Guidance for Determining Attendance/Deadline Modifications

The role of attendance, due dates and participation vary from course to course, so it is important for you and the student to discuss how Attendance and Deadline Modifications (ADMs) will be handled in your course. While this document should provide you with a solid foundation for this discussion, remember that ODS staff are available to you and the student to facilitate the conversation, answer questions, and brainstorm reasonable modifications.

Please keep in mind that an agreement made for the lecture component of a course does not necessarily automatically apply to an associated lab, recitation, etc. (or vice versa). If your course involves multiple components, the student should work with you and any other instructors or course coordinators to complete separate agreements for each (unless you explicitly note otherwise).

General Process:

- It is our responsibility as faculty and staff to provide reasonable flexibility to students with regards to ADMs where possible and to clearly articulate why flexibility is not reasonable when necessary.
- The need for ADMs has been documented through Disability Services; no additional medical documentation is needed. If your syllabus requires medication documentation for an excused absence, make-up exam, etc., the student’s Course Accessibility Letter should serve as sufficient documentation. The student is still expected to maintain prompt and regular communication with you as flare-ups occur throughout the semester.
- Disability Services requires that ADM agreements be in writing. Written clarity avoids future confusion.
- These requests may be time sensitive due to the sudden onset of symptoms. When this occurs, the student’s functioning level may be significantly compromised resulting in an inability to attend class, meet a deadline for a paper or project, or take an exam on a specific day.
- SLDS recommends that instructors document attempts to contact students to discuss ADMs, especially if students do not respond or follow-through with the process.

Makeup Quiz/Exams:

- Make-up quizzes/exams of equivalent difficulty must be offered to students who experience medical flare-ups.
- Course policies in which test or quiz grades may be dropped as part of the final grade calculation cannot be applied to ADMs. Missed tests and quizzes beyond the limits of this accommodation or for reasons not associated with this accommodation may be addressed in accordance with course policy.

Troubleshooting/Conflicts:

- Under no circumstances are students solely responsible for the resolution of conflicts arising from disability-related absences. Please contact ODS if a conflict or disagreement occurs.
Office for Disability Services
Ohio State ATI/Wooster Campus

- If a student stops communicating with you before an ADM agreement is able to be finalized, ODS strongly recommends that you email the student and ODS a provisional ADM agreement. This way, the student is made aware of the reasonable level of flexibility that is available to them at this stage in the course, while also inviting them to re-engage with you on a revised agreement, if needed.
- In the event that the student is unable to meet the terms of the agreement, and if no reasonable revisions to the agreement can be made, the student should then be held to the relevant course syllabus policies.
- If you are concerned about how an ADM agreement may impact academic integrity, fairness to other students, or your department’s workload, please contact ODS.

**Expected Communication from Student:**

- For any potentially missed course activity related to the ADM agreement, the student is expected to contact the instructor ASAP after the course event (paper due date, test date, etc.) in order to coordinate the accommodations outlined in this arrangement.
- The student should reference this accommodation and verify the reason is related to a disability flare-up in the email/communication to assist the professor with managing logistics.
- In the event of hospitalization/incapacitating flare-ups, the leniency of the expected communication timeline is warranted. The frequency and severity of a student's symptoms may fluctuate over the course of the semester. Student’s functioning levels may be significantly compromised and should be taken into account.

**Essential Questions:**

With this accommodation, the student is permitted a reasonable amount of flexibility. Reasonable flexibility can be determined by analyzing the course design. These modifications should not compromise the essential design and learning outcomes of the course. During your analysis, we ask that you to consider the following questions:

- If there is a structured attendance policy, is there room for flexibility? If so, how?
- If a student misses an in-class activity, is it possible for the student to complete an alternate assignment?
- If the student needs to miss class, should they email or call you? How can the student catch up on what they may have missed?
- If the student misses class when an assignment is due, can they turn in the work via email?
- If the student misses an exam? If you allow make-up exams, is there a timeframe within which make-ups must be completed?
- If the student needs to request an extension, how much flexibility will there be for an assignment?

**Considerations for Attendance:**

When considering how an attendance policy can be modified to accommodate a disability, faculty should first consider how regular attendance corresponds to the essential nature of the course. When courses can bear intermittent attendance, it would be reasonable to expect some flexibility when a
student is absent for disability-related reasons. Some alternatives to attendance used by faculty are listed below.

