



Attendance Consideration as an Accommodation

Definition

The attendance consideration is an accommodation that increases the amount of excused absences that should be afforded to the qualifying student. More specifically, the attendance consideration provides for double the number of absences that are outlined in the course policy. Students who qualify for the attendance consideration typically have chronic conditions that may interfere with their ability to attend class, and can flare up unpredictably (e.g. a student with severe migraines would not know in advance if a debilitating migraine will occur). Having additional absences allows these students to access the course in a way that would not be possible if they were held to the same attendance standards as a typical student. Further, knowing they have extra absences reduces the students' anxiety and allows them to address their health concerns.

Implementation

The attendance consideration allows for two times the amount of absences that are allowed by a course policy. For example, if a course allows for 2 absences with no penalty and a grade reduction incurred for each subsequent absence, a student with the attendance consideration should be allowed 4 absences with no penalty before incurring grade reductions. Any absences accumulated beyond what is allowed for in the accommodation are handled at the discretion of the instructor.

Missed coursework

The attendance consideration does not cover work that is missed due to absence. All extensions or opportunities to make up work (including exams) are at the discretion of the instructor. SDS will proctor any exam that is missed because of absence due to disability, but the student must obtain permission and make arrangements with the instructor.

Students who are approved for the attendance consideration often cannot predict their absence, so we ask that you take this into consideration when making a determination on whether to allow an extension or make-up.

Seminar

A fundamental aspect of seminar courses is that students are present and participate in discussion. Because of the nature of the course, excessive absences are often grounds for failing the class as it is difficult to make up absences with other types of work.

Typically, seminar courses allow for one week's worth of absences without any penalty (e.g. 2 on a TTH schedule, and 3 on a MWF schedule). The seminar department absence policy states



Student Disability Services

that if a student misses more than 25% of scheduled class sessions, they should receive an F for the course (>9 for three days a week schedule, >6 for two days a week schedule). If these policies are in place, then there is no conflict with the attendance consideration. A student in a two day a week course would be allowed 4 absences with no penalty, which is under the 25% cap. If that student were to miss a 5th and 6th day, they would incur the penalty outlined in the syllabus, and they would receive an F if they missed a 7th day.

If the course policy is not aligned with the above example and a student accumulates absences that are within the attendance consideration but beyond the seminar department policy, please contact both the seminar department chair and Devin Toma, SDS Coordinator, at (925) 631-5058, or by email at dk1@stmarys-ca.edu

How is the attendance consideration accommodation determined and approved?

A student who requests an attendance consideration as an accommodation must present documentation from a qualified professional (usually a physician or psychiatrist) which supports the need for this aid. An SDS staff member will review the documentation and discuss the request in depth with the student. In particular, we are looking for a documented chronic condition that significantly impacts a student's ability to attend class or participate in strenuous activity. Some typical disabilities that may qualify include but are not limited to:

- Migraines
- IBS
- Other chronic medical conditions
- Severe depression or anxiety