

# ATTENDANCE AND CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE

In accordance with ABA Standard 308(a), the right to take examinations, as well as the privilege of continuing as a student in the School of Law, is conditioned on regular attendance and satisfactory participation in class work.

**Absence Limitation:** With respect to any course, a student is allowed to miss up to the "Absence Limitation" for that course. The Absence Limitation shall mean 15% of the total minutes of instruction required for the credit amount of the course and is defined by the table below.

**Year-Long Courses:** In year-long courses, each of the semesters of a course shall have its own Absence Limitation as defined above. Students may not "carry-over" unused absences to increase the Absence Limitation in the second semester of a year-long course.

**Intensive Courses (anything less than the traditional 14-week semester):** A faculty member may designate a course as an "intensive course," if that course has a limited number of class meetings or meets for less than the traditional 14-week semester. In a course so designated, there will ordinarily be no Absence Limitation. Students are expected to attend all class meetings in intensive courses. An absence or significant tardiness in an intensive class will result in the student being excluded from the course. Alternatively, a faculty member may designate a specific number of absences that are acceptable, using as a guide 15% of the total course minutes.

**Externships and Clinics:** Regular and punctual attendance is also required in externship and clinical courses. Participation in an externship or clinical program is a professional commitment. All students are expected to adhere to a high standard of responsibility, competence, and dedication with regard to all work assigned.

To obtain a waiver from this rule, a student must submit a petition to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity. The Assistant Dean will only grant the petition if:

1. the petition shows an extraordinary and unavoidable circumstance, and
2. the instructor believes that the amount of absence will not unreasonably alter the level of engagement expected of all students in the course.

**Add/ Drop Period:** For elective courses, class meetings during the add/drop period shall be disregarded in determining whether a student has exceeded the Absence Limitation. This does not apply to required courses, summer session, or intensive courses.

**Sanctions:** Unsatisfactory attendance or unsatisfactory classroom performance may result in lowering of a final grade for the course, involuntary withdrawal from the course, failing the course, or other resolution.

**Reporting Absences to the Instructor:** Any absences within the Absence Limitation should be addressed consistent with the instructor's policy. Any absences in excess of the Absence Limitation or any absences of more than three consecutive school days shall be reported to the

Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity by the student as soon as practicable.

**Reporting of Excess Absences:** The instructor of a course shall notify the Assistant Dean when a student has been absent for more than the Absence Limitation, excluding any covered absences. The instructor's communication to the Assistant Dean should include the dates or number of class absences. Once it is determined that the student is to be excluded from the course, the Associate Dean, in light of applicable circumstances, will consult with the reporting instructor.

The Assistant Dean and instructor shall determine whether:

1. to allow the student to withdraw from the course; or
2. to exclude that student from the course and to award a grade of F for the course.

**Absences Beyond the Absence Limitation:** The Assistant Dean does not manage absences that fall within the Absence Limitation. However, the Assistant Dean, in consultation with the course instructor, may make a determination that, on account of extraordinary circumstances affecting an extended period of time, a student may be granted absences beyond the Absence Limitation. Such extraordinary circumstances must relate to health, bereavement, family, military, or significant personal issues.

Additional absences will not be granted for vacations or on-going conflicts resulting from the student's normal employment commitments. In addition, excusals will not be granted to relieve full-time students of the limitation on employment set by the law school.

The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity may not allow additional absences for more than one week's worth of classes beyond the Absence Limitation or in circumstances where a student would miss more than 10 consecutive days of classes during a semester regardless of the circumstances. Students who have circumstances causing them to be absent for more than these specified periods shall consult with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs regarding a Voluntary Leave of Absence or course withdrawal.

**Faculty Responsibilities:** Faculty must provide notice of the attendance policy in their syllabus. If the faculty policy deviates from the law school policy (by being more restrictive), the syllabus must note the differences. For example, faculty may allow opportunities to participate in events or do additional work to make up absences.

Faculty will take attendance and monitor absences. Individual faculty members may permit absences beyond the law school policy, but only for compelling circumstances.

**Student Responsibilities:** Students are expected to keep a personal record of all absences. In courses where the instructor requires the students to sign an attendance sheet (or otherwise mark themselves as present), it is the student's responsibility to ensure that this is done in a timely manner for each class. Students who mark or sign as present a classmate who is absent shall be subject to disciplinary action.

**Tardiness and Early Departures:** Excessive tardiness or early departures from class may result in exclusion from a course under this policy. Tardiness or early departures for normal and foreseeable commutes or work schedules are not considered extraordinary circumstances.

**Religious Observances:** Students who observe work-restricted religious holy days must be allowed to do so without jeopardizing their academic standing in any course. Faculty are obliged to accommodate students'

request(s) for adjustments in course work on the grounds of religious observance, provided that the student(s) make such request(s) in writing during the first two (2) weeks of term. See University Policy.

**University Sanctioned Absences:** There are no excused absences, except as provided by University policy. For information concerning excused absences for participation in University-sanctioned events, see the University Classroom Policies.

**Rescheduled Classes:** In a course where a professor cancels and reschedules more than one class, a student should not be counted as absent if he or she does not attend the rescheduled classes after the first one.

**Questions:** Questions about the general attendance policy above should be directed to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity. Questions about a specific class attendance policy should be directed to the instructor of the class.