



**LAMAR UNIVERSITY
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

SECTION: Student Affairs

AREA: Dean of Students

Excused Absences for University-sponsored Activities

I. POLICY

- A. A Lamar University (LU) student who participates in a University-sponsored activity shall be granted an excused absence for classes missed during the activity and shall be given an opportunity to make up, without penalty, examinations, quizzes, and any other assignments (or equivalent work) missed as a result of the activity.
- B. It is a student's responsibility to inform instructors of participation in a University-sponsored activity and the resulting absence from class. A student should inform instructors of anticipated absences for University-sponsored activities as early as possible in the semester, ideally upon receiving the course syllabus.

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- A. This policy falls under the authority of all applicable federal, state, and Texas State University System (TSUS) statutes, rules, and regulations, including, but not limited to, the TSUS *Rules & Regulations*; Texas Education Code, Title 3, Higher Education; and Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Education.
- B. This policy does not apply to military students called to active duty or to students requesting medical leave. Students called to active duty should contact LU's Office of Veterans Affairs for assistance. Students who wish to request medical leave should contact LU's Division of Student Affairs for assistance.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Excused Absence.** An absence for which a student (1) is not penalized by an instructor for being absent from class, and (2) is allowed to make up, without penalty, examinations, quizzes, and any other assignments (or equivalent work) missed during the absence.
- B. **University-sponsored Activity.** An official function or event occurring under the sponsorship of, or endorsed by, Lamar University or one of its academic, administrative, or athletic departments, units, centers, or institutes. The function must offer educational, development, or leadership opportunities for students. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Participating in official University athletic competitions (e.g., NCAA events).
 - Performing as part of an official group (e.g., band, choir) at a University-sponsored event.

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- Attending as an official representative of a student organization at leadership conferences.
- Participating in competitions and events as a member of an official University sports club.
- Participating in scholarly competitions or presenting at conferences as an official representative of Lamar University.

Note. Students, instructors, and sponsors who are unsure whether an activity qualifies as a University-sponsored activity should contact the Division of Student Affairs for assistance.

IV. REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

- A. To receive an excused absence, a student must have official written notification or equivalent documentation of an anticipated absence for a University-sponsored activity. In many cases, an activity's sponsor (e.g., Athletics, faculty sponsor) will provide a student and/or instructors with this documentation. If a sponsor does not provide these materials, a student should contact the sponsor as soon as possible to secure this documentation. Documentation from an LU sponsor must be on official University letterhead and/or sent via an official LU account, and the sponsor must be authorized to provide this documentation.
- B. If a student receives little or no advance notice of participation in a University-sponsored activity, the student must inform instructors as soon as possible after learning of the upcoming activity and absence. If prior notice is not possible, the student should inform instructors immediately upon returning to classes.
- C. A student who is enrolled in an online course while participating in a University-sponsored activity shall be entitled to the same excused absence as an on-campus student. A student must contact his/her instructor to discuss alternative arrangements for work due in an online course. Examples of online work that may be affected include, but are not limited to, required frequency of course "logins" or discussion posts, required synchronous activities, and due dates for online examinations, quizzes, and assignments.
- D. Instructors must provide a fair, equivalent alternative to an examination, quiz, or assignment missed due to a University-sponsored activity. For activities that cannot be directly made up (e.g., laboratory, group presentation, off-campus experience), an instructor must arrange a fair alternative to the missed work that is, to the extent possible, equivalent to the original examination, quiz, or assignment.
- E. An excused absence for a University-sponsored activity covers the day(s) and time(s) that the activity takes place and, when applicable, travel time to and from the activity. Depending on travel arrangements, the excused absence may cover the entire day on which travel takes place.
- F. This policy on excused absences for University-sponsored activities applies only to the activity itself and to any approved travel to and from the activity. Students are not excused from classes for practice, training-room treatment, rehearsals, or related activities on nonevent days.
- G. If a scheduled University-sponsored activity is postponed or canceled, a student must attend class or, in the case of online courses, participate in required online activities. Failure to go to class or

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participate online when a University-sponsored activity has been postponed or canceled may lead to an unexcused absence.

- H. Students should, when possible, avoid scheduling classes that conflict with known activity obligations (e.g., student-athletes participating in regular Tuesday night games should avoid enrolling in Tuesday night classes).
- I. Students in courses or programs with intensive and strict attendance requirements (e.g., clinicals, internships, etc.) must speak with their instructor and the Program Director or Chair of the department that offers the course or program to determine if there is a way to reconcile these attendance requirements with participation in a University-sponsored activity.
- J. **Fairness in Counting Student Absences and Assigning Make-up Work.** Instructors shall not unfairly impact the course performance and grades of a student who has received an excused absence for a University-sponsored activity. For this reason, the University has established the following requirements:
 - 1. Instructors who allow all students in a course a certain number of absences must not use one or more of these absences to cover for an excused absence for a University-sponsored activity. Excused absences for University-sponsored activities must be in addition to (not in place of) absences available to all students in a course.
 - 2. Instructors who allow all students in a course to drop one examination, quiz, or assignment grade with no penalty shall not use these “drops” to cover work missed for a University-sponsored activity. For example, an instructor may ask students to complete four exams and drop one. Or, an instructor may offer three exams plus a final, with students having the option to take all three exams and skip the final or drop one exam and take the final. These practices are not allowed as they place students who receive an excused absence to represent the University at a disadvantage in making decisions about their course performance and grades.

V. PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

- A. Students who are part of an official Lamar University athletic team shall receive an excused absence for a University-sponsored activity (e.g., competition, home game, away game, tournament, etc.) in which they participate and that will cause their absence from class.
- B. At the beginning of each semester, the Division of Athletics will send travel letters electronically to instructors who have student-athletes enrolled in their courses. These travel letters serve as official notification of a student-athlete’s excused absence for a University-sponsored activity.
- C. Student-athletes are strongly encouraged to confirm with their instructors that each instructor has received an official travel letter from Athletics and that the letter contains accurate information about the student and University-sponsored activity.
- D. After receiving notification from Athletics of an upcoming excused absence(s), an instructor will determine with a student-athlete how the student will make up, without penalty, examinations, quizzes, and any other assignments (or equivalent work) missed as a result of the activity.

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1. Faculty shall determine the dates and times of make-up examinations, quizzes, and any other assignments (or equivalent work) missed due to a University-sponsored activity.
- E. If a disagreement arises between a student and instructor over an excused absence for a University-sponsored activity or over make-up work, the instructor and student should make a good faith effort to resolve the matter fairly and reasonably. If a resolution cannot be reached, the instructor and/or the student should refer the matter to the Dean of Students.

VI. PROCEDURES FOR ALL OTHER STUDENTS

- A. Students who are not part of an official Lamar University athletic team but who are participating in a University-sponsored activity (e.g., band, competition, conference, performance, sports club, etc.) shall receive an excused absence if this activity will cause their absence from class. Certain groups (e.g., band) may have excused absence procedures of their own. If not, a student can use the procedures in this policy. **To be valid, an excused absence of this type must be approved by the Dean of Students or designee through the approval process described in this policy.** Students are responsible for ensuring that their request for an excused absence has been approved.
- B. The approval process for an excused absence for a student who is not part of an athletic team but who is participating in a University-sponsored activity is as follows:
 1. At least seven (7) days before participating in a University-sponsored activity, a student must contact the Office of Student Conduct and Care Services (SCCS). Staff at the SCCS will assist the student with the excused absence process.
 2. To receive an excused absence, a student must present documentation that verifies his/her participation in a University-sponsored activity. Documentation includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - **Preferred.** Letter from an LU faculty or staff member who is the sponsor of the University group or club to which the student belongs and that is participating in the University-sponsored activity.
 - **Preferred.** Letter from an LU faculty or staff member who is a University-recognized advisor to the student and can verify the student's participation in a University-sponsored activity.
 - If a letter from a Lamar faculty or staff member is not available, a student may, with the permission of the Dean of Students or designee, submit another form of verification. For example, if a student will attend a professional conference to present a paper, and no faculty member can provide a letter, the student could submit an invitation letter from the conference or a page from the conference website/program that lists the student's name and Lamar University affiliation.
 3. When requesting an excused absence, a student must list the course number, title, date, time, and instructor's name for each course that will be missed.
 4. After a student has submitted a request for an excused absence, the request will be routed for approval. The Dean of Students or designee shall make the final decision as to whether an excused absence will be granted.

5. After the Dean of Students or designee has made a final decision, the decision will be sent via LU email to the student. This email serves as official notification of a student's excused absence for a University-sponsored activity.

Note. If a student's request for an excused absence is not approved, the student may still request an excused absence from individual instructors, who may grant or reject the request in keeping with University policies and the policies in their course syllabi.

6. ***Students are responsible*** for presenting official notification of an excused absence, ***in advance***, to their instructors and confirming the excused absence with each instructor.
7. After receiving notification of an upcoming excused absence(s), an instructor will determine with a student how the student will make up, without penalty, examinations, quizzes, and any other assignments (or equivalent work) missed as a result of the activity.
 - Faculty shall determine the dates and times of make-up examinations, quizzes, and any other assignments (or equivalent work) missed due to a University-sponsored activity.
8. If a disagreement arises between a student and instructor over an excused absence for a University-sponsored activity or over make-up work, the instructor and student should make a good faith effort to resolve the matter fairly and reasonably. If a resolution cannot be reached, the instructor and/or the student should refer the matter to the Dean of Students.

VII. LATE REQUESTS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

- A. Although students are expected to request an excused absence for a University-sponsored activity at least seven (7) days in advance, a request in advance may not always be possible, nor may it be possible to process an approval and notify instructors before an activity.
- B. If a request and notice in advance are not possible, a student must contact the Office of Student Conduct and Care Services within seven (7) days of returning from a University-sponsored activity.
 1. Student-athletes submitting a late request for an excused absence for a University sports event will work with their advisor in the Division of Athletics and SCCS to process this request.
 2. All other students submitting a late request for an excused absence for a University-sponsored activity will work with their academic advisor and SCCS to process this request.
- C. The Dean of Students or designee will consider, on a case-by-case basis, requests for excused absences submitted after the seven-day period following a University-sponsored activity. Review and approval of late requests are not guaranteed.

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VIII. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Review Schedule: Every three years on or before the date the policy was last revised and/or approved.

Responsible Party: Vice President for Student Affairs

IX. APPROVAL

Dr. Freddie Titus	07/21/2025
Vice President for Student Affairs	Date

Dr. Jaime R. Taylor	07/24/2025
Lamar University President	Date

POLICY LOG

Version	Date	Description of Changes
1	07/18/2025	Policy draft completed.
	07/24/2025	Policy approved by President.