



School of Veterinary Medicine

Office of the Dean

Bulletin – Attendance Policy

Changes to the former bulletin statement are provided in bold.

Bulletin Link

LSU Vet Med Phase 1 Attendance Policy:

LSU Vet Med recognizes that situations arise preventing a student from being able to complete a mandatory attendance activity (exam, lab, classroom session, etc) at the scheduled time. Excused absences will be permitted for only certain circumstances. These scenarios are described below and are in accordance with LSU PS-22: www.lsu.edu/policies/ps/ps_22.pdf

1. Approved Absences in Phase 1:

Excused absences for mandatory activities will be permitted for the following reasons:

Illness: The student should **TEAMS** message both the year coordinator and the course coordinator as soon as possible if they anticipate missing a mandatory attendance activity because of illness (physical or mental). In situations of acute illness, the student should remain at home or seek medical care, even if the absence has not been approved before the start of the activity. The honor system is applied; however, documentation may be required at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Student Success and/or Course Coordinator.

Compassionate leave: Students experiencing a death in the family, funeral, serious emergencies involving members of a student's household or immediate family, or other personal crisis, including death of a personal pet will be granted compassionate leave from all classes and

examinations after contacting the Associate Dean for Student Success or one of the counselors. The student should also contact the Course Coordinator. Documentation may be required at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Student Success or Course Coordinator.

Conferences (participating): Students are encouraged to attend conferences or other continuing education events relevant to their professional goals. However, absences from mandatory attendance courses and examinations are ONLY permitted if the student is:

- a) presenting a scientific abstract as a poster or podium presentation or
- b) receiving a competitive scholarship from a national or state organization to attend the meeting or
- c) the student is representing LSU as part of a national leadership position (not a school level position) or competitive team and
- d) in good academic standing with the university

Students should complete a conference travel approval form and contact the Course Coordinator(s) and the Year Coordinator as soon as possible when making travel arrangements. A minimum of 30 days advanced notice is required, unless extenuating circumstances prevent such notice. If the approval form is not completed within the above timeframe, approval for leave will not be granted. The following guidelines are provided regarding conference travel:

- a) Travel Planning: Travel should be minimally impactful to the student's academic schedule and obligations. General guidelines include:
 - a. Conference Travel:
 - i. In-state: should be planned for the same day, unless previous approval acquired (i.e. presentation is first thing in the morning)
 - ii. North, Central, or South American destination: travel should be planned for the day prior
 - iii. All other destinations: up to two days prior
 - iv. Exceptions must be approved by the Course Coordinator and Senior Associate Dean of Student Success
 - v. Travel back to LSU should occur on the same day of the presentation or mandatory meeting when possible (i.e. morning presentations or meetings that end early on the final day, where an afternoon or evening flight can be arranged), or the day immediately following

- vi. Extended attendance at a conference for the purpose of non-essential session/workshop attendance or personal activities is not considered excused if interfering with the student's academic schedule.

b) Examination makeup

- a. Any exam that required rescheduling due to an approved travel event must be completed within 48 business hours of returning to LSU, unless otherwise approved by the course coordinator and OASS.

c) Activities/Quizzes with deadlines during absence

- a. Any activity or quiz schedule around the time of a conference with at least a 5-business days timeframe to submit/complete will not be required by the course coordinator to adjust for conference-related travel. The student is expected to submit or complete these within the pre-noted deadline.
- b. Any activity or quiz with less than 5 business days to complete should be discussed with the course coordinator to determine if an extension should be permitted based on the extent of the assignment.

d) Attendance Points

- a. To receive credit for missed mandatory attendance, the student must arrange a makeup opportunity with the course coordinator, which may include but is not limited to:
 - i. attending an alternative session or
 - ii. watching a recorded classroom session and completing a related designated assignment or
 - iii. completing an alternative activity/assignment
 - 1. It is the student's responsibility to arrange makeups with the course coordinator, failure to do so will result in 0 points for the missed attendance

e) Avoidance Dates

- a. Efforts should be made to avoid any travel that may occur at times of academic schedules where major practical or team-based learning events are scheduled (i.e. PBL, OSCEs, Form & Function practical exams). Excused absences may not be granted from these events.

LSU Vet Med Student Employees: Per approval from the Dean, recognizing the essential nature of the efforts that LSU Vet Med VTH student workers have on Vet Med Hospital operations, the following is provided for allowing an excused absence from classroom-based attendance. This is specific to LSU Vet Med VTH student workers only.

- a) Students who are employed by the Live-In program or work night-shift technician shifts in the VTH and work for a shift immediately preceding a normal weekday shall be granted a half-day excused absence (8AM-12PM) from classroom attendance **ONLY** based on the following criteria:
 - a. The student shall have been actively working consistently between the hours of 12AM – 8 AM.
 - b. Documentation of hours actively working (such as time clocks or other proof of work activities) shall be made available at the request of the Course Coordinator.
 - c. This excused absence is only applicable to classroom monitored attendance and non-disclosed graded activities (such as pop-quizzes). It does not apply to any mandatory labs (clinical skills, anatomy, etc), examinations, and pre-disclosed quizzes.
- b) To request an absence, the student worker must follow the below protocol:
 - a. **BEFORE** leaving from their scheduled shift: the student must send an EMAIL to all course coordinators for the classes being missed stating that they are requesting an excused absence.
 - b. The Live-In/Nursing Supervisor must also be copied on the email to the course coordinators
 - c. Microsoft Teams messages or other formats of communication are not approved for absence requests.
 - d. The Live-In/Nursing Supervisor will reply to the email chain and confirm that the student was scheduled to work during the shift.
 - e. Emails sent AFTER the start of class for which the excuse is being requested will **NOT** be considered.
- c) Students found to be in violation of the policy shall receive an unexcused absence and forfeit the right to continue to request excused absences. Depending on extent of severity, they may be reported for academic misconduct.

Military obligations or court-imposed legal obligations such as subpoenas or jury duty: Students should submit documentation of their legal reason to miss the mandatory attendance activity to the Course Coordinator and the Year Coordinator.

Religious observances: Mandatory attendance activity absences are permitted for religious holidays. See the interfaith calendar website (www.interfaith-calendar.org).

Pets: Students may request an absence from a mandatory attendance activity if a pet requires emergency medical care, but requests will only be approved for emergency situations when all other reasonable options have been exhausted. Absences will not be approved for scheduled appointments. Students should contact via **TEAMS** the Course Coordinator and the Year Coordinator to request an absence as soon as possible.

Transportation issues: In the event of a car accident, students should seek medical care and contact the school when the situation has stabilized. If other transportation issues such as mechanical problems with a car or canceled trains/flights are encountered, students should message the year coordinator and course coordinator via TEAMS as soon as possible. Absences will only be approved if there are no other options available. See LSU Vet Med Bulletin regarding travel expectations during the semester dates.

All other requests that do not fall into one of the above categories or PS-22 are unexcused. This includes attendance at conferences, weddings, and other social events.

One-time Exception ('Free Pass'): Students are permitted ONE exception to the above policy for attending conferences, student associations, and weddings or other important family events ONCE during Phase 1. Students must still request the absence by following the procedure described below and take the make-up examination after the scheduled date, in consultation with the Office of Admissions and Student Success. No exams will be allowed to be taken early. If a student is using their 'one free pass', the student must be prepared to take the make-up exam within 48 business hours of returning from the event. If a student is using their one free pass, the Course Coordinator and the Year Coordinator must be notified 48 business hours prior to the event or the absence will be considered unexcused.