Attendance Policy and Absence Request Form

Attending examinations and other required exercises (as specified by the course director and responsible instructor at the beginning of a course) is mandatory, except for the following:

1. Attendance at the annual SAVMA Symposium or required SAVMA delegate activities (requires the completion of the Absence Request From per policy).
2. When a student is the presenting author of a USU faculty-mentored project at a scientific meeting (requires the completion of the Absence Request From per policy).
3. A medical or family emergency (requires notification of the Director of Student and Academic Services).
4. Military or legal obligations such as subpoena or jury duty (requires notification of the Director of Student and Academic Services).

In general, meetings, conferences, or symposia not covered above by items "1" and "2" will not be considered as extraordinary personal circumstances. Since most important family events and extracurricular activities can be scheduled well in advance, as a rule these activities will not be considered as extraordinary personal circumstances.

Petitions for permission to reschedule an exam or required exercise on the basis of extraordinary personal circumstances shall be submitted to the Attendance Committee. The petitioning process begins by completing an Absence Request Form. These forms are available in the Office of Student Services or by download via the link below. The request form must be submitted 6 weeks in advance of the personal circumstance/proposed absence. The Attendance Committee shall approve or deny the request by majority vote after thorough review of the request. The majority decision of the 3-member Attendance Committee is final. An unexcused absence from an examination or specified group exercise will result in the student not being allowed to take the examination or repeat the exercise. The student will lose a single letter grade (or equivalent loss in class ranking in S/F courses) from the final course grade or receive a zero for the exercise dependent upon the decision of the course director. If an exercise is required to pass a course, an unexcused absence will result in failure of the course. A failure in a core course does not allow a student to continue progressing in the curriculum with their current class, and may be grounds for dismissal from the program (see Academic Standards Policy and Grading Policy).

The USU SVM Attendance Committee shall be made up of the Associate Department Head for the SVM, the Director of Student and Academic Affairs, and the First Year Coordinator (if the request is coming from a first year student), or the Second Year Coordinator (if the request is coming from a second year student). The Associate Dean for the SVM will serve as an alternate. The alternate will participate in the event a committee member is not available to evaluate a petition.

ADDENDUM TO THE CVM ATTENDANCE POLICY: June 30, 2018

CVM teaching faculty teaching in the DVM curriculum may choose to utilize low-stakes, in-class teaching activities that generate points for a particular course. These points may in turn count towards the final course grade and course/class ranking. Examples include “clicker”

questions (student response systems), pre-session case preparation exercises, in class or online quizzes, etc.

However, these low-stakes learning activities must (a) have a valid pedagogical purpose that requires a student's physical presence** - see below , (b) not actually represent a surrogate system for required attendance, and (c) not amount to more than 10% of the total points for the course. It is also the instructor's responsibility to clearly communicate to students at least 24 hours prior to a session if a low-stakes, in-class activity that generates points will be used so that students can make informed decisions. The schedule for these activities can also be communicated to students via the syllabus. This policy in no ways precludes the use of in-class activities that do not generate points.

Students who choose not to attend lectures, labs, and other educational events where these activities have been scheduled must accept that they are sacrificing any points that might be awarded. Although the effects are most likely to be minor considering the small number of points involved, students should understand that sacrificing these points has the potential to affect their grade and/or course rank. In the case of student illness or other unforeseen/unavoidable circumstances, the instructor has the option to provide a make-up assignment or accept a late submission of the activity or exercise.

This policy does not preclude instructors from also using higher points/higher stakes activities and/or exercises (i.e. greater than 5% of total points). However these types of learning exercises must be published in the course syllabus that is provided to enrolled students at the start of the semester. In accordance with the CVM policy on scheduling exams, these scheduled activities should also (if at all possible) be included in the semester exam/required activities calendar that is published prior to the start of the semester. Again, the use of learning activities must not conflict with the current CVM Policy on Student Attendance & Absences, e.g. represent a surrogate for required daily attendance.

** NOTE: A learning activity that is designed to keep students from falling behind may or may not also require students' physical presence in class, depending on how that activity is used or built upon pedagogically during the session.

Instructions for Absence Request Form

Unless there is a bona fide emergency, students requesting special accommodations to make-up missed exams or other required exercises due to a planned absence must return this form to the Office of Student Services (AGRS Rm 242) at least 6 weeks prior to the proposed absence.

1. Download the Absence Request Form.
2. Contact your instructors regarding your leave of absence. Your instructor(s) will need to know your plan and sign the form acknowledging that you have spoken with them and a plan is in place. Please note: An instructor's willingness to accommodate your absence does not constitute approval.
3. This Absence Request Form must be completely filled out, including your signature.

4. The Attendance Committee will try to review all petitions within 2 weeks of receipt, and will notify the student of their decision via email.
5. Return the Form at least 6 weeks prior to the proposed absence (if this is no longer possible, still complete and submit the form).
6. All final decisions rest with the SVM Attendance Committee.