

Attendance Policy For Undergraduate Students

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a balance between complying with the requirement of attending classes in an in-person institution while addressing absences due to religious observance, athletic responsibilities, mental and physical health issues, and accommodations set in place by the Offices of Accessibility Services and Title IX. The policy also establishes a maximum number of absences a student can have from all their courses in any given semester before the administration recommends a withdrawal.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all undergraduate students.

III. STATEMENT

Class attendance and communication with professors are among the top predictors of student academic and sustained success. Students should plan to attend EVERY class session. An absence is an absence, excused or unexcused. However, there are many reasons why students might be absent from class: for health reasons; documented disability; participating in a varsity athletic contest; religious observance; and Title IX related concern.

Faculty members record ALL absences and follow the attendance policy in their syllabi that might vary from class to class and from program to program. Attendance policies illustrate the number of classes that a faculty member determines that a student can miss without hindering the student's performance in the class.

If a student misses more than three (3) weeks of all their classes, they should make an appointment with the associate provost for undergraduate studies to discuss the possibility of withdrawing for the semester or taking a medical/compassionate withdrawal (for more information, visit the Registrar's [website](#)). If a student misses three (3) weeks in one class, they should discuss with their faculty or success advisor the possibility of withdrawing from that class before the last day of classes.

If a student misses more than four (4) weeks across all the classes they are enrolled in for a given semester, the College will consider an administrative withdrawal. An administrative withdrawal may happen in the very rare circumstance in which a student has stopped attending classes for 4+ weeks and is not responding to academic advisors and Care Team members. An administrative withdrawal will remove a student from all their classes and from the residence halls. This process will typically be initiated by the leadership of the Care Team, as they review Academic Progress Reports completed by faculty each week.

The Care Team would make a recommendation regarding Administrative Withdrawal to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies, who will review the student's reported attendance and academic progress with the student's academic advisor and with the Director of Student Financial Services and will attempt to meet with the student before making a final decision regarding Administrative Withdrawal. If the student is Administratively Withdrawn and is otherwise in good standing with the College, they are welcome to return the following semester. If the student is on academic warning or on academic probation, the associate provost will bring the case to the Academic Policies Committee (APC) to discuss if an academic suspension is appropriate. If the student would like to appeal the decision, they will appeal the decision to APC by writing to associateprovost@goucher.edu within one week of having received the decision.

IV. DEFINITIONS

A. Absence: When a student does not attend a regularly scheduled class session.

B. Administrative Withdrawal: When the College determines that a student is not meeting basic academic requirements of attendance and/or for behavioral reasons should be withdrawn from the remainder of the semester's classes and required to move out of the residence halls. Students who are administratively withdrawn may be impacted in the following ways (See [College-Initiated Administrative Withdraw Policy](#), Section IV.):

- a. Students who are administratively withdrawn from classes will receive a "W" for all courses attempted during that semester, unless a final grade for the course has been posted on the transcript prior to the administrative withdrawal. The W will be reflected on the student's official transcript.
- b. Students who are administratively withdrawn are subject to the College's Refund Policy in the same manner as students who voluntarily withdraw from the College.
- c. Goucher maintains a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement, and a Return of Federal Title IV Funds requirement, both of which are mandated by federal financial aid regulations. A withdrawing student must consult with the Office of Financial Aid to determine the effect of withdrawal on financial aid under this policy.
- d. Students are expected to continue to make satisfactory academic progress towards a degree each term. Full-time students are expected to achieve this through the cumulative GPA requirements and successful credit load. An administrative withdrawal may affect the student's ability to keep satisfactory academic progress, and the student should contact the Office of Financial Aid and discuss a plan of action with faculty or success advisor for when they return (if applicable).

B. Attendance: The act of being physically in a classroom location. Attendance:

- Supports a sense of belonging: It allows students to become part of a classroom community.
- Encourages student success: It helps students learn the course material and create knowledge with their professors and peers.
- Supports group work: Absent students cannot contribute their unique perspectives to class discussion or other group work, negatively affecting other students' learning opportunities.

- Promotes professional behavior: It promotes responsibility and accountability. It prepares students for the labor market.
- Helps with retention: Students that attend classes and are engaged with faculty and peers are less likely to withdraw from the College.
- Promotes mental health: Attendance gives students a purpose to get out of bed, go outside to walk to class, and have social interactions. Routine and natural daylight enhances mental health.

V. PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING AND/OR NOTIFYING THE COLLEGE OF ABSENCES

1. Students must submit an [Academic Notification Request](#) in the following scenarios:
 1. For any illness, including when testing positive for COVID-19. Either the Office of the Dean of Students or the Student Health Center will work with students to assess the request.
 2. In the case of a death in the family. The staff at the [Student Counseling Center](#) is here to support students during this difficult time.
 3. In the case of a medical emergency such as hospitalization or surgery. The Office of the Dean of Students will work with the student to assess the request.
2. When students have documented disabilities and are in need of accommodations, they should contact access@goucher.edu. This must happen before the semester starts as accommodations are not retroactive. Once accommodations are in place, the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) emails students and their professors. After receiving the email from OAS, students MUST make an appointment with EACH of their professors to discuss what the accommodations will look like in EACH of their classes as college accommodations are very different to high school accommodations. OAS can facilitate these conversations when requested. As Goucher College is a residential institution, virtual attendance is not contemplated as a reasonable accommodation.
3. In the case of a Title IX adjustment, students should work with the [Office of Title IX](#), who informs the associate provost of any Title IX adjustment, who in turn notifies students' professors and advisors. Students MUST work with their professors to best apply these adjustments and identify a plan of action to help them successfully complete all the course work. As Goucher College is a residential institution, virtual attendance is not contemplated as a reasonable accommodation.
4. In the case of student-athletes, students must complete the Athletic Academic Schedule Conflict [form](#) on the first week of class. This form mirrors the Add/Drop process; professors receive the request and can approve/deny it and then add any notes. Students receive an email with the professor's decision and notes.
5. When suffering a concussion, students should follow the procedures in the concussion accommodation [policy](#).
6. When observing a [religious holiday](#) that conflicts with class attendance, students should submit a [Religious Academic Notification Request](#). The Chaplain will work with the student to assess the request.

VI. RESOURCES

Please visit the following related policies:

[College Initiated Administrative Withdrawal Policy](#)

[Classroom Behavior Policy](#)

[Policy Governing Audio and Video Recording](#) (see section III. A. Class Recording)

[Policy for Student/Parent/Guardian Engagement in Academic Affairs](#)

[Procedure for Academic Notification for Class Absence](#)

VII. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

For more information or if you have questions about this policy, please contact the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies at associateprovost@goucher.edu.

VIII. HISTORY

Adopted: January 2024. Updated April 2024; October 2024; June 2025.