ATTENDANCE AND EXCUSED ABSENCES

Students are expected to attend all scheduled activities for all of the classes for which they are registered during the entire course of the academic semester for which they are enrolled. The academic calendar indicates normal class days, recesses, and holidays. Instructors, however, may schedule required activities on other days, including recesses, holidays, and weekends, if required by programmatic needs, such as laboratories or field trips. Such requirements must be clearly stated in the online course description available at registration and on the syllabus, and instructors should try to provide compensatory time off for students.

The university understands that students participating in university-sponsored extracurricular activities may, on rare occasions, need to miss a class session during the semester. As a matter of course, students should inform their instructors in advance of absences resulting from participation in university-sponsored activities, and faculty normally will give a reasonable opportunity to make up work missed on such occasions.

No nonacademic university-sponsored event at which student attendance is required may be scheduled or rescheduled for any date after the day following the last day of classes. Exceptions may be granted by a quorum of the Committee on Examinations and Standing only for events where scheduling is not under the control of the university. On the class days falling during the last calendar week of classes, an individual student may participate in only one university-sponsored event, which may be scheduled or rescheduled, so long as no more than one night would be spent outside of Houston for travel. For events during the last week of classes, the reading period, and the final examination period, a quorum of the Committee on Examinations and Standing must be satisfied that each student is in satisfactory academic standing to participate in an event. If a quorum of the Committee on Examinations and Standing cannot meet in a timely fashion, then the executive committee of the Faculty Senate will handle exception requests.

Absences for activities other than university-sponsored events may be negotiated on an informal basis between the student and the faculty member. Alternatively, absences may be formally excused on a case-by-case basis if a petition explaining the nature of the event, accompanied by suitable documentation, is submitted to the Committee on Examinations and Standing at least two weeks before the event.

Resolving Conflicting Course Obligations Scheduled Outside of Assigned Class Time

Many courses require presentations that cannot reasonably be accommodated within the scheduled class period. Problems occur when faculty schedule these presentations during times that conflict with other regularly scheduled classes.

Principles

• Generally, faculty should plan their course activities to avoid conflicts with other regularly scheduled classes.
• Generally, all deadlines and schedules will be included in the syllabus or announced, in writing, early in the semester.

• It is the responsibility of faculty members to make appropriate accommodations and adjustments when required class exercises are scheduled outside of assigned class time.
• A student must not be penalized either directly or indirectly.

Resolution of Scheduling Conflicts

• Class presentations outside of the scheduled class time should be held on evenings and weekends.
• Registrar-assigned class times take priority over activities of other classes.
• When two or more classes require activities outside of class time, the order of priority is determined by the date at which the exercise was announced in writing and scheduled.
• When two or more classes require activities outside of class time, activities which require external reviewers or coordination of multiple schedules have priority over individual exercises that can be rescheduled.
• Required exercises outside of assigned class times that are announced at the last minute do not take priority over those announced earlier, even if they require coordination of multiple schedules.

Roles and Responsibilities

• Ideally, faculty will cooperate with one another when they need to resolve scheduling conflicts.
• If faculty involved are unable to find a solution that does not penalize or unduly disadvantage the student, department chairs will resolve the scheduling conflict.
• If department chairs are unable to resolve the scheduling conflict, the matter will be referred to the Dean of Undergraduates or the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, or their designees, who will have final authority for resolution.