

[Faculty Rule 3335-9-21, Absences](#) states: “Each department or school may make its own rules relative to occasional absences by students from scheduled activities. If, however, a student is absent from a course to such an extent as to imperil his or her credit, or is notably irregular in attendance, it shall be the duty of the instructor concerned to report the facts promptly to the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled. The dean may take such action as deemed appropriate.”

Given the diversity of class sizes, formats, and environments at Ohio State, attendance requirements and the ability to accommodate absences can vary significantly. For example, attendance may not be taken at all in large lecture classes, whereas certain laboratory, experiential and/or clinical requirements may require extensive individualized preparation and attention, such that absences can have a larger impact.

While no single system will cover all situations, this guidance document seeks to provide a fair and workable framework for faculty and students to use in addressing the need for absences generally, while recognizing that individual professors may need to handle specific classes differently and have the right to, per Faculty Rule 3335-9-21. This document highlights legal and other compliance issues that faculty need to consider as they develop and enact an absence policy for their courses and identifies best practices and resources for students seeking an excused absence. Open and timely communication is key between faculty and students.

Faculty members may excuse student absences for a variety of circumstances and adjust curriculum requirements as appropriate. Students, faculty, and other instructional staff are expected to work together with respect and integrity to define and enact the appropriate curriculum adjustments.

Some examples of reasonable and common situations leading to an absence from class may include, depending upon the circumstances:

- Illness, physical or mental, or injuries of the student or a student’s dependent
- Situations covered by Title IX, including medical conditions related to pregnancy
- Participation in intercollegiate athletic events and other university-affiliated academic events as stated in Faculty Rule 3335-9-22 Group Absences.
- Subpoenas
- Jury duty
- Military service
- Bereavement, including related travel
- Religious observances; holidays observed by many members of the university community include, but are not limited to: Rosh Hashanah; Yom Kippur; Sukkot; Passover; Shavuot; 'Id al-Fitr; 'Id al-Adha, and Good Friday
  - A calendar of commonly observed religious holidays can be viewed at: [https://registrar.osu.edu/participationroster/religious\\_holidays.pdf](https://registrar.osu.edu/participationroster/religious_holidays.pdf)

Note that some of these situations are covered by Federal, State, or other applicable laws. If you have concerns or questions, you may contact the [Office of Academic Affairs](#), [Office of Legal Affairs](#), or [Office of Institutional Equity](#)

Students have a responsibility to:

- Attend each and every class meeting scheduled during the normal meeting times, including final exams
- Meet all of the requirements for each course for which they are registered
- Know an instructor’s course policy regarding absence and make-up work at the start of the semester.
- Notify faculty/instructor of any preplanned absences within the first week of class or as soon reasonably as possible.
- Make a timely request that an unforeseen absence be excused
- Take reasonable efforts to avoid schedule conflicts

- Work collaboratively and transparently with your course instructor

Faculty have a responsibility to:

- Establish and disseminate a consistent course absence policy that explains expectations and the process for seeking an excused absence
- Provide a syllabus on the first day of the course that includes information regarding examinations, scheduled experiential learning activities, or other requirements to the extent possible
- Develop reasonable curriculum adjustments where applicable and track student engagement
- Consider all points of view when exercising judgement in applying course policies in non-standard situations
- Work collaboratively and transparently with your students

Faculty members may reasonably require documentation to support a request for an excused absence. However, requiring doctor's notes, police reports in case of injury, and other such documentation in the event of physical/mental illness or injuries can cause an unintended hardship for students who may not, for example, have financial means or the ready ability to obtain such a note. Furthermore, this kind of documentation often contains highly sensitive information that needs to be managed in special ways to protect the privacy of the individual and to maintain compliance with institutional data policies. Students in special situations or those requiring specific, long-term, or other accommodation should seek support from appropriate university offices including but not limited to: [Student Advocacy](#), [Student Life Disability Services](#), the [Office of Institutional Equity](#).

For situations of illness or injury, it is recommended that faculty members accept <FORM>, a notice of student absence that a student fills out on their own. By completing this form, the student acknowledges that they are responsible for communicating appropriate information to their instructor to allow the instructor to make an informed decision about whether to excuse an absence, and that they must complete any missed assignments or make-up work associated with their absence. The veracity of information conveyed in this form is certified by the student's signature, and the submission of untrue information is subject to penalty via the [Code of Student Conduct](#) as Academic Misconduct (Section 3335-23-04-A.12: "Providing falsified materials, documents, or records to a university official in order to meet academic qualifications, criteria, or requirements, including but not limited to submitting falsified doctor's notes and/or falsified transcripts."). Submission of this form does not guarantee that an absence will be excused.

A student who feels that they have encountered legitimate and unpreventable circumstances for which they have not received an excused absence may follow the grievance policy for the course/college/division in which the course is taught. Additional resources on campus may be found through the [Student Advocacy Center](#), [Younkin Success Center](#) or [Student Life Disability Services](#).

Faculty encountering unusual or difficult circumstances are encouraged to consult with their chair or Dean, or to seek feedback from the [Student Advocacy Center](#), [Office of Legal Affairs](#), [Office of Undergraduate Education](#), or the [Graduate School](#).