

# Marshall University Class Absence Policy

It is Marshall University policy that each instructor evaluates the importance of class attendance. In the course syllabus, the instructor provides his/her policy on class attendance, missed 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 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 sponsored 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.
- 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 Obligations**: 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 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.**

### **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 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 Obligations:** 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.

### **Process to Catch Up / Make Up Missed Work**

1. It is the responsibility of the student to request an opportunity to complete missed work.
2. Once the excused absence has been secured, the request to make up work should be made to the instructor at the next available class meeting.
3. Missed activities will be rescheduled or, in the event that rescheduling of an activity is not practical or possible, a fair and equitable alternative way of arriving at the grade for the missed component of the overall grade will be developed by the instructor.
4. Punitive measures must not be taken against students who present an official University excused absence.
5. Students should be aware that excessive absences--whether excused or unexcused--may affect their ability to earn a passing grade.
6. If the faculty member believes that the number of absences accrued under the terms of this policy is such that the student cannot fulfill the learning experience/mastery that a course requires, he/she may recommend that a student withdraw from the class.

Regardless of the nature of the excused absence, the student is responsible for completing all coursework prior to the end of the semester.