

Guidelines for Determining Parameters of Flexibility in Attendance

What does flexibility in attendance mean?

Flexibility in attendance is defined *as occasional exceptions to absentee/tardiness policies when educationally feasible.*

When is flexibility in attendance authorized as an accommodation?

Students are expected and encouraged to attend class. Faculty have a right to establish attendance policies. However, if a student has a disability that may occasionally impact her/his ability to attend class and/or complete assignments and tests at the scheduled time, flexibility in attendance is considered an appropriate accommodation. Hopefully, a student's disability will not interfere with attendance; however, if the student has disability related absences during the semester, the accommodation allows for flexibility in attendance policies and make-up work.

Student's responsibilities

- Student provides appropriate documentation of a disability to Disability Support Services
- Student discusses impact of his/her disability with the Director of Disability Support Services
- If deemed an appropriate accommodation, flexibility in attendance is added to the student's accommodation letter
- Student schedules an appointment to meet with the professor to determine a reasonable number of absences for the class and to establish a specific plan for making up missed work.
- Student will contact **the professor** (not DSS) as soon as possible to inform the professor that the absence was medically necessary. If the student does not notify the professor that the accommodation was accommodation related, the professor may count that absence within the parameters of the attendance policy stated on the syllabus.
- Student will adhere to the agreed upon plan and complete make up work within the agreed upon alternate timeline.
- Student will contact DSS immediately with any questions or concerns

Professor's responsibilities

- Professor considers questions (p. 2,3) regarding parameters of flexibility with attendance and due dates. Please note that regardless of a professor's preferences, the functional limitations of disability, nature of course, and essential requirements must all be considered on an individualized basis. We must engage

- in an interactive, deliberative process when determining adjustments to policies and procedures. It is important to reach out to the DSS office to discuss any concerns or questions as to how to accommodate.
- Professor will maintain the essential standards/learning outcomes of the class.
 - If the student notifies professor of a disability related absence, professor will return student's voice mail/e-mail as soon as possible and verify the agreed upon alternate time line for make-up work
 - Professor will contact DSS immediately with any questions or concerns

DSS responsibilities

- DSS discusses accommodation needs with the student and reviews student's documentation. If reasonable, DSS establishes that flexibility in attendance and/or due dates is an appropriate accommodation
- DSS will generate student's accommodation letters
- DSS will, if necessary, help faculty and student develop a plan for completing make-up work.
- DSS will address student/faculty questions and concerns regarding accommodations.

Considerations when determining parameters of flexibility in attendance

- Policies in the syllabus
 - What does the syllabus say about attendance? Is this based on a faculty/department set policy? Is attendance tied to an essential requirement?
 - Is attendance factored into the student's final grade? What way can students make up these points if they miss class for disability related reasons?
 - What is the "time in seat" expectation for this class?
 - Are students required to actively participate in class discussions/activities?
 - How is participation figured into the final grade?
 - How are students expected to interact with each other (in class, group work outside of class, via Blackboard/e-mail)?
 - Is the material being learned in the class sequential? Does each week's material build on the material learned in the previous week(s)?
 - Are there other sections of the class that the student could attend to catch up on missed material?
 - What policies exist for making up missed exams, pop quizzes? Turning in late work?
 - Does the class use Blackboard?
 - Could missed assignments be turned in via discussion board/e-mail?

- Are tests to be taken at a specific time and place, or is there a window when the test can be taken?
- Is it possible for students to “work ahead” in this class?

It is important to note that students with disabilities that affect attendance often do not go to the doctor when feeling poorly and might not be able to provide a doctor’s note for each absence. This would be overly burdensome for students with chronic conditions. Their documentation provided to DSS has already established the need for more than the standard amount of absences typically permitted as a standard college policy.

If you have any questions or concerns about Flexibility in Attendance, contact the DSS at 856-691-8600 x1282 or mvicente@ccnj.edu BEFORE discussing the accommodation with the student.