy remains relevant and aligns with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, PASSHE Board of Governors policies, and other University policies, procedures, standards, or guidelines.

7. Additional Information

7.1. Supporting Documents

7.1.1. Include title of supporting documentation here.] [[Link](#)]

7.2. History

7.2.1. [Indicate whether the policy is a new policy, or whether it supersedes an existing policy. Include the effective date of the original policy as well as the date(s) of any subsequent amendments (if known).]

7.2.2. Effective Date – [Date Approved by the University Senate or Issued by the Office of the President as an Interim Policy]

7.2.3. Revised - [Date of Revision]

7.2.4. Next Review Date - [Date of Revision]

7.3. Related Policies - [Reference related policies]

7.3.1. IAP 11

7.4. Contacts for Additional Information and Reporting

7.4.1. [Name of Office/Division, Commonwealth University, Attn: [Name of person to serve as contact, email address of contact hyperlinked, office phone of contact in format of XXX.XXX.XXXX]