- Provide class notes on a class website or assist students in getting notes from a classmate when the student misses class due to disability.
- Permit students to attend another section of the class or view an on-line version if available.
- Permit student to view a videotape of course content as available (e.g., anatomy dissection, Shakespearian play, etc.).
- If discussions are missed, consider having the student keep a journal for contributions or e-mail comments to instructors and/or classmates.
- If an acceptable alternative to the attendance requirement is reached, but there is insufficient time for the student to meet it before grades are due, consider granting an incomplete.
  - It may be reasonable to expect consistent attendance for classes in which the most effective way to learn the material and/or demonstrate mastery of the material is to be present.
    - Some examples include a dance or physical education class, a science lab, a class geared specifically to group work, or foreign language classes that include an expressive language component.
    - There may also be times when a student has missed so many classes that the intent of class attendance is lost.
    - In these situations, we advise you to contact the student’s Access Specialist to explore alternatives that may be available and potentially reasonable in your course.
    - We strongly recommend assessing these situations individually to determine the most appropriate course of action.
- Regardless of the modification of the attendance policy, the student is required to meet all of the academic course requirements and to complete all assignments and examinations.

Considerations for Missed Quizzes/Exams:

Decisions about arranging an equitable make-up exam are often based on the test design for the original test, the overall number of exams to be administered in the semester when in the semester the student misses an exam and the size of the class. Many faculty teaching large classes routinely create a second exam anticipating that a percentage of the class may miss an exam due to illness, family emergencies, religious holidays, etc. For those classes that offer do not have a second exam in place, the following alternatives are suggested below.

- Administer the same exam the class took as a make-up exam with a clearly communicated expectation that the honor code with regard to test integrity will be enforced.
- Modify the existing exam by rearranging the question order and/or adding new questions.
- Substitute an exam from a previous semester if only minor changes to the content are needed to match relevance to the current semester’s material.
- Substitute a paper, project, presentation, or oral exam for the written exam.
- Discuss the possibility of an incomplete when the student’s performance in the class is consistent with the guidelines regarding granting this grade placeholder. The student can then take the exam when the symptoms of the disability are less interfering.
Considerations for Deadlines:

Like all students, students with disabilities are expected to carry a credit load that is reasonable and manageable. Students with fluctuating disorders though may be unable to predict the frequency or severity of their flare-ups. Requesting an extension is a common request in these situations. Because repeat extensions can cause a “snowballing” effect, however, and ultimately undermine the student’s ability to complete the work or even the semester, some preventive measures are included in the following list along with other accommodation suggestions.

- Give notice of all assignments and due dates on your syllabus so that students can plan their workload accordingly.
- Work with the student to develop an appropriate plan and timeline for managing the assignment. Break a large project into smaller parts with intermediate deadlines to assist students in staying on task.
- Refer students to the Dennis Learning Center for guidance and coaching on time management, organization, and study skills.
- If flexibility with deadlines is not possible (e.g., if the assignments are discussed daily), let students know early on so they can plan accordingly. Offering a journal exercise or reflection might be a reasonable substitute for this kind of activity.
- A typical extension for papers and projects is 1-3 days, but could be longer for large projects or extreme circumstances (e.g., hospitalization of the student). If the project is one of many smaller projects, consider merging two or more into a larger project with a longer timeline.
- Contact ODS when a student is requesting repeat extensions. While this may seem to make the most sense to a student in the short run, it may lead to a completely unmanageable semester affecting more than one class. Their Access Specialist can assist you in considering these requests.
- As mentioned earlier, consider an incomplete when appropriate.

Generic Examples:

- If the course is mostly lecture-based, the in-class content is available in the text or from instructor/peer notes, and minimal student interaction is involved during class, then more flexibility with excused absences/participation points is reasonable.
- If the course is mostly experiential or discussion-based, the in-class content is not recreated elsewhere, and/or involves significant student interaction, then less flexibility with excused absences/participation points is reasonable.
- If modifying exam dates and deadlines would not substantially impact the flow or design of the course, then more flexibility with exam dates and deadlines is reasonable.
  - For example, it may be reasonable to allow a research paper to be turned in a few days late if it would not impact the overall progression of the course.
  - On the other hand, it may be unreasonable to modify an assignment due date that is based on an inflexible factor, such as a journal’s publication deadline.

For more guidance:

Please contact ODS. We are available for calls Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. at 330-287-1247 and by email at faes-atiods@osu.edu.