



Student Disability Resource Center

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Information for Faculty Regarding Disability Related Absence Accommodation

Disability related absences are recommended for students registered with the Student Disability Resource Center who have chronic disabilities and require hospitalization, recurring doctor's appointments, or scheduled treatments. Since this accommodation concerns attendance, it is important that the student and instructor discuss responsibilities and limitations of this accommodation in the event that this student is absent from class for disability related reasons.

1. Accommodation letters will be sent to the instructor's GCSU e-mail when the student submits a semester request.
2. Students are responsible for discussing their disability accommodations, including disability related absences **during instructor office hours within the second week of each semester or upon issuance.**
 - a. Discussion should include agreed upon arrangements for handling disability related absences when the case arises.
 - b. Students should negotiate **each and every absence** with their instructor.
 - c. If students know they are going to be absent beforehand, they are asked to contact their instructor per previously agreed upon arrangements.

The discussion between the instructor and student should include:

1. What the instructor considers to be a reasonable amount of absences in this class.
2. The instructor's preferred method of being contacted and what he/she considers timely notification of the student's absence.
3. The time table to make up missed assignments and exams/quizzes, if applicable.
4. **Documentation of the agreement via email between the student, instructor and The Student Disability Resource Center.**

Federal law requires colleges and universities to consider reasonable modification of attendance policies if required to accommodate a student's disability. In making this determination, two questions must be answered:

1. Does the student have a documented disability that directly affects his/her ability to attend class on a regular basis? The Student Disability Resource Center will make this determination based on a review of documentation from the student's physician, psychologist or other appropriate specialist and through an interactive registration process with the student.
2. Is attendance and participation an essential element of the class? More specifically, would modification of attendance policies result in a fundamental alteration of an essential element of the program? The SDRC and faculty will make this determination in collaboration, where appropriate.

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has provided the following guidelines to be used in considering whether attendance is an essential element of a course:

- What does the course description and syllabus say?
- What elements of the class experience are used to calculate the final grade?
- What are the classroom practices and policies regarding attendance?
- To what extent is there classroom interaction between the instructor and students and/or among students?
- Do student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process?
- Does the fundamental nature of the course rely on student participation as an essential method for learning?
- To what degree does a student's failure to attend constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?

Please contact the Student Disability Resource Center if you have questions or concerns about this accommodation at disability@gcsu.edu or by phone at (478) 445-5931.