

From: [Terfehr, Sara](#)
To: [NDSU Student Health Service](#)
Subject: FW: Student Absence and Class Attendance Policy Reminder
Date: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 11:11:56 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

From: Frazier, Emily
Sent: Tuesday, October 3, 2023 4:32 PM
To: NDSU-FACULTY-OFFICIAL@listserv.nodak.edu
Subject: Student Absence and Class Attendance Policy Reminder

Good Afternoon,

As the temperature starts to cool down (though not the past few days) and we enter the beginning of cold and flu season, it feels like a good time to send a message about student absences and the [Class Attendance Policy](#). As always, regular attendance is expected and is an important component of academic success. However, policy language also emphasizes the ability for instructors to be flexible with students regarding class absences, to partner with the Dean of Students Office when there are questions and concerns about a student's absence, and that medical documentation is often not necessary to validate absences due to illness.

Missing class due to common illnesses is inevitable at some point. The past few years have certainly shown the importance of staying home when symptomatic, as to limit exposure to others. Student Health Service (SHS) routinely receives requests for class absence excuses, which they can provide, however, the illnesses students are typically presenting with are generally best cared for by rest and self-care at home. Requiring documentation for things such as sore throats, cold symptoms, or mild gastrointestinal illnesses is not only inconvenient for students, but will likely also incur an unnecessary cost.

Students have increasingly complex lives with competing responsibilities and unexpected circumstances that may warrant or require an absence. Family emergencies, hospitalizations, and medical appointments are unfortunately regular occurrences for many of our students. Student absences often have unique dynamics and timeframes, requiring an individual approach rather than a standardized protocol to provide the best resolution. Whenever possible, please extend grace and understanding in such situations. While policy doesn't require opportunities to make-up missed work for these absences, it is extremely helpful to the continued success and retention of our students when allowances are granted. It is also often simply the right thing to do. Most students will be honest about what is going on in their lives and will be grateful that an opportunity is being extended to them when they are already navigating a challenge.

The Dean of Students Office will send formal [class absence notifications](#) for students who cannot notify their instructors due to an emergency. However, students are always prompted to communicate personally with their instructors when they are able. Absence of a formal notice does not signify that the absence is being falsified or inappropriately communicated, it simply means that the student could communicate on their own behalf. The Dean of Students Office personnel will gladly partner with anyone who has concerns or questions about a student's absence. If you have a situation that feels unclear or seems to warrant additional information or verification, please do not hesitate to contact us at 701-231-7701.

Thank you to the many instructors and faculty who already connect with our office regularly and work with students whenever possible. It can be a delicate balancing act at times, as we value both

student accountability and well-being. If you have questions now or in the future, please reach out so we can work together to support students who are dealing with illnesses or situations impacting attendance and their continued success at NDSU.

Sincerely,
Emily

Emily Frazier, EdD
Dean of Students
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We collectively acknowledge that we gather at NDSU, a land grant institution, on the traditional lands of the Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, Nakoda) and Anishinaabe Peoples in addition to many diverse Indigenous Peoples still connected to these lands. We honor with gratitude Mother Earth and the Indigenous Peoples who have walked with her throughout generations. We will continue to learn how to live in unity with Mother Earth and build strong, mutually beneficial, trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples of our region.



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