

Instructor Fact Sheet

Relaxation of Attendance Requirements Accommodation

Some students, due to the nature and impact of their disabilities, may experience absences from class and request special consideration of attendance requirements. In response to this request, the *Relaxation of Attendance Requirements* accommodation provides the case-by-case means for deciding the essentiality of attendance in light of course requirements and methodology. The documentation students provide to the Disability Resource Center (DRC) must contain a recommendation and justification for such an accommodation before the accommodation is instituted by the DRC. Follows is the wording of the *Relaxation of Attendance Requirements* accommodation as it will appear in an accommodation letter:

This student's disability may occasionally contribute to class absenteeism. Any leniency of attendance and classroom participation grading policies within the context of course requirements is supported by the student's documentation. The student is responsible for: notifying you on the same day of the absence, completing missed in-class work or assignments within 7 days or a mutually agreed upon period of time, abiding by the course syllabi in the event of a missed exam, and completing all course requirements. If absenteeism is considered to be excessive, the instructor and/or student should contact the DRC.

The following information is designed to provide a structured method to guide you in the implementation of this accommodation.

It is acknowledged that an instructor:

- Will not be asked to lower academic standards or fundamentally alter the essential requirements of the course.
- Is responsible for setting attendance policy and stating that policy in course syllabi.
- Is responsible for determining policy regarding missed exams and/or quizzes and make-up work.
- Is responsible for determining if class attendance is considered a fundamental element or essential requirement of the course.

If an instructor determines that a student can master the course despite occasional disability-related absences and is willing to allow a relaxation of attendance requirements, it is suggested that the instructor consult with the student to develop a contingency plan (e.g. establish a pre-determined number of additional absences in order to avoid any misconceptions about the number of absences allowed) to accommodate any disability-related absences that may occur.

If an instructor is not willing to allow a relaxation of attendance requirements, the instructor should engage in the deliberative process in order to avoid discrimination on

the basis of a disability or claims of differential treatment. An instructor can use the following questions as a guide when engaging in the deliberative process and should document in writing any alternatives considered and/or the reasons for his/her decision:

- Is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students and among students?
- Do student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- Does the fundamental nature of the course rely upon student participation as an essential method for learning?
- To what degree does a student's failure to attend class constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of the student and other students in the class?
- What does the course description and syllabus indicate about attendance and participation?
- How is the final grade determined?
- What are the classroom practices and policies regarding attendance? Is the attendance policy equally applied? Has the attendance policy been modified for others or have any exceptions been made to the policy for non-disabled students?

Please direct any questions you may have about this accommodation or the implementation of this accommodation to the Disability Resource Center at 352-392-8565 x200.