

1 **SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY**  
2 **Academic Senate**  
3 **Instruction and Student Affairs Committee**  
4 **February 6, 2023**  
5 **Final Reading**  
6  
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**AS 1841**

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9 **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**  
10 **Amendment A to University Policy S22-2**  
11 **Student Excused Absences**

12 **Whereas:** The word "accommodation" is a legal term associated with making a  
13 program accessible to a person with a disability; and  
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15 **Whereas:** Every effort should be made to utilize language that preserves the  
16 meaning of a legally protected accommodation; therefore, be it,  
17

18 **Resolved:** That S22-2 be edited as shown below.  
19

20 **Approved:** November 28, 2022

21 **Vote:** 11-0-0

22 **Present:** Melinda Jackson (non-voting), Varun Jaiswal, Sharmin  
23 Khan, Amy Leisenring (non-voting), Kelly Masegian,  
24 Ravisha Mathur, Sabrina Pinnell, Eric Rollerson, Soma  
25 Sen, Rushabh Sheta, Laura Sullivan-Green, Dominic  
26 Treseler

27 **Absent:** Michael Chadwick, Caroline Chen, Nina Chuang, Henderson  
28 Hill, Maria Martinez, Gilles Muler, Gregory Wolcott

29 **Financial impact:** None expected.

30 **Workload impact:** No anticipated change in workload from the current policy.

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## Student Excused Absences Policy

32 Students may have valid reasons to miss one or more classes, whether anticipated or  
33 unforeseen. Students are responsible for informing their instructor in writing about such  
34 absences as soon as possible. Absences may be considered “excused” and may require  
35 accommodation modification or flexibility for course requirements.

### 36 1. Student responsibilities

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

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

- 43 ○ ROTC or other military duties
- 44 ○ Jury duty
- 45 ○ Death of a family member or friend
- 46 ○ Illness or injury, including physical and mental health-related issues
- 47 ○ University-sanctioned SJSU Athletics competitions
- 48 ○ University-sanctioned leadership conferences
- 49 ○ Academic or research conferences
- 50 ○ Adding a class late (though still during the add period)
- 51 ○ Duties related to elected or appointed Associated Students representatives
- 52 ○ Mandatory work-related activity or travel that temporarily impacts a student’s  
53 ability to participate in their academics
- 54 ○ Caregiving duties for family members, including parents, spouses or domestic  
55 partners, a minor child, an adult child, a child of a domestic partner, grandparent,  
56 grandchild, or sibling<sup>1</sup>
- 57 ○ Personal instability in a student’s life that temporarily affects their ability to attend  
58 class<sup>2</sup>
- 59 ○ Religious holidays (see University Policy [S14-7](#))
- 60 ○ Unanticipated emergencies or instabilities

### 61 2. Faculty responsibilities

62 Faculty shall treat personal matters of “reasons for absence” with the utmost sensitivity.  
63 Students may have reasons included in the list above, or they may have others; they  
64 also may be reluctant to mention specifics, and faculty should be understanding when  
65 that is the case. Faculty should request documentation only in rare cases. (Faculty  
66 members may only require students to provide verification for repeated or successive

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Personal instability may include housing instability, food insecurity, or other financial crises.

67 absences, or absences on the days of tests, presentations, and other graded activities.)  
68 Faculty shall reasonably accommodate absences to the extent possible.

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

73 3. Possible considerations following extended absences

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

- 77 ○ If the absence exceeds two consecutive weeks of class time.
- 78 ○ If the student returns to the class and attempts in good faith to complete the
- 79 missing work but is overwhelmed and cannot finish.