

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICY

Policy Title: **MEDICAL ABSENCE EXCUSE**

Policy Number: 2.0.1.0

Campus: Lisle Mesa Both

Policy Status: New policy Continuing/active policy Archive policy

Supersedes: not applicable

Policy Origination/Approval Date: 11/25/2025

Review Period: Annually

Last Revision Date: 11/25/2025

Last Review Date: 11/25/2025

Next Scheduled Review: 11/25/2026

Associated Division(s): Academic Affairs

Responsible Office(s): Office of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

Name(s) of Designated Policy Owner(s): Kate Lang

Approved By:

- **University Planning Council Subcommittee on Policies:**
Tim Marin, Ellen Ziliak 11/25/2025
- **Provost:**
Kate Lang 11/25/2025

1. Purpose

This policy establishes clear procedures for students, faculty, and the Office of Academic Affairs when a student is absent from classes due to a medical reason. It distinguishes medical absences from academic accommodations and ensures appropriate communication and verification.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in courses at Benedictine University. It also provides guidance for faculty and staff who support students during medical absences.

- This policy applies only to temporary medical absences.

- Long-term or ongoing medical needs should be addressed through the Office of Academic Accommodations and Accessibility for formal accommodations.
- Verification of a medical absence does not guarantee extensions, makeup exams, or changes to grading policies; such decisions remain at the instructor's discretion consistent with university academic standards.

3. Definitions

- **Medical Absence:** A temporary absence from classes or academic responsibilities due to illness, injury, or other medical conditions that affect a student's ability to attend or participate.
- **Accommodation:** An ongoing academic adjustment or support provided under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or other applicable law, typically arranged through the university's Office of Academic Accommodations and Accessibility.
Note: Medical absences are not the same as accommodations and do not guarantee adjustments beyond the missed class period(s).

4. Policy Statement

The university recognizes that students may experience short-term illnesses or injuries that temporarily affect their ability to attend class. Students are encouraged to communicate proactively with their instructors when medical absences occur.

- Short-term medical absences (fewer than three consecutive class days) should be handled directly between the student and faculty member. Benedictine University encourages faculty to be flexible in these cases to support student learning.
- Academic Affairs will verify documentation for absences of three (3) to seven (7) consecutive class days, in cases where the instructor requests documentation.
- Students whose absences exceed seven (7) consecutive class days must consult with Academic Affairs to discuss the academic impact and potential options, including medical withdrawals, incompletes, and accommodations through the Office of Academic Accommodations and Accessibility.

This policy does not replace the process for requesting ongoing academic accommodations through the Office of Academic Accommodations and Accessibility.

5. Procedures

5.1 Students

1. Notify faculty as soon as possible when a medical condition prevents class attendance.
2. Provide documentation (e.g., a medical provider's note) to Academic Affairs, if the faculty member requires it when the absence is three (3) or more consecutive class days.
3. Consult with Academic Affairs if the absence will be longer than seven (7) days.

4. Work with faculty to complete missed coursework in a timely manner, consistent with the course syllabus and instructor policies.

5.2 Faculty

1. Encourage students to communicate promptly about medical absences.
2. If you are going to require documentation, ensure that the absence meets the criteria outlined in Section 6.
3. Provide reasonable opportunities for students to make up missed work, consistent with course learning outcomes.
4. Refer students to Academic Affairs if the absence is expected to extend beyond seven (7) days.

5.3 Academic Affairs

1. Receive and verify medical documentation for absences of 3–7 consecutive class days, when faculty request it.
2. Advise students and faculty when a medical excuse is verified an absence exceeds seven (7) consecutive class days.
3. Explore options with students and faculty when an absence exceeds seven (7) consecutive class days.
4. Maintain confidentiality of student medical information. All medical documentation will be handled confidentially by Academic Affairs and shared only to the extent necessary to verify the absence and support the student’s academic progress.

Length of Medical Absence	Student Action	Academic Affairs Role
Fewer than 3 consecutive days	Student notifies instructor directly. No documentation required unless requested by instructor.	None.
3 to 7 consecutive days	Student submits a medical note or other verification to Academic Affairs.	Academic Affairs reviews documentation and verifies the medical excuse to faculty.
More than 7 consecutive days	Student submits documentation and meets with Academic Affairs for consultation about academic impact and options (e.g., withdrawal, incomplete).	Academic Affairs verifies documentation, advises the student, and communicates with faculty as appropriate.

6. Related Policies and Documents

- Benedictine University Student Handbook

7. Related Forms