



## Student Absences: Information for Faculty

From time to time, students request excused absences from the Office for Undergraduate Education. Per Emory College of Arts and Sciences policy, OUE will only grant excused absences in a limited number of situations. This document lays out the most common situations and the instructions that OUE has provided to students on our website. Individual instructors are in charge of their own classes and associated grading policies. We encourage instructors to work with students where reasonable, but also acknowledge their autonomy to make appropriate decisions relating to absences and the impact that missing class may have on a student's final grade.

The official absence policy for Emory College states, *"Although students incur no administrative penalties for a reasonable number of absences from class or laboratory, they should understand that they are responsible for the academic consequences of absence and that instructors may set specific policies about absence for individual courses."*<sup>1</sup>

### **Situations where OUE will grant excused absences**

Emory College of Arts and Sciences policy states, *"A student who fails to take any required midterm or final examination at the scheduled time may not make up the examination without written permission from a dean in the Office for Undergraduate Education. Permission will be granted only for illness or other compelling reasons, such as participation in scheduled events off-campus as an official representative of the University."*<sup>2</sup>

In these cases, OUE staff have worked with the student and collected any relevant information to certify an excused absence. We appreciate the support of instructors in supporting these students with appropriate arrangements (where possible.)

### **Situations where OUE will contact/work with instructors on a student's behalf**

There are occasions where a student will contact OUE to request support in working with instructors when they have missed courses. While not reaching the standard of an "excused absence" these are typically situations, which are of a serious nature.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/incomplete-absence.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/incomplete-absence.html>

- Illness (that represents at least a four-calendar day absence) supported by medical documentation supplied to OUE.
- Situations where students are working with campus officials to resolve ongoing circumstances beyond their control.

In addition, we may request instructor support in situations where a student is representing the University at an officially sanctioned event.

We appreciate the understanding and support of instructors in these cases, and any arrangements available to assist students in these circumstances.

### **Student absence self-certification**

There are a number of cases where a student may self-certify an absence under the Emory College Honor Code. This form, completed by the student, is delivered directly to the instructors of affected classes. The types of situations that fall into this category include:

- Illness (that represents a three-calendar day absence or less)
- Illness (that represents more than a four-calendar day absence where the student has no supporting documentation)
- Personal Emergencies
- Family Events (e.g. weddings, etc.)
- Student Athlete Absence\*

In these cases, we ask that faculty try to work with students where appropriate. Students are aware that absences can have a detrimental effect to their course grade and that the impact (or lack thereof) is at the discretion of their instructors.

### **Student absence self-certification: Religious Observances**

Students may also notify faculty of an absence due to a religious observance through the self-certification form. According to the University's Religious Accommodation Policy ([Policy 10.17](#)), faculty must make reasonable efforts to accommodate these absences and allow the student to make-up missed work (waiving the grade is not an acceptable accommodation). Absences due to a religious observance are considered excused absences and should not be counted toward a limited number or set of allowable absences in the course. Students are asked to notify faculty as early as possible of any planned religious observances, and they also have the responsibility to complete any missed work resulting from the absence. Please note that Religious Accommodations policy applies to the religious observance itself; travel days around the religious observance are not excused.

### **Other Absence Requests**

There may be additional absence excuse requests from students not covered under the scope of the self-certification process. (For example, job interviews, etc.) In these cases (as with all other cases), OUE will encourage student to discuss their situation with relevant instructors at the earliest possible occasion and make appropriate arrangements with their instructors.

Again, in these cases, students are aware that absences can have a detrimental effect to their course grade and that the impact (or lack thereof) is at the discretion of their instructors.

### **Missed Deadlines Due to Illness**

Faculty may ask students to provide their appointment confirmation email from Student Health Services (SHS) when a student cannot complete a test or other major assignment in the required timeframe due to illness. Faculty may not ask for documentation apart from the SHS appointment confirmation, nor may they ask for information regarding the nature of the student illness. Faculty should only ask students for their appointment confirmation in situations that involve major assignments worth 10% or more of the final grade. Note that faculty are not required to accept this documentation, but it is available for those who want some kind of verification.

### **Notes:**

- Emory Student Health Services does not provide absence excuses.
- Students are not required to disclose confidential medical or personal records to instructors.
- If instructors are in any doubt about the veracity of any absence (self-certified or otherwise), please contact [oue.advising@emory.edu](mailto:oue.advising@emory.edu).
- If instructors discover evidence that a student is using an absence to gain academic advantage in the course, those may be reported to the Emory College Honor Council through the regular process.

*\* Student Athletes are provided with a list of travel days for their sport at the beginning of each semester. They should provide this to instructors as early as possible each semester. In addition, instructors may request that students complete the Student Self Service Absence Form if they wish.*