

U of L CLASSROOM POLICIES

EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR UNIVERSITY-SANCTIONED EVENTS

On the recommendation of the Faculty Senate, Provost Willihnganz has approved following guidelines for student absences excused by reason of participation in university-sanctioned events. These guidelines replace the Faculty Senate statement of July 8, 1998. Resolved by the Faculty Senate, September 6, 2006:

Although each college, school, or academic unit of the University of Louisville creates its own regulations concerning class attendance, all units hold students responsible for materials covered, lectures given, papers due, exams scheduled, or other evaluative measures administered. The academy requires student participation in the learning process, measurement of student progress, and the fulfillment of basic course requirements.

However, because the university recognizes that educational experiences extend beyond the classroom and campus, faculty **must be** flexible with students who are acting as official representatives of the university, or participating in university-sanctioned events or activities that require absence from class. A university sanctioned event or activity shall be one in which a student represents the university to external constituencies in academic or extra-curricular activities. These include but are not limited to student government congresses, intercollegiate athletic and debate contests, music competitions, academic meetings, and conferences. The deans, the student government association, or faculty sponsors of recognized student organizations may petition the provost to designate other events or categories of events as university-sanctioned.

When students' participation in university-sanctioned events or activities requires them to be absent from a class (or classes) during which an examination or other measurement of academic progress is scheduled, faculty **will** provide students with opportunities to be evaluated at other times **and** by comparable alternative evaluation methods within a reasonable period of time prior to or after the absence.

Faculty members **will** provide students in their classes with clear syllabi, including attendance requirements and dates for required measurements or field experiences. Attendance policies should allow excused absences for university-sanctioned events.

Students who seek excused absences to attend university-sanctioned events are expected to follow the instructions below, and are expected to complete assignments on time, actively participate in other class sessions, and to make up work missed as agreed upon with the faculty member. Students are expected to attend regularly at **all** other times.

Official notice of a university-sanctioned event shall consist of an excused absence request letter from the sponsoring unit or program to the faculty whose class(es) will be missed, delivered by the student. The excused absence letter may request blanket approval for a series of events or approval of a single event. If the event or class of events has not already been designated as university-sanctioned, the letter must be signed by the provost or her/his designee [\[1\]](#). The letter must be delivered to and received by the faculty member at the beginning of the semester for a

series of events or a minimum of one week prior to the event or activity [2]. The letter shall include the following data:

- Name, date(s), and location(s) of the event(s)
- Date of departure from campus and exact time when the student is expected to report for departure.
- Date of return to campus and exact day and time that the student will be expected to return to class.

The faculty member will respond in writing. Approval indicates that the instructor will provide opportunities for students to be evaluated at other times and by comparable alternative evaluation methods, within a reasonable period of time prior to or after the absence, without academic penalty.

If the letter requests blanket approval at the beginning of the term for a series of absences and the faculty member determines that the absences will seriously compromise the student's performance in the course, the faculty member may deny the excused absence request within the first week of classes, thereby allowing the student to drop the course and add another. If the letter requests absence from an exam or other evaluative measure later in the term (but at least one week in advance) [2] and the faculty member determines that the requested absence will compromise the student's performance in the course, the faculty member may deny the excused absence.

The student may appeal denial of an excused absence to the provost or the provost's designee [1]. Students who believe themselves to be penalized by an instructor, either by a disproportionate task to make up missed work or a grade reduction, may also appeal. Reprisals for following the policy or for reporting a failure to follow the policy are prohibited.

[1] The designee for these guidelines is Dr. Dale B. Billingsley, associate university provost for undergraduate affairs (852-5209, provost@louisville.edu).

[2] On occasion, students will not anticipate an absence for a university-sanctioned event until late in the term and will be unable to provide a week's notice. Such events include but are not limited to post-season tournaments or participation in a regional or national competition. In such instances, the student will provide the faculty member with a letter from the sponsoring unit or program for the event, as soon as the event is scheduled, and the faculty member is asked to be as flexible as possible.

Drafted by Senator Bruce Kemelgor, with Senator Elaine Wise; Senator Wise discussed the policy with Provost Willihnganz on 12 March 2012; CAP revised it on 20 March 2012; it was approved by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate on 21 March 2012, and sent to the Faculty Senate on 2 May 2012, and deferred to 6 June 2012.