

Procedure Title:	Class Absence
Procedure ID:	#OP 2-205A
Manual Classification:	Academic Affairs
Linked to Policy:	2-205 Class Absence
Approved by Senior Management Team (SMT):	TBA
Effective Date:	TBA
Next Review Date:	TBA+3
Contact for Procedure Interpretation:	Executive Vice President, Academic

1.0 – Purpose

Fleming College supports the regular attendance of students in order to achieve success in their field of study. The College also recognizes there will be times when an absence may occur for a variety of reasons.

This procedure and associated Policy seek to provide guidance for managing absences occurring at times of assessment and supporting student learning.

2.0 – Definitions and Acronyms

Sanctioned Absences: Attendance at scheduled events sanctioned by Fleming College. Absences related to sanctioned reasons require advance notification to faculty members as documented in 5.1. Examples of a sanctioned absence include:

- Course related field trips or events which occur during the time of other classes
- Academic conferences
- Varsity Athletic commitments
- Student government commitments

Planned Absences: An absence based on a planned event or appointment that is known in advance. Planned absences require advanced notice and approval as laid out in 5.2. Examples of planned absences include:

- Health care appointments
- Compassionate reasons such as attending a funeral service
- Appointments for dependents
- Participation in a major personal event, such as a wedding

Unexpected Absences: Are absences that are not known about in advance. Examples include:

- Illness or injury
- Incidents involving a dependent
- Death in the family

3.0 – Guiding Principles

The College recognises three broad categories of absences, defined fully above. They are: Sanctioned Absences, Planned Absences, Unexpected Absences. Student and Faculty responsibilities remain consistent in all cases.

4.0 – Scope

This policy applies to all students attending Fleming College, and faculty members who manage classrooms and other learning spaces. This policy is principally designed for absences which impact assessment or required learning opportunities, rather than regular attendance of classes.

Employee attendance and absence is outside the scope of this policy.

5.0 – Operating Procedure

5.1 – Sanctioned Absences

Students are expected to notify their faculty member(s) of events that constitute a sanctioned absence in writing as soon as is possible – ideally five (5) College business days before the absence is to occur.

Faculty will provide a written response and provide reasonable opportunity for students to make up any missed assessments or learning opportunities. It is the student's responsibility to complete assigned materials within the timeframe given by the faculty member.

The faculty member can determine if assessments will be completed prior to the absence, or after. For unique learning opportunities, such as a guest speaker and a written reflection on the discussion, the faculty member can assign an alternative assessment.

As a measure of last resort, a faculty member can choose to eliminate an assessment and reweight the remaining assessments in a course if it is deemed a student has met all required learning outcomes in the remaining assessments.

If a sanctioned absence is unreasonably denied, the student may request the review of the Academic Chair of their School to render a final decision.

5.2 – Planned Absences

Students are expected to schedule events and appointments outside of their academic schedule wherever possible, especially where assessment is planned to occur based on the course outlines and instruction. Requests for planned absences are for exceptional circumstances only where it is not possible to schedule outside of academic hours.

Students must request absence in writing to their faculty members, with as much advance notice as is possible. Ideally, five (5) College business days prior to the expected absence.

Planned absences are granted at Faculty discretion, and Faculty may request documentation depending on the nature of the planned absence. Please see section 5.4 for more information on submission of documentation.

Faculty will provide a written response confirming or denying the absence. If the absence is approved, the faculty will provide reasonable opportunity for students to make up any missed assessments or learning opportunities.

The faculty member can determine if assessments will be completed prior to the absence, or after. For unique learning opportunities, such as a guest speaker and a written reflection on the discussion, the faculty member can assign an alternative assessment.

It is the student's responsibility to complete assigned materials within the timeframe given by the faculty member.

As a measure of last resort, a faculty member can choose to eliminate an assessment and reweight the remaining assessments in a course if it is deemed a student has met all required learning outcomes in the remaining assessments.

If a planned absence is unreasonably denied, the student may request the review of the Academic Chair of their School to render a final decision.

5.3 – Unexpected Absences

When a student experiences an unforeseen/sudden event or medical condition that results in an unexpected absence, the student should notify their faculty member(s) as soon as they are able.

A faculty member may request supporting documentation from the student to verify the dates of the absence – see 5.4 Supporting Documentation.

If the absence extends beyond the end of a course's duration and the faculty member is not available, the student should contact their Academic Chair.

If the absence is approved, the faculty will provide reasonable opportunity for students to make up any missed assessments or learning opportunities. For unique learning opportunities, such as a guest speaker and a written reflection on the discussion, the faculty member can assign an alternative assessment.

It is the student's responsibility to complete assigned materials within the timeframe given by the faculty member.

As a measure of last resort, a faculty member can choose to eliminate an assessment and reweight the remaining assessments in a course if it is deemed a student has met all required learning outcomes in the remaining assessments.

If an unexpected absence is unreasonably denied, the student may request the review of the Academic Chair of their School to render a final decision.

5.4 – Documentation

If supporting documentation is requested to verify an absence (i.e. a medical note, obituary), the student decides if the documentation is considered personal information or not. All medical documentation is considered personal information, and should not be shared directly with faculty.

Supporting documentation from a medical practitioner does not need to include a full diagnosis or any private medical information (i.e. injury, surgery type, medical conditions) and students are under no obligation to provide private medical information.

Not Confidential Supporting Documents

If the supporting documents are deemed to NOT contain personal or confidential information the student may send to appropriate faculty as needed.

Confidential Supporting Documents

If supporting documentation is deemed to contain personal or confidential information, such as medical records, the student will provide it to Accessible Education Services (AES) for review. AES will confirm the dates of a student's absence to all impacted faculty members on the student's behalf, copying the student on this correspondence.

5.5 – Support and Return to Learning

Accessible Education Services will support any student experiencing difficulties with their transition back to class following an absence. Efforts to support a student's return to the learning environment will be coordinated where necessary across other College departments (i.e. the Registrar's Office). Students may be required to provide documentation from a qualified professional confirming their readiness to return to class.

If the situation resulting in an absence requires an accommodation, the student will be required to provide appropriate documentation to AES for review.

Students requesting a retroactive accommodation must meet with a counsellor in Accessible Education Services to review their request and provide any supporting documentation required. Retroactive accommodations are granted on a case-by-case basis.

If an unexpected absence is due to a new or pre-existing disability related condition, the student may be eligible for a retroactive accommodation.

In cases of absences impacting a significant number of courses, the School Office may assist a student in coordinating with their faculty, copying a student on the correspondence. The School Office will not retain or duplicate supporting documentation and use it only for its purpose of verification.

5.5 – Unqualified Absences

The College is under no obligation to provide alternative opportunities to students who are absent due to removal under any part of 5-506 Student Rights and Responsibilities and its associated OP, suspension, participation in illegal activities resulting in their absence, or students under a trespass notice from the College or any other partner in learning (such as a placement site).

Other absences may be deemed unqualified for support in making up material at the College's discretion.

6.0 – Related Documents

- 2-205 Class Absence

7.0 – History of Amendments & Reviews

Date Approved	Approved By	List of Approved Amendments / Review
TBA	TBA	<p>Split from the original absence OP, which did not include a parent policy. Reworked original language to emphasize missing classes where an assessment would be impacted rather than general attendance.</p> <p>Added section 5.4 Documentation, 5.5 Support and Return to Learning, 5.6 Unqualified Absences. Replaced list of assessments (i.e. test, essay, etc.) with a definition of assessment to remove repetition and add clarity. Clarified documentation could be requested for Planned Absences.</p>