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SR-08-09-10 BAPC

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BUDGET AND ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

RETURNED TO COMMITTEE

SR-08-09-10 BAPC

Recommends that the current CLASS ATTENDANCE policy, as stated on pages 128-130 of the 2008-2009 Marshall University Undergraduate Catalog, be revised as follows with proposed changes being indicated with new language in **bold** font and deleted language as ~~strikethrough~~.

Class Attendance

It is Marshall University's policy that each instructor evaluates the importance of student class attendance. In the course syllabus, the instructor must provide his/her policy on class attendance, make-up work, and related matters. If a student is absent from class because of a circumstance that is included in the excused absence policy, the absence can be handled by an arrangement between the student and the instructor or, if either party requests, the student can obtain an official excused absence following the procedure described below. The instructor must honor a university excused absence covered by this policy and allow the student an opportunity to catch up/make up work missed. This policy excludes those academic endeavors that require the completion of a certain number of clock hours, as in clinical experiences, practica or internships. For those courses, the maximum number of absences will be determined by the department chair or program supervisor. This policy does not supersede program accreditation requirements.

Definitions of Excused Absences:

Excused absences fall into five categories:

1. University-sponsored activities:

- a. Academic activities including, but not limited to, performing arts, debate and individual events, honors classes, ROTC, and departmental functions.
- b. Athletics. Official athletic events sponsored by the Athletic Department.
- c. Other University activities, including student government and student organizations. The activity must have a clear educational mission and be closely linked to academic pursuits or to other official University functions.

2. Student Illness or Critical Illness/Death in the Immediate Family

"Immediate Family" is defined as a spouse/life partner, child, parent, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent or grandchild.

- a. Student Illness or injury: Absences will be excused only for illnesses or injuries that prohibit students from participating in class. **Scheduled, non-emergency medical appointments will not be excused.**
- b. Critical Illness of Immediate Family Member: Absences will be excused if the student documents that he or she had to provide needed care and/or support for a critically ill immediate family member.
- c. Death of an Immediate Family Member

3. Short-Term Military Obligation: This is defined as absence as the result of military orders for a short-term period. Note: Students subject to federal activation are covered by a separate policy. Please see the catalog for this policy.
4. Jury Duty or Subpoena for Court Appearance: This applies to absences that are a result of official requests from a court of law.
5. Religious Holidays: This applies to religious holidays.

Process to Secure an Excused Absence

~~The student who seeks an excused absence must do so immediately after the event/activity/incident by following these guidelines. Whenever time permits, such as for University activities scheduled well in advance, the excuse must be obtained and presented to the instructor prior to the absence.~~ **The student who seeks an excuse for a medical emergency or family medical emergency must do so immediately upon returning to class. All other excused absences must be approved in advance and the instructor must be notified in advance.**

1. University Sponsored Activities:
 - a. Academic Activities: These absences are excused by the dean within whose unit the activity is sponsored. The dean must pre-approve any notice that is given or sent to faculty regarding absences of this type.
 - b. Athletics: These absences are excused by the Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs who must pre-approve any notice given/sent to faculty.
 - c. Other University activities: These absences are pre-approved by the Dean of Student Affairs and excused by the Office of Academic Affairs prior to any notice to faculty. The activity and the excused absence must be endorsed in writing by the organization advisor.
2. Student Illness or Critical Illness/Death in the Immediate Family:
 - a. Student Illness or Injury: The student must submit official documentation of treatment by a medical practitioner to the Dean of Student Affairs as soon as he/she returns to class. Documentation must specify the inclusive dates to be excused. The dean will notify faculty that the absence(s) meets the criteria to be excused.
 - b. Critical Illness of Immediate Family Member: The student must submit official documentation from the family member's health care provider that substantiates the critical nature of the illness and the student's need to provide the care/support. This documentation is to be submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs upon the student's return to class. The dean will notify faculty that the absence(s) meets the criteria to be excused.
 - c. Death of an Immediate Family Member: To obtain an excused absence, the student must submit one of the following to the Dean of Student Affairs upon return to classes: an obituary or a funeral program with the student named as a relative; verification on letterhead stationery of the death and the relationship by clergy or funeral home personnel. The dean will notify faculty that the absence meets the criteria to be excused.
3. Short-Term Military Obligation: The student who seeks an excused absence for military obligation must present official documentation of his/her orders to duty to the dean of his/her college prior to the absence. The dean will notify faculty that the absences are to be excused.

4. **Jury Duty or Subpoena for Court Appearance:** The student who seeks an excused absence for jury duty or court appearance must submit his/her subpoena or official notification of jury duty to the dean of his/her college prior to the date of the obligation. The dean will notify faculty that the absence is to be excused.
5. **Religious Holidays:** Absences resulting from religious holidays will be excused when the student presents the request in advance of the absence to the Dean of Student Affairs. The dean will indicate his/her approval on the request and forward it to the Office of Academic Affairs for the official excused absence notification to faculty.

Notice: Any student who falsifies information or documentation in order to obtain an excused absence has committed a violation of the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and will be referred to Judicial Affairs for appropriate sanctions.

RATIONALE:

The recommended policy is more specific. It removes some ambiguities, and clarifies the definition of excused absences for student illness or injury. In addition, the time line for the process to secure an excused absence is clarified.

FACULTY SENATE CHAIR:

APPROVED BY THE
FACULTY SENATE: _____ DATE: _____

DISAPPROVED BY THE
FACULTY SENATE: _____ DATE: _____

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:

APPROVED: _____ DATE: _____

DISAPPROVED: _____ DATE: _____

COMMENTS: Approved by the Faculty Senate on December 11, 2008; Disapproved by the University President on January 16, 2009 with the following comment: "Since the amendment to the language in paragraph 2 of the definition appears to not permit an excused absence for required treatment of a chronic or acute illness (i.e., radiation/chemo therapy), this amendment could be construed as harsh, overreaching and possibly discriminatory."