

Policies and Expectations - Student Attendance

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

University of Maine

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This document gathers University of Maine policies related to student attendance and describes expected practices within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). UMaine policies are explicitly identified as such, with links provided. The primary audience for the document is instructors in CLAS.

I. At the University of Maine, these expectations apply to students' attendance in class:

1. Students are ordinarily expected to attend all class meetings of the courses for which they are registered. For asynchronous online classes, participation in class activities and/or submitting assignments may be considered evidence of attendance. [<http://catalog.umaine.edu> > "Grades and Grading"]
2. Students unable to attend class are expected to notify their instructor as soon as they become aware that an absence will be necessary.
3. Students who must be absent are expected to take the initiative to stay on pace with the class.

II. In the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), these expectations apply to instructors in the context of students' attendance:

1. Regardless of the reason for a student's absence, instructors are encouraged to interact with students in ways that support students' progress.
2. When a student's absence falls into one of the recognized categories specified in Section III, instructors are expected to offer fair opportunities to make up or compensate for missed tests or assignments, and to support students' efforts to stay on pace with the class.
 - a. Make-up opportunities should be designed to minimize additional burdens on the instructor and the student. To the extent possible, and keeping in mind the nature of the course, these opportunities should also offer an equivalent chance for students to learn and for their learning to be assessed as the originally assigned work would have done.
 - b. Instructors are not expected to re-teach a class that the student has missed. To help the student catch up, they could consider sharing PowerPoint slides, lecture notes, lab instructions, or similar materials.
3. Instructors are expected to state their attendance policy in the syllabus. Such policies must align with relevant academic policies and practices at the university. Links to policies are provided below where applicable.
4. Students who register after a course has begun may not be penalized for absences or missed work that occurred prior to their enrollment. If the nature of the class allows, students may be permitted to make up any work assigned before they enrolled. If making up this work is not possible, this should not count against a student's final grade in the class. Students are responsible for catching up on any content they may have missed due to their late enrollment.
5. Providing remote access to students who are unable to attend class is not recommended. Classes are to be taught in the modality in which they are offered on MaineStreet.
6. When the university has announced that classes are not being held due to severe weather [<https://umaine.edu/emergency/weatherpolicy/>] or other emergency, instructors may not hold class or expect students to attend class-related activities, whether online or in-person.
7. University policy prohibits final examinations from being given prior to the time stated in the published schedule [<http://catalog.umaine.edu> > "Grades and Grading"]. For this reason, instructors may not offer final exam make-up opportunities before the published exam date without an exception approved by the CLAS Associate Dean for Academics.

III. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences recognizes the following specific categories of absence. Links are provided to applicable University of Maine policies:

1. Absence due to religious observance or holiday (UMaine policy)

- a. The University of Maine recognizes that when students are observing significant religious holidays, some may be unable to attend classes or labs, study, take tests, or work on other assignments. If they provide adequate notice (at least one week and longer if at all possible), these students are allowed to make up course requirements as long as this effort does not create an unreasonable burden on the instructor, department or University. At the discretion of the instructor, such coursework could be due before or after the examination or assignment. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to a student's grade for the examination, study, or course requirement on the day of religious observance. The student shall not be marked absent from the class due to observing a significant religious holiday. In the case of an internship or clinical, students should refer to the applicable policy in place by the employer or site.

[\[https://umaine.edu/provost/faculty-staff-resources/syllabus-guidelines-for-faculty/\]](https://umaine.edu/provost/faculty-staff-resources/syllabus-guidelines-for-faculty/)

2. Absence due to students' participation in a university-sanctioned event or activity. University-sanctioned activities are events where students officially represent the University of Maine to external constituencies. These activities should not significantly disrupt the University's primary educational mission or compromise classroom integrity. Regularly scheduled rehearsals and practices are excluded from this policy.

