BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

University Policy 3120

University-Recognized Student Absences

Effective Date

April 2001

Last Revision Date

October 21, 2021

Responsible Party

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, (208) 426-1202

Scope and Audience

This policy applies to all University Faculty, activity sponsors, and any student requesting an excused absence for a University-recognized reason. A student who is unable to attend a course meeting due to an absence not covered under this policy, such as illness or injury or bereavement for a close friend or family member not defined in Section 5, is encouraged to work directly with the Faculty member.

Additional Authority

Idaho State Board of Education Policy, Section III.P. (Students)

1. Policy Purpose

To establish University-recognized reasons for excused absences, the process for requesting such absences, and to outline the rights and responsibilities for both the student and the Faculty member under this policy.

2. Policy Statement

Boise State University recognizes that while regular attendance and participation are critical to academic achievement, there are circumstances in which student absences may be considered excused. Regular course meeting attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework (both in-person and online) are important contributors to student success. However, certain student absences covered under this policy may be excused and will not be counted against any absence limits set forth in the Faculty member's course syllabus unless a student:

a. Is absent from six (6) instructional hours regardless of term length (6 instructional hours are approximately equal to 2 course meetings for every credit hour - see Carnegie Unit), and

b. Is unable to make up missed coursework for those absences.

A student whose absences and missed coursework exceed six (6) instructional hours and corresponding assignments is encouraged to consider withdrawing from the course.

3. Definitions

3.1 Military-affiliated Students

These students include, but are not limited to:

- Active Duty Military personnel
- Members of the National Guard
- Reservists
- Students receiving Military Tuition Assistance as Reservists, Members of the National Guard, or Active Duty Personnel
- Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

3.2 Faculty

As defined in the Faculty Constitution, the Faculty of the University shall comprise five (5) categories of members hereinafter referred to as: 1) Tenure/Tenure Eligible Faculty, 2) Teaching Faculty [lecturer faculty], 3) Clinical Faculty, 4) Research Faculty, and 5) Administrative Faculty. Associated Faculties constitute a sixth category: 6) Adjunct, Affiliate, and Visiting Faculty. In

addition, for the purposes of this policy, "Faculty" also include emeriti Faculty members and any person employed by the University to conduct learning.

4. Introduction

A student will be granted an excused absence from a course meeting when they document, as described in Section 5, a University-recognized reason for such absence.

a. Excused absences for University-recognized reasons shall not be counted against any absence limits set in the course syllabus.

b. An excused absence excuses the student only from attending course meetings and other formal instruction during the absence. It does not excuse the student from their assigned coursework.

5. University-recognized Reasons

a. University-recognized reasons include the following:

- Athletics, band, forensics, dance, music, theatre, or other activities sponsored by the University if identified by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, or their designees, as the basis for the excused absence.

- The observance of any religious holiday listed on the University's Religious Observance Calendar or any other observed religious holiday.

- Duties required of Military-affiliated Students.

- Participation as a representative of the University or as an officer of a University co-curricular organization in a scheduled professional academic conference; a scheduled conference for which participation is mandatory for the student (e.g., a required annual meeting for all presidents of a national student organization); an academic competition; or a field trip scheduled as a part of a course.

- Participation in University-related business (e.g., student representative attending meetings related to University governance).

- Bereavement for the death of an immediate family member. An immediate family member includes a student's spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, or grandchild including the same relation by marriage or legal guardian.

- Jury duty service

b. An absence due to similar events that could not have been anticipated earlier in the semester will be recognized as an excused absence upon advance notification (as noted below) to the Faculty member by an appropriate Faculty advisor or athletic coach.

6. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students have both the right and the responsibility:

a. To make up any coursework missed during their excused absence;

b. To make up examinations given during their excused absence;

c. To have the same privileges as other students in the course; and

d. To provide the Faculty member with written notification of the excused absence at least ten (10) days in advance of the absence, except in the case of bereavement or jury duty service.

- Written notification must either be prepared by the activity sponsor, or the notification must refer to specific dates on the University's Religious Observance Calendar or any other observed religious holiday. For jury duty service, a copy of the official jury duty summons must accompany the written notification. For bereavement, documentation may be requested by the Faculty member.

- For a Military-affiliated Student, official documentation of the required service must be provided (e.g., military orders, memorandums of record, documentation from a commander, official government request for service of a veteran for contract services, etc.).

- Times for make-up examinations and similar work are to be determined no later than two (2) days prior to the date of the absence, or within seven (7) days of returning from immediate call-up (notification that takes place within 24 to 48 hours) for military duties. Make-up work or examinations will be scheduled within the term and at times mutually convenient for the student and the Faculty member. Should the absence occur during the final two weeks of a course term, the student will resolve the missing work with an incomplete.

- If feasible, a student may request remote or online participation from the Faculty member if in-person attendance is not possible but the student is able to join remotely.

A student who will be absent for an extended period of military duty or service to a federal agency (more than 6 instructional hours) should consult with their advisor to determine if a request for a complete withdrawal is advisable (see University Policy 3110 – Student Complete withdrawal from the University).

7. Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty have the responsibility:

a. To refer to this policy on course syllabi;

b. To excuse a student from attending a course meeting or other formal instruction during the excused absence;

c. To not penalize a student for such absence;

d. To preserve the same privileges that other students have in the course;

e. To allow a student to make up any work missed during their excused absence (not to exceed 6 instructional hours); missed coursework for more than 6 instructional hours may jeopardize the student's ability to achieve the learning outcomes;

f. To determine times for make-up examinations and similar work no later than two (2) days prior to the date of the absence, or within two (2) days of returning from immediate call-up (notification that takes place within 24 to 48 hours) for military duties. Make-up work or examinations will be scheduled at times mutually convenient for the student and the Faculty member.

g. To determine if make-up work arrangements would not be reasonable for the Faculty member and/or the student, even for reasons covered under this policy because the student has missed too many critical components of the course. It is the Faculty member's responsibility to communicate such determination to the student.

h. To indicate on the syllabus and/or in program handbooks and materials when reasonable adjustments, modifications, or adaptations cannot be made to accommodate excused absences as listed in this policy because the course and/or program has required elements (e.g., labs, field trips, clinical placements, etc.) that make it unfeasible or create an undue burden for either the student to make-up the particular course element or for the Faculty member and/or program to fashion a reasonable alternative.

8. Activity Sponsor Responsibilities

Activity sponsors (e.g., athletics, band, dance, etc.) have the responsibility:

a. To prepare written notification on behalf of the participating student on University letterhead with dates and approximate departure and return times for the excused absence.

b. To work with the student to ensure timely delivery of the notice. Failure to deliver the notice at least ten (10) days in advance of the absence could jeopardize the student's excused absence request.

9. Provost's Office Responsibilities

The Provost's Office is responsible for ensuring that Faculty are apprised of this policy.

10. Related Information

Carnegie Unit
https://www.albright.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/instructional-equivalencies-chart-carnegie-units-updated-9-22-15.pdf

Religious Observances Calendar (Office of the Registrar)
https://www.boisestate.edu/registrar/boise-state-academic-calendars/religious-observances/

University Policy 3110 (Student Complete Withdrawal from the University)

Revision History

July 2019; October 21, 2021