

# **Texas Woman's University University Regulation and Procedure**

**Regulation and Procedure Name: Excused Absence Policy**

**Regulation and Procedure  
Number: URP: 06.160**

**Policy Owner: Student Life**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Texas Woman's University ("TWU" or "University") recognizes that consistent and attentive attendance is vital to student success. Class attendance and participation is an individual student responsibility. Faculty set the attendance policy for each course they teach. The University expects regular and punctual attendance at all scheduled classes, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of nonattendance.

Faculty are responsible for notifying students of any special attendance requirements for their courses. This policy applies to all modes of course delivery.

## **APPLICABILITY**

This policy is applicable to TWU Students and Faculty.

## **DEFINITIONS**

1. "Active Military Service" means military service performed by a member of the Texas National Guard, or the Texas State Guard, or federally funded state active service, or federal active service, but excludes service performed exclusively for training, including basic combat training, advanced individual training, annual training, inactive duty training, and special training periodically made available to reserve members.
2. "Day" means an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. calendar day, and excludes weekends, University holidays, skeleton crew days, and days on which regularly scheduled classes are suspended due to emergent situations. If a deadline defined in this policy falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or University holiday, that deadline will be moved to the next day.

3. "Faculty" means a person who teaches a course offered for academic credit by TWU, teaching assistants, instructors, lab assistants, research assistants, lecturers, adjuncts, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. This also includes clinical faculty, visiting faculty, and adjunct faculty.
4. "Official University Function" means events, programs, or activities sponsored by an academic or administrative unit of the University whether occurring on or off campus.
5. "Reasonable Time" means no fewer than seven (7) days.
6. "Religious Holy Days" means a day widely considered to be a major holy days within the religious tradition, and are most likely to be times when an adherent would engage in religious observations.
7. "Student" means a person enrolled in one or more courses at Texas Woman's University.
8. "University Holiday" means days identified in the holiday schedule published by the Office of Human Resources.

## **REGULATION AND PROCEDURE**

### **I. Student Responsibilities**

- A. Students taking traditional face-to-face courses are expected to attend class and complete all assignments by stated due dates.
- B. Students enrolled in online or hybrid courses are expected to regularly engage with instructional materials and complete all assignments by stated due dates.
- C. Graduate and professional students are expected to attend all examinations required by departments or advisory committees as formally scheduled such as, but not limited to, qualifying exams, preliminary exams, and final defenses.

### **II. Faculty Responsibilities**

- A. Faculty should state clearly in their syllabi their policy regarding student absences and how absences may affect grades.
- B. Instructors are expected to provide notice of the dates on which major exams will be given and when assignments will be due on the course syllabus, which must be made available to students by the first class period.

### III. Excused Absences

An absence may be excused for the following reasons:

- A. Personal injury or illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class;
- B. Serious injury, illness, or death of an immediate family member;
  - 1. Immediate family may include: parents, siblings, grandparents, spouse, child, spouse's child, spouse's parents, spouse's grandparents, step-parents, step-siblings, step-grandparents, grandchild, step-grandchild, legal guardian, and others as deemed appropriate by faculty or the Dean of Students Office.
- C. Participation in legal or governmental proceedings that require a student's presence and that cannot be rescheduled;
- D. Active military service, including travel for that purpose;
- E. Religious holy day, including days necessary to travel for that purpose;
- F. Pregnancy and Parenting requirements under Title IX and the Texas Education Code;
- G. Participation in an Official University Function for which an excused absence form is provided including mandatory participation as a student-athlete in NCAA-sanctioned or other governing-sanctioned athletic competition (e.g. Gymnastics, Synchronized Swimming, STUNT, Dance); or
- H. Other official events as deemed appropriate by the Vice President of Student Life or Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

### IV. Absence Due to Injury or Illness

- A. In the case where a student has an illness or injury that is significant or contagious, the student should communicate with their course faculty. Faculty may choose to request documentation of the illness or injury in question before approving the excused absence.
- B. In the situation where a student is diagnosed with a contagious or communicable disease (e.g. Meningitis, Tuberculosis, Monkey Pox) that requires public health authority notification in the State of Texas, the student must remain isolated to the best of their ability and communicate to Student Health Services for release to return. Documentation should be sent

electronically to the course faculty and the student should communicate regarding their anticipated return to the classroom.

V. Official University Function

Student absences due to participation in an official University function must be approved in advance by the department chair, Dean or sponsoring non-academic unit head. Athletic team member absences will be approved by the Director of Athletics, or their designee. Students representing the University at official University functions will have their absences excused under this policy.

