

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™

Policy and Procedure

ACADEMIC OPERATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

MEMORANDUM TO: All Holders of Mississippi State University
Academic Operating Policy and Procedure Manual

DATE: July 12, 2000
Revised March 26, 2003 /Approved 9/18/03
Approved: November 05, 2007

SUBJECT: AOP 12.09 - Class Attendance and Reporting
Absences

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (AOP) is to establish the policy related to student class attendance at Mississippi State University.

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years or whenever circumstances require an earlier review by the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (APAA) with recommendations for revision presented to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

POLICY

Upon registration, the student accepts the responsibility of attending all classes and completing all in class and out of class work that the instructor formally assigns. When absence from class is essential, the student must inform the instructor through an official means of communication or provide satisfactory documentation of the impending absence unless prescribed otherwise in the syllabus. If possible, all arrangements should be made prior to the absence. The student should discuss and document the scope and timeframe for completion of missed work with the instructor in an agreed upon timely manner. The student should recognize that failure to comply with a documented mutually agreed upon procedure could result in a grade penalty, if prescribed in course syllabus.

An attendance policy is the purview of an individual instructor. A policy should include, but is not limited to, how the instructor defines class attendance, particularly as it pertains to in-class responsibilities that go beyond the student's mere presence in the classroom, how attendance relates to student learning outcomes, the extent of credit or penalty, how excused and unexcused absences are measured, and how all absences are recorded.

Each instructor must describe his or her attendance and participation policy on the course syllabus. If the instructor has a prescribed policy, then he or she should present both verbally and in writing that policy, inform students how attendance will be measured, maintain current, verifiable records on attendance, and recognize that failure to comply could constitute grounds for grade appeal.

It is the responsibility of the university to ensure the highest academic standards, to recognize that events occur beyond the personal control of students or faculty, to establish procedures that apply equally to on campus and distance learning students, to acknowledge the extensive variety of course offerings and student learning outcomes mandates an equal variety of attendance policies, and to provide procedures that assure appropriate resolutions of disputes.

Course credit must come from course evaluations and class participation. It is the discretion of a faculty whether to include class attendance and participation in the evaluation of a student. If a faculty member chooses to include attendance and participation in the evaluation, then a student may not pass a course based solely on class attendance. Nor can accrued absences be the sole cause for failing a class. If an instructor chooses to impose a class attendance and participation policy, then that policy should correspond to the course's learning outcomes.

The Instructor's Department Head will supervise all class attendance policies so as to assure compliance with departmental standards and university policy.

PROCEDURES

Excused Absences

These approved excused absences are not subject to instructor discretion in course attendance penalties:

- Participation in an authorized university activity.
- Death in a student's immediate family.
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
- Religious holy day.
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

The following illness and injury-related excuses are eligible as excused absences, but are subject to instructor's discretion.

- An illness or injury of a dependent or immediate family member (father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter, or guardian only).

Students must obtain valid documentation from a physician that contains the date and time the student sought medical consultation and/or treatment; and, present that documentation upon returning to class. Based on documentation, the instructor decides whether the illness or injury constitutes an excused absence for that class.

If a student accrues a significant number of excused absences and/or excused absences subject to instructor's discretion, then the instructor should contact the student about the best course of action regarding the timely completion of the course or withdrawal from the course.

Reporting Absences

With the exception of freshmen, whose absences should be reported, instructors may choose to record and report the absences of all students on both the midterm (where applicable) and final grade reports submitted to the Registrar. Reporting freshman absences provides assessment of behavior related to retention.

All absences and last dates of attendance (where applicable) will become a part of the student's file in the Registrar's Office. Instructors may report absences to the Division of Student Affairs at any time they feel it appropriate to do so and are expected to report students with continued consecutive absences.

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SUPERSEDED

RESPONSIBILITIES

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Section</u> | <u>Year</u> |
|---|----------------|-------------|
| <u>Associate Provost for Academic Affairs</u> | Review | 2018 |

APPROVED:

/s/ Peter L Ryan 12/17/2013
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs Date

/s/ Jerome A. Gilbert 01/03/2014
Provost and Executive Vice President Date

/s/ Gerald Emison 04/14/2014
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate Date

REVIEWED BY:

/s/ Lesia Ervin 04/17/2014
Director, Office of Internal Audit Date

/s/ Joan Lucas 04/24/2014
General Counsel Date

APPROVED BY:

Mark Keenum 04/30/2014
President Date

THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SUPERSEDED