



COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

University Disability Services Consideration for Absences Procedure

Commonwealth University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The University Disability Services (UDS) office reviews every request with great caution and we approve accommodations only when there is a clear documented rationale for their need.

Consideration for Absences

When a student is approved for a *consideration for absences* accommodation, this means that a student is permitted a reasonable amount of additional absences beyond the attendance requirements that are set for students in a particular course. The Office of Civil Rights and the Department of Justice require us to consider these requests on a case-by-case and course-by-course basis. In approving a request for consideration for absences, we want to ensure clear communication between faculty, students and UDS about the limits of that consideration and about how to proceed when absences approach the threshold of unreasonable.

Please note that students who are approved for a consideration for absences accommodation are strongly encouraged to attend all classes on a regular basis. The students are informed that this accommodation is ONLY applicable for the specific disability that the students are registered for with UDS. They are also informed that if a class session is missed due to a disability related circumstance, they must email the faculty member and copy UDS staff to the email to notify all parties of the absence. In all instances when the student experiences an exacerbation of their condition, they are notified to maintain ongoing, timely communication with their faculty members and UDS as well as to fulfill all objectives associated with their courses.

UDS encourages the faculty member to notify UDS when he/she believes that absences are nearing the threshold of unreasonable or if/when communication with the student is made regarding a withdrawal from the course or issuing an incomplete.

Consideration for Absences Agreement Form

In order to enhance communication between students, faculty and UDS, we have created a *Consideration for Absences Agreement Form*. Our intention with this agreement is to help guide conversations regarding attendance and the parameters that are agreed upon by all parties; the student, faculty and UDS.

All questions or concerns regarding the consideration for absences accommodation, agreement, or process, should be directed to the University Disability Services office.

The *Consideration for Absences Agreement Form* (page 3 of this document) is designed to provide faculty and students a framework for developing parameters and a contingency plan for consideration for absences as a reasonable accommodation as verified by University Disability Services. The purpose of this form is to facilitate discussions about how to apply this accommodation to a given course by balancing the student's need for a consideration for absences as a reasonable accommodation and maintaining the academic integrity of the course.

Please note that students are not required to disclose their specific diagnosis, but the typical frequency, manner and duration of the impact of their disability are important factors in determining appropriate consideration for absences. Reach out to UDS if you need assistance with determining reasonableness for specific cases.

Consideration for Absences Agreement Form

If the student has an approved accommodation for consideration of absences, the following questions may apply to the discussion between professor and student. This is not an exhaustive list and students and faculty should discuss any additional questions or concerns with one another and document them on this form or attach to this form for UDS review.

Course Name:

Number of absences allowed per syllabus:

Number of additional absences allowed upon considering the accommodations:

Are there any specific dates planned for doctor's appointments that can be shared now?

When the student identifies an unpredicted or unplanned need for a consideration for absences, how should the student communicate that need to the professor?

Keeping the objectives for class sessions in mind, if a session is missed, are there options for missed material/objectives to be made up?

Are there any course sessions that are unable to be made up or replicated, such as labs, in-class discussion or experiential learning?

Consideration for absences does not automatically allow for extended deadlines for assignments or imply make-up dates for tests/quizzes/exams. If a deadline or exam is missed, is a make-up or flexibility reasonable?

Are there options for professor notes, peer notes or other materials to be made available for missed sessions?

By signing this agreement, the faculty member and student agree to the terms noted above. In addition, the student agrees to provide a copy of this signed form to University Disability Services for review and to maintain in the student's file. Both parties also agree that if either the student or faculty member believe that the outcome of this discussion is unfavorable or leaves unanswered questions, that the student will contact University Disability Services to support a discussion to attempt reconciliation of any discontinuity.

Faculty Printed Name

Date

Faculty Signature

Date

Student Printed Name

Date

Student Signature

Date

UDS Printed Name

Date

UDS Signature

Date