VI. Excused Absences Required by State and Federal Regulations

A. Religious Holy Days:

1. In accordance with the Texas Education Code Section 51.911 Religious Holy Days, TWU shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Excused absences for the observance of a religious holy day must follow the requirements of URP 06.120: Student Religious Accommodation Policy. Questions about religious holy days should be directed to the Associate Vice President for Student Enrichment, Health, & Support.

B. Military Services

1. In accordance with the Texas Education Code Section 51.9111 Excused Absence for Active Military Service, TWU shall excuse a student from attending classes or engaging in other required activities, including examinations, in order for the student to participate in active military service to which the student is called, including travel associated with the service. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to complete an assignment or take an examination from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.
2. The maximum time for which the student may be excused has been defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board ("THECB") as "no more than 25 percent of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent (not including the final examination period) for the specific course or courses in which the student is currently enrolled at the beginning of the period of active military service."

3. Faculty may choose not to accept the missed assignments if the student fails to satisfactorily complete the assignment or examination within a reasonable time after the absence.
4. A student returning from active military service who believes that they have not been given full and fair treatment in accordance with this policy, or other relevant state or federal laws relating to return from active military service, may seek review under this policy. The Vice President for Student Life and TWU's Veteran Education Benefits Services will facilitate the review process.

#### C. Pregnant or Parenting Students

1. In accordance with Title IX and Texas Education Code Section 51.982, TWU shall excuse a pregnant or parenting student from class or other required activities. Excused absences for pregnant or parenting students must follow the requirements of URP 01.244: Student Pregnancy and Parenting Nondiscrimination.

#### D. Disability

1. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as Amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, TWU shall provide equal access for students with disabilities. Some students with disabilities may qualify for an attendance policy modification. Excused absences as an accommodation must follow the requirements of URP 01.242: Academic Accommodations for Students. Questions about disability-related absences should be directed to Disability Services for Students.

### VII. Process for Requesting an Excused Absence

- A. The student is responsible for providing prior written notice of their needed absence and documentation, as applicable, substantiating the reason for the absence to their course faculty. This documentation must be provided within three (3) business days of the last date of the absence unless otherwise stated in this policy.
- B. Faculty may confirm a student's absence documentation and, once confirmed, must excuse a student from attending class for the reasons stated above. Faculty may excuse a student from attending class for other reasons as they deem appropriate and at their discretion.
- C. Students who furnish false information may be found in violation of URP 06.200: Student Code of Conduct.

## VIII. Make-up Work

- A. If a student's absence is excused, the course faculty must either provide the student an opportunity to make-up any missed quiz, exam, or other work that contributes to the final grade or provide a satisfactory alternative by a date agreed upon by the student and course faculty. If the faculty has a regularly scheduled make-up exam, students are expected to attend unless they have an excused absence for the make-up exam date.
- B. Students are encouraged to work with their course faculty to complete make-up work in advance of known scheduled absences. Make-up work must be completed in a timeframe not to exceed thirty (30) calendar days from the last day of the initial excused absence unless there are mitigating circumstances, such as those included in state and federal regulations outlined above.
- C. Faculty are under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence.

## IX. Extended Absences

- A. If the student is absent for excused reasons for an unreasonable amount of time during the semester, faculty must contact the Dean of Students Office to discuss alternative measures and the posting of final grades.
- B. When a student is absent for unknown reasons for an extended period of time, faculty should report those concerns through the Dean of Students Office.

## REVIEW

This policy will remain in effect and published until it is reviewed, updated, or archived. This policy is to be reviewed once every six years. Interim review may be required as a result of updates to federal and state law or regulations, Board of Regents policies, or internal processes or procedures.

## REFERENCES

[Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972](#)

[URP 01.220: Title IX Policy](#)

[Texas Education Code Section 51.982 Protections for Pregnant and Parenting Students](#)

[Texas Education Code Section 51.911 Religious Holy Days](#)

[URP 06.120: Student Religious Accommodation Policy](#)

[Texas Education Code Section 51.9111 Excused Absence for Required Military Service](#)

[Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Part1. Chapter 4, Subchapter A, Rule 4.8](#)

[URP 01.244: Student Pregnancy and Parenting Nondiscrimination](#)

[URP 01.242: Academic Accommodations for Students](#)

[URP 06.200: Student Code of Conduct](#)

## **FORMS AND TOOLS**

None

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