

### **Attendance Accommodation**

In most cases, class attendance is critical to a student's mastery of the knowledge and skills that are taught in a specific course and students are expected to follow the attendance policy established by the instructor in each class. If a qualified student with a disability believes he or she may not be able to abide by the attendance policy for disability related reasons, the student should contact Disability Resources prior to the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after the need for an exception arises, to discuss the matter of a possible accommodation.

DR may determine that a student's disability documentation entitles the student to a modification of the usual course attendance policy. Modifications of course attendance policies will be determined on an individual, case-by-case basis depending upon the extent to which the supporting medical or psychological documentation from a licensed professional, qualified to diagnose and treat the disability, supports the need for modification to an attendance policy. The determination will be indicated on the student's professor letter. Since each class and situation is different, the extent of the modification should be determined by a discussion between the professor and the student very early in the semester. The student and professor will meet and complete the Attendance Agreement Form within seven (7) days of the student's request for a meeting. The student is to return the form to Disability Resources within seven (7) days of the meeting. The agreement reached, or the fact that no agreement was reached, is to be documented on the form. If the form indicates that no agreement has been reached, Disability Resources will schedule a meeting with the professor and the student to resolve the matter. If appropriate, the academic chair or other academic administrator will be included in the discussions.

Northern Arizona University will make every effort to reasonably accommodate students disability related academic needs. However, neither the university nor an individual faculty member is required to waive essential or fundamental academic requirements of a course regardless of the nature of a student's disability. If a professor or department can demonstrate to Disability Resources that attendance is an essential or fundamental academic requirement for the course or to any directly related licensing requirement, they may put in place reasonable attendance requirements. Disability Resources will determine the appropriateness of modifying attendance policy by consideration of such things as statements in the syllabus and course description regarding attendance, grading methods, whether student participation is an essential method for learning, the need or lack thereof for classroom interaction, and the impact, if any, which non-attendance will have on the educational experience of other students.

Regardless of the modification of the attendance policy, the student is required to meet all of the academic course requirements and to complete all assignments and examinations within the respective time deadlines. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the

material and notes from missed classes. The student will be graded according to the criteria stated in the class syllabus. If a student finds that he or she is not doing well in the class due to extended absences, the student is urged to consider options such as dropping the class, withdrawing from the class or taking an incomplete. It is important for the student not to abuse the modification of the attendance policy. Modification of the attendance policy does not mean that unlimited absences will be permitted. The number of absences permitted will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Absences for non-disability related reasons will not be excused by the modification.

It is important for the student to realize that even if excused, absences could impact the student's academic performance because the student will not have the benefit of such things as full classroom interaction and the opportunity to ask questions while the material is being presented. The university offers a number of courses on-line. Students with disabilities which require repeated absences from class are encouraged to consider the option of taking courses on-line.