University Life
DISABILITY SERVICES
George Mason University

Student Union Building I, Suite 2500
4400 University Drive, MS 5C9, Fairfax, VA 22030
Phone: 703.993.2474 | Fax: 703.993.4306
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Accommodation Policy: Flexibility with Attendance

This accommodation allows students to occasionally miss class due to unpredictable or cyclical acute disability-related impact(s). When students request this accommodation, Disability Services (DS) may ask for documentation from a relevant, treating healthcare professional. Documentation may need to explain-why this accommodation is necessary and how much the student expects to miss class.

If students are approved for Flexibility with Attendance, a statement describing the approved accommodation will appear on their Academic Accommodation Letter (AAL). Students, instructors, and DS share responsibilities to ensure the correct use of this accommodation.

Making Up Missed Coursework:

Flexibility with Attendance provides flexibility from the attendance requirement; it does not waive the academic requirements of the course. Students are responsible for completing any missed coursework, including but not limited to in-class work, quizzes, tests, exams, assignments, laboratory activities, presentations, participation, and other required course activities missed due to an approved disability-related absence.

If missed coursework or a required course activity cannot reasonably be completed in its original format, the instructor and student should establish a reasonable alternative method for demonstrating the required learning outcomes.

Alternative arrangements should maintain the academic standards and essential requirements of the course. The student and instructor should establish reasonable timelines for completing missed work, taking into consideration the nature of the missed work and the circumstances of the absence.

See below for a summary of each stakeholder's roles and responsibilities related to this accommodation.

Student Responsibilities:

- Engage in the interactive process with DS to evaluate if Flexibility with Attendance is a reasonable accommodation, and determine number of absences, if approved.
- Provide AALs to instructors. This will activate approved accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactive, meaning that they do not apply to past assignments/tests/courses.
- Review course syllabi to become familiar with the attendance policy, assignments, due dates, and expectations.

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- Contact instructors as soon as possible when a disability-related absence occurs or has occurred. If possible, let instructors know the expected date to return to class.
- Initiate collaboration with instructors to develop a plan to address:
  - How missed coursework will be made up
  - How instructors will be notified when class is missed
- Students are responsible for completing any missed coursework and other required course activities, as outlined above, when class is missed due to an approved disability-related absence. If missed coursework or a required course activity cannot reasonably be completed in its original format, the instructor and student should establish a reasonable alternative method for demonstrating the required learning outcomes.
- Contact DS to explore approaches to mitigate absences if it is related to attending doctor's appointment, managing treatment, and/or for additional support in using this accommodation.

Instructor Responsibilities:

- Students do not need to ask for permission to use this accommodation and will not be penalized for missing class. Students are not required to provide medical documentation or a doctor's note to justify an absence related to this accommodation.
- Engage with students to develop a plan for completing missed coursework and other required course activities, as outlined above, which may include appropriate alternative arrangements and deadlines when necessary.
- Contact DS as soon as possible if there is a concern that absences interfere with the essential academic or technical requirements of the course.

Disability Services Responsibilities:

- Engage in the interactive process with the student to evaluate if Flexibility with Attendance is a reasonable accommodation, and determine number of absences, if approved.
- If needed, consult with instructors regarding essential academic or technical requirements of a course when attendance concerns arise.
- If needed, evaluate concerns about excessive absences to determine whether they fundamentally alter course requirements, or whether alternative accommodations should be considered.
- Provide guidance and education to students and instructors on policies, rights, and responsibilities related to disability accommodations.
- Serve as a point of contact for ongoing questions or concerns.

If there are questions regarding this policy or the Disability Services process, please call the office at 703-993-2474 or email ods@gmu.edu. Thank you for your assistance.