

STUDENT INSTITUTIONAL EXCUSES

POLICY SUMMARY

A Student Institutional Excuse may be granted to a student who participates in academic, research, extra- or co-curricular, athletic, or military service activities or because of anticipated acute medical, bereavement, or religious circumstances. Students may be excused for institutional purposes from otherwise required academic activity only when a valid Student Institutional Excuse is approved by the appropriate administrative unit or official.

REASON FOR THIS POLICY

Consistently applied institutional excuse criteria support student success, supports students in challenging circumstances, and promotes the equitable and efficient operation of university programs and processes.

ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

- All academic units
- Lumberjack Athletics
- Dean of Students
- Veteran and Military Services
- Disability Resources
- Equity and Access

WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY

- All academic unit leaders and administrative staff
- All faculty
- All students
- Dean of Students
- Director, Veteran and Military Services
- Intercollegiate Athletics administrative staff
- Vice Provost for Academic Operations
- Disability Resources
- Equity and Access

DEFINITIONS

Student Institutional Excuse: Formal permission granted by an authorized administrative unit or official that enables a student to be excused from otherwise required academic activities.

POLICY

A. General

1. Students must notify their affected instructors and present a copy of their approved Student Institutional Excuse forms no later than five (5) business days (or one class period when the class meets less frequently than every five (5) business days) prior to any anticipated absence.
2. Student Institutional Excuses do not relieve students of the responsibility to meet their academic responsibilities, but rather offer flexibility in doing so.
3. Instructors must honor valid Student Institutional Excuses and when class attendance or participation in other required academic activities is required or constitutes part of the course's evaluation or learning assessment, instructors must provide appropriate allowances, including providing special arrangements to account for student absences when necessary.
4. Instructors are not obligated to honor Student Institutional Excuses provided less than five (5) business days prior to the start of the time period covered by the Student Institutional Excuse, unless explicitly requested to do so by the approving official due to extraordinary circumstances.
5. Falsifying a Student Institutional Excuse or submitting false information in applying for one is subject to corrective disciplinary action up to and including expulsion in accordance with the University's applicable student code of conduct policies and procedures.

B. Student Institutional Excuse Categories

1. **Academic:** Approved by the dean (or designee) of the relevant academic college, the academic Student Institutional Excuse may be issued to students who participate in anticipated i) curriculum-based, scheduled course activities outside of a normal class meeting time; or ii) academically-oriented or postgraduation career activities (e.g., conferences, research presentations, graduate school interviews, job interviews related to earned degrees).
2. **Athletic:** Approved by the Vice Provost for Academic Operations (or designee), the Athletic Student Institutional Excuse may be issued to students who participate in anticipated athletic events sanctioned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).
3. **Extra- or Co-Curricular:** Approved by the Dean of Students (or designee), the extra- or co-curricular Student Institutional Excuse may be issued to students who participate in anticipated sanctioned extracurricular or co-curricular events sponsored by student clubs and organizations.
4. **Military:** Approved by the Dean of Students (or designee), the military Student Institutional Excuse may be issued to students who must respond to official U.S. Department of Defense service orders or U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) medical treatment and related non-VA referrals.
5. **Medical:** Approved by the Dean of Students (or designee), the Medical Student Institutional Excuse may be issued to students who experience an anticipated significant medical event.
6. **Bereavement:** Approved by the Dean of Students (or designee), the Bereavement Student Institutional Excuse may be issued to students who experience the loss of a loved one and are unable to participate in their courses due to grief or needing to attend funeral services.
7. **Religious:** Approved by the Associate Vice President for Equity and Access (or designee), the Religious Institutional Excuse may be issued to students who must participate in anticipated religious observances and practices.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Approvers: Work to ensure that all Student Institutional Excuse requests and approvals comport with applicable policy and criteria; refer instances of invalid or false requests to the Dean of Students.

Dean of Students: Approves Extra- and Co-Curricular, Military, Medical, and Bereavement Student Institutional Excuses.

Director of Veteran and Military Services: Collaborates with the Dean of Students on Military Student Institutional Excuses.

Director of Disability Resources: Collaborates with the Dean of Students on Medical Student Institutional Excuses.

Associate Vice President for Equity and Access: Approves Religious Institutional Excuses.

Director, Veteran and Military Services: Collaborates with the Dean of Students to approve Military Student Institutional Excuse requests.

Instructors: Honor valid Student Institutional Excuses by excusing students from scheduled course activities and providing alternative arrangements as described in this policy.

Lumberjack Athletics: Collaborates with the Vice Provost for Academic Operations to administer Athletic Student Institutional Excuses.

Students: Obtain valid Student Institutional Excuses and confirm their absences and make-up work with their instructors in a timely manner, as outlined in this policy.

Student Athletes: Provide their instructors with a schedule of the athletic events in which they are required to participate as a member of one of the University's NCAA-sanctioned athletic teams; confirm their absences and make-up work with their instructors in a timely fashion as outlined in this policy.

Vice Provost for Academic Operations: Implements and administers this policy; approves Athletic Student Institutional Excuses in collaboration with Lumberjack Athletics; works to ensure that all Student Institutional Excuses granted comport with applicable criteria and policy.

PROCEDURES

Qualified students seeking to obtain a Student Institutional Excuse may visit the Student Institutional Excuse [website](#) or use the links below to access the apply.

Instructors are responsible for determining appropriate allowances for excused students, which may, in reasonable cases, include providing special arrangements to account for student absences when necessary. Options for doing so include permitting excused students to complete in advance or to make up afterward all assignments, tests, quizzes, examinations, or any other evaluation-reliant coursework or class activity missed during an excused absence. Some cases may not meet the expectation of reasonable, where those experiences cannot be completed through an alternative assignment, or where labs, practicum, student teaching, capstone, (and others) are dependent on other factors. In these cases, the faculty member will report back to the approving authorizer.

All University officials who review Student Institutional Excuse requests are responsible for ensuring that requests are aligned with appropriate criteria before approval is granted. Requests that could lead to excessive absences and risk to the student's academic standing in the class, as determined by the approving official in consultation with instructors and students, when necessary, are not to be approved.

Students who are seeking long-term accommodations due to a disability, including temporary disability due to injury or chronic illness, should contact Disability Resources. Students requesting accommodation for pregnancy should contact the Title IX institutional compliance office (titleix@nau.edu) or Equity and Access.

RELATED INFORMATION

Forms or Tools

- [Academic](#)
- [Athletic](#)
- [Extra- or Co-Curricular](#)
- [Military](#)

Cross-References

- Disability Resources [Attendance Accommodation](#)
- [Syllabus Requirements](#)

Sources

There are no external sources associated with this policy.

APPENDIX

None.