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## Academic Standards Subcommittee Agenda, February 12, 2015

Utah State University

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### Recommended Citation

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*Educational Policies Committee*. Paper 259.

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# **Academic Standards Subcommittee Agenda**

**12 February 2015**

Meeting to be held February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. in Champ Hall

- I. Old Business
  - a. Excused Absence Policy (revised document attached)
- II. New Business
  - a. Summer credit-hour registration cap (document attached)
  - b. Student Code of Conduct (guests: Krystin Deschamps, Bryan Olsen)
  - c. Undergraduate Degree Enrichment Proposal
- III. Informational Items
  - a. Upcoming Meetings:
    - March 12, 2015, 2:00 - 3:30 pm, Champ Hall
    - April 9, 2015, 2:00 - 3:30 pm, Champ Hall

# [DRAFT 2.0 – Academic Standards Subcommittee of the EPC]

## Attendance & Excused Absences

### Introduction

The university views class attendance as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments in accordance with individual instructor and course policies.

There are multiple mechanisms that should be considered if absence is necessary:

- Incomplete (I) Grade: if a student is unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, a grade of “I” (Incomplete) may be submitted by the instructor. Refer to policy X for policies.
- Withdrawal: Students may drop courses without notation on the permanent record through the first 20 percent of the class. If a student drops a course following the first 20 percent of the class, a *W* will be permanently affixed to the student’s record. After 60 percent of the class is completed, the student’s academic advisor must sign any drop request, and a *W* with a grade assigned by the instructor will be entered on the student’s permanent record. Under normal circumstances, a student may not drop a course after 75 percent of the class is completed. (Check [General Catalog](#) for exact dates.)
- Academic Renewal: Undergraduate students who have been admitted to Utah State University after an interruption in their collegiate education of at least one year may petition to have certain credits that are older than five years removed from the calculation of the GPA and credits earned.
- Excused Absence: an absence can be excused as outlined below. Students may request an excused absence using the procedures outlined below, for reasons outlined below. Student who are requesting an excused absence are expected to uphold the Student Code of Conduct.

### Excused Absences

A student who is requesting an excused absence is responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to the instructor to substantiate the reason for absence.

Excused absences may not exceed 20 percent of the class meetings.

Among the reasons absences are considered excused by the university are the following:

1. Participation in a university sponsored or sanctioned activity.
2. Death or major illness in a student’s immediate family (as defined in Policy 346.1 of the USU Policies Manual.
3. Illness of a dependent family member.
4. Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student’s presence.
5. Religious holy day.

6. Injury or Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
  - a. **Injury or illness of three or more days.** For injury or illness that requires a student to be absent from classes for three or more class meetings, the student should obtain a medical confirmation note from his or her medical provider. The Student Health & Wellness Center or an off-campus medical professional can provide a medical confirmation note only if medical professionals are involved in the medical care of the student. The medical confirmation note must contain the date and time of the illness and medical professional's confirmation of needed absence.
  - b. **Injury or illness less than three days.** Faculty members may require confirmation of student injury or illness that is serious enough for a student to be absent from class for a period less than or more class meetings. At the discretion of the faculty member and/or academic department standard, as outlined in the course syllabus, illness confirmation may be obtained by confirmation of visit to a health care professional affirming date and time of visit.
  - c. An absence for a non-acute medical service does not constitute an excused absence.
7. Required participation in military duties.
8. Mandatory admissions interviews for professional or graduate school, or internships, that cannot be rescheduled.
9. Mandatory participation as a student-athlete in NCAA-sanctioned competition.
10. In accordance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Utah State University shall treat pregnancy and related conditions as a justification for an excused absence for so long a period of time as is deemed medically necessary by the student's physician. Requests for excused absence related to pregnancy should be directed to the instructor; questions about Title IX should be directed to the University Title IX Coordinator.

## **Procedures**

Students may be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in above, or other reason deemed appropriate by the student's instructor.

The dean (or dean's designee), of the student's college may provide a letter for the student to take to the instructor stating that the dean or designee has verified the student's absence as excused.

## Student

To be excused the student must notify his or her instructor in writing (acknowledged e-mail message is acceptable) prior to the date of absence if such notification is feasible. In cases where advance notification is not feasible (e.g. accident, or emergency) the student must provide notification by the end of the second working day after the absence. This notification should include an explanation of why notice could not be sent prior to the class. Accommodations sought for absences due to the observance of a religious holiday can be sought either prior or after the absence, but not later than two working days after the absence. If needed, the student must provide additional documentation substantiating the reason for the absence, which is satisfactory to the instructor, within one week of the last date of the absence.

## Instructor

Instructors are under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence.

If the absence is excused, the instructor must either provide the student an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam, or other work that contributes to the final grade or provide a satisfactory alternative by a date agreed upon by the student and instructor. Students with an excused absence shall be “held harmless,” and benefit from all classroom policies. Any make-up work must be completed in a timeframe not to exceed 14 calendar days from the last day of the initial absence.

### **Appeal Procedures**

A student may appeal an instructor’s decision that an absence is unexcused on the grounds that evidence has been presented to the instructor that substantiates one or more of the reasons deemed sufficient for an excused absence or on the grounds that the instructor’s decision was arbitrary, capricious or prejudicial. Any appeal must be initiated within three class days of the instructor’s decision. In the appeal process, the burden of proof shall be upon the student. The student may make an appeal to the following persons or bodies in the sequence in which they are listed:

1. The head of the academic department in which the course is offered
2. The Dean or designee of the undergraduate college in which the course is offered or the director of graduate studies in the case of graduate students.
3. The Provost

## Summer Credit-Hour Registration Cap

Debra Baldwin, Instructor from the Department of History, noted:

- During a regular 15-week semester, students are capped at 18 hours before special permissions are needed to bypass registration restrictions.
- I am asking for the same policy to apply to summer term, taking into account the shortened time period versus credit hour enrollment.
- I am asking that the same policy for our 15-week terms be applied to summer blocks and that students are not allowed to overload themselves by registering for more courses than it is feasible to complete in that length of time.

### Estimation

Working from her formula, we have:

Weeks	Max Credits	Max Credits / Week
15	18	1.2
14	17 *	1.2
7	8 *	1.2

\* Rounded

### Questions

1. Are there financial aid implications? (i.e., what is full-time status in the summer?)
2. What is the scope of the “problem”? (i.e., what is the distribution of credits taken during the summer term?)
3. How would this sort of change impact graduation rates?

## **Undergraduate Degree Enrichment Proposal**

### **Undergraduate Degree Enrichment**

In some instances, a student who has graduated with a bachelor's degree may need to return to school to take additional undergraduate courses for employment or other reasons. If the student does not intend to receive a second bachelor's degree, he or she may apply for Undergraduate Degree Enrichment as a nonmatriculated undergraduate student. If approved, the student may pay undergraduate tuition and fees. Under this option, a maximum of 9 additional undergraduate semester credits may be taken within a 5-year period. Students who wish to take additional undergraduate courses must apply for a second bachelor's degree or be admitted as a nonmatriculated graduate student and pay graduate tuition.