- a. The university official organizing the event determines whether the event qualifies as a university-sanctioned activity. If the activity qualifies, the university official must provide written documentation of the event to each student involved. This documentation must be signed by the chair or director of the sponsoring program. Each affected student is responsible for delivering this form to their course instructor(s) at least two weeks before the event. Exceptions to this timeline may apply for unexpected competition placements or if two weeks is an unreasonable threshold. Examples of sanctioned events include, but are not limited to:
 - Intercollegiate athletics
 - Collegiate club competitions
 - UMaine arts performances and exhibitions
 - Academic conferences and workshops
 - Official university recruitment events
- b. If students are missing more than two weeks of classes in total due to university-sanctioned events, the CLAS Associate Dean for Academics may be consulted to determine the most appropriate plan of action.

3. Absence due to illness, injury, or personal emergency. Students who are ill should not attend class if they feel too unwell to do so or if they are likely to pose a risk of infection to others. Students must notify their instructors as soon as possible if they are unable to attend class due to illness, injury, or a personal emergency. Requesting doctor's notes is not recommended.

- a. For occasional, short-term absences, instructors should support students' efforts to keep pace with the class as described in Section II. Students who make up missed work as instructed will not be subject to negative consequences under the course attendance policy due to their absence.
- b. For absences due to illness, injury, or a personal emergency that exceed two consecutive weeks, the CLAS Associate Dean for Academics should be consulted to determine the most appropriate plan of action. Instructors may not promise an incomplete unless the student has already met the associated catalog requirements, posted at <http://catalog.umaine.edu> > "Grades and Grading."

- c. Students whose illness or injury is disabling, whether temporarily or permanently, may be entitled to accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, available through the Office of Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at <https://umaine.edu/studentaccessibility/>. Students potentially entitled to an accommodation should work directly with SAS; individual instructors are not authorized to offer disability accommodations.
- d. If a student's short-term absences exceed two weeks of classes in total, the student does not have an accommodation on file with the Office of Student Accessibility Services, and the instructor is concerned about the student's ability to succeed in the class, the CLAS Associate Dean for Academics may be consulted to determine the most appropriate plan of action.

4. Absence due to bereavement (UMaine policy)

- a. Students will be excused from attending and course participation, without penalty, for one week of class meetings in the case of death in their immediate household, close acquaintances, or family. Given the diversity in the composition of families and the subjective nature of "immediate," students will determine whether their loss meets the criterion.
- b. Recognizing that every situation of loss has unique circumstances and grief is a personal process that differs for each student, faculty members should work with the student to develop a feasible and flexible plan, allowing the student the time and space to grieve and be available for their family.
- c. Students should contact and consult with the Associate Dean or their academic affairs representative in their College. The Associate Dean or their designee will contact faculty members and other relevant staff.
- d. Students will be given the opportunity to make up missed or late coursework within 2 weeks of their return to campus (or on a timeline jointly agreed to by both the student and instructor in writing). The cognizant Associate Dean or their representative will work with student's instructors to identify alternative, feasible, and equitable arrangements as necessary.
[\[https://studentrecords.umaine.edu/policies/bereavement/\]](https://studentrecords.umaine.edu/policies/bereavement/)

5. Absence due to jury duty

- a. For short-term absences due to jury duty, the policy for university-sanctioned events and activities will apply. An official court notice will be considered in lieu of the notice from a university official.
- b. When jury duty requires an absence longer than two consecutive weeks, the CLAS Associate Dean for Academics should be consulted to determine the most appropriate plan of action. Instructors may not promise an incomplete unless the student has already met the associated catalog requirements, posted at <http://catalog.umaine.edu> under "Grades and Grading."

6. Absence due to military service

- a. The university's policy for students who are mobilized or called to active duty is posted at <https://umaine.edu/veterans/faq/students-called-to-active-duty/>. Additional information about student military covered service can be found at <https://www.maine.edu/apls/apl-ix-h/>. Questions about application of this policy may be addressed to the CLAS Associate Dean for Academics.
- b. For short-term absences, such as for annual training in the Reserves, the policy for university-sanctioned events and activities will apply. Official military orders will be considered in lieu of the notice from a university official.