

1 **San José State University**
2 **Academic Senate**
3 **Committee on Instruction and Student Affairs** **AS 1826**
4 **February 28, 2022**
5 **Final reading**
6

7 **Policy Recommendation:**
8 **Student Excused Absences**
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10 Legislative History: no previous policy
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12 Whereas: While faculty and staff have the ability to take an excused absence without
13 penalty during a semester, students currently do not have this option; and
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15 Whereas: Some faculty have denied students the ability to make up work when
16 students have had a family emergency or work problem; and
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18 Whereas: Students can have valid reasons for missing classes and should have the
19 option to make up work as long as the work is submitted in a reasonable
20 time frame; and
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22 Whereas: SJSU is trying to promote student success and timely graduation, so
23 supporting students during times of short-term crisis is one way to help
24 students continue to succeed and graduate on time; therefore be it
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26 Resolved: That the following become university policy.
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29 Approved: February 21, 2022

30 Vote: 12-0-1

31 Present: Allen, Frazier, French, Jackson (non-voting), Kaur, Lupton,
32 Masegian, Rollerson, Sen, Walker, Wilson, Wolcott, Yang, Yao

33 Absent: Hill, Leisenring (non-voting), Merz, Kumar

34 Financial Impact: None.

35 Workload Impact: Some significance for faculty workload in the case of makeup
36 assignments or exams.

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Excused Student Absences

Students may have valid reasons to miss one or more classes, whether anticipated or unforeseen. Students are responsible for informing their instructor about such absences as soon as possible. Absences may be considered “excused” and may require accommodation.

1. Student responsibilities

If a student is aware of a future absence ahead of time, the student shall notify the instructor within the first two weeks of classes or as soon as the student learns of the need for an absence. If the student must be absent for an unforeseen reason, they shall inform the instructor as soon as circumstances permit.

Absences can happen for any number of reasons. The following list provides examples, but there are many other possibilities not captured among these.

- ROTC or other military duties
- Jury duty
- Death of a family member or friend
- Illness or injury, including physical and mental health-related issues
- University-sanctioned SJSU Athletics competitions
- University-sanctioned leadership conferences
- Academic or research conferences
- Adding a class late (though still during the add period)
- Duties related to elected or appointed Associated Students representatives
- Mandatory work-related activity or travel that temporarily impacts a student’s ability to participate in their academics
- Caregiving duties for family members, including parents, spouses or domestic partners, a minor child, an adult child, a child of a domestic partner, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling¹
- Personal instability in a student’s life that temporarily affects their ability to attend class²
- Religious holidays (see University Policy [S14-7](#))
- Unanticipated emergencies or instabilities

¹ Family often extends beyond those defined herein. Faculty should be considerate of those family members that may not be clearly defined here, but have a familial relationship with the student.

² Personal instability may include housing instability, food insecurity, or other financial crises.

77 2. Faculty responsibilities

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79 Faculty shall treat personal matters of “reasons for absence” with the utmost
80 sensitivity. Students may have reasons included in the list above, or they may
81 have others; they also may be reluctant to mention specifics, and faculty should
82 be understanding when that is the case. Faculty should request documentation
83 only in rare cases. (Faculty members may only require students to provide
84 verification for repeated or successive absences, or absences on the days of
85 tests, presentations, and other graded activities.) Faculty shall reasonably
86 accommodate absences to the extent possible.

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88 Excused absences normally should not exceed two cumulative weeks of class
89 time. The faculty member should make arrangements with the student to address
90 missed learning opportunities, which could include submitting work late,
91 completing different but comparable assignments, or waiving an assignment.

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93 3. Possible considerations following extended absences

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95 The following are situations when an excused absence could become an
96 incomplete or a course withdrawal. Students should consult with their instructor
97 and / or advisor to determine the most suitable course of action.

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- 99 ● If the absence exceeds two consecutive weeks of class time.
- 100 ● If the student returns to the class and attempts in good faith to complete
101 the missing work but is overwhelmed and cannot finish.