

**Date:** August 25, 2008

**To:** Faculty, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

**From:** Tom Klammer, Dean  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences

**Subject:** Meeting Your Classes

Each year questions arise about when it's OK for faculty to miss class. Already this year, several situations have arisen that pose such questions.

Of course, the obligation to meet classes is not just a matter of formal rules and procedures. On the basis of my own experience and my observation of a great many faculty colleagues over the years, I know that most faculty rarely, if ever, miss class unless they are too sick to teach (or experience a family emergency that keeps them from the classroom). They share a sense of **professional pride and responsibility** that transcends institutional rules and guides their professional judgments.

In recent years, with on-line classes, hybrid classes, and perhaps other new ways of offering instruction, what exactly it means to meet a class has become more complex, and good judgment is required.

Outlined below are a few of the common circumstances in which faculty might miss class and how we deal with such absences in accord with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, UPS 230.010, and the CSUF Faculty Handbook. Not included here are the rather large variety of paid and unpaid leaves that are available to faculty under certain conditions. All such leaves must be approved in advance.<sup>1</sup>

### **1. Illness**

If you are sick and have to miss a regularly scheduled class or classes, you must notify your department chair or program coordinator as much in

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<sup>1</sup> Information about leaves is available from Faculty Affairs and Records. Leaves are also described in the Faculty Handbook (<http://www.fullerton.edu/far/handbook/handbook.htm>).

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advance as you can.<sup>2</sup> If you know of an absence in advance, it is your responsibility to work with the department chair or program coordinator to arrange for a qualified colleague to meet the class or to reschedule the class at a time acceptable to all students. If neither is possible, consult with the chair or coordinator in regard to providing a special assignment to the students in lieu of the normal class session. For extended illnesses, the College will provide funds to the department to hire substitutes to teach your classes. When you miss class because of illness, you must use sick leave, even if a colleague or substitute has met your class in your absence. When you are well enough to return to class, be sure to notify the department office.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Health Emergencies

If you have a health emergency (a sudden illness, an accident, etc.) and have to miss a regularly scheduled class or classes on short notice, you must notify the department chair or program coordinator as soon as you can. You will use sick leave to cover this time. Canceling class is appropriate only as a last resort in cases of emergencies where prior planning for class coverage is not possible.

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<sup>2</sup> **Absences for Which Sick Leave May Be Charged** [CBA 24.10]

The use of sick leave may be authorized by the President only when a faculty unit employee is absent because of:

- a. illness or injury, or disability related to pregnancy or childbirth;
- b. exposure to contagious disease;
- c. dental, eye, or other physical or medical examinations or treatments by licensed practitioners;
- d. Illness or injury in the immediate family;
- e. death of a person in the immediate family; or
- f. an extension of the maternity/paternity leave benefit pursuant to provision 23.5 of the Agreement.

<sup>3</sup> **Sick Leave** [from the CSUF Faculty Handbook; similar language is included in the Part-time Faculty Handbook]

Sick leave is accrued at the rate of eight hours per qualifying pay period for full-time faculty. Part-time faculty accrue sick leave on a pro-rata basis. Sick leave may be accumulated without limit. Refer to the CBA for appropriate uses of sick leave. Absences must be reported to your department chair. Your department attendance clerk maintains records on the amount of sick leave accrued and used and will assist you with the appropriate forms required for reporting the use of sick leave to Payroll Services. Faculty are considered to work five days in a seven day period for the purpose of charging sick leave.

Faculty requiring an extended leave of absence for medical reasons must discuss the matter with the Department Chair and provide a statement from a physician indicating that he/she will be unable to work and the length of time of the incapacity. A faculty member may be required to see a doctor of the university's choice for a second opinion. A medical release must be provided to the Department Chair before the faculty member may return to work. The Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs must be notified of all requests for extended medical leaves of absence.

**3. Absence on University Business**

If you will be absent from regularly scheduled classes because of University business (for example, to attend a CSU meeting as a campus representative), please have such absences approved in advance using the official Travel Authorization form. You will not be charged sick leave for such absences. It is your responsibility to work with the department chair or program coordinator to arrange for a colleague to teach in your place or to hire a replacement for you.

**4. Absence for Professional Activities**

If you will be absent from regularly scheduled classes because of University-related professional travel (for example, to deliver a paper at a scholarly conference), you must have the absence approved in advance using the official Travel Authorization form. You will not be charged sick leave for such absences. It is your responsibility to work with the department chair or program coordinator to arrange for a colleague to teach in your place.

Absence from class for the purpose of attending conferences or carrying out other off-campus professional activities should be kept to a minimum. Normally, absences for more than one class-day will not be permitted. Longer absences require the Dean's approval in advance. Professional activities other than giving papers at conferences (for example, consulting, giving invited lectures, etc.) should be scheduled for times outside of the 16 weeks of the semester. Faculty who are teaching in the short Intersession or Summer Sessions may not be absent during those terms except for reasons of illness.

International travel now requires University travel insurance, which is provided at no charge to the traveler and includes liability insurance (which protects you and the University in case you are found liable, for example, in an accident) and repatriation insurance (for example, to fly you home in case of illness). It requires 7 to 10 days to obtain the insurance coverage, making it imperative that Travel Authorizations and insurance applications for international trips be submitted two weeks in advance at a minimum. International travel will not be authorized without the required insurance.

### **5. Jury Duty**

Faculty who receive a summons to jury duty during the semester should immediately request a postponement to a time (such as January or summer) when class is not in session. The courts will normally grant such a postponement. If a postponement is not granted, work with the department chair or program coordinator to arrange for a colleague to teach in your place for short absences. The College will provide funds to the department to hire a substitute in case of longer unavoidable absences for jury duty. You will not be charged sick leave for unavoidable absences due to jury duty and will receive your regular salary.

### **6. Religious Holidays**

Absences to observe religious holidays while the University is in session must be scheduled in advance with the department chair or program coordinator, with whom you should work to arrange for a colleague to teach in your place. The day(s) will not be considered absences or personal leaves for faculty. Please see President Gordon's statement of campus policy regarding observance of religious holidays; it is included on the next page.

### **7. Personal Holiday**

The Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 33.3, provides for one Personal Holiday for faculty members per calendar year.<sup>4</sup> The campus endeavors to follow this policy as written. Thus, if you wish to use a Personal Holiday, you should first discuss your request with your department chair or program coordinator. Following that discussion, submit your request to the dean via e-mail, with a copy to the department chair or program coordinator. If your request is approved, you must cooperate with the chair or coordinator to arrange for a colleague to teach in your place, if the requested Personal Holiday interferes with your teaching duties. Naturally, it is preferable to arrange to use your Personal Holiday when it won't interfere with teaching.<sup>5</sup>

### **8. Informal Arrangements to Cover a Class**

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<sup>4</sup> A faculty unit employee shall be entitled to a Personal Holiday which may be taken on one (1) day during the calendar year. If the faculty unit employee fails to take the Personal Holiday before the end of the calendar year, the holiday shall be forfeited. CSU and CFA shall endeavor to inform a new faculty unit employee of his/her Personal Holiday. Scheduling of the Personal Holiday shall be by mutual agreement of the faculty unit employee and the appropriate administrator. (CBA 33.3)

<sup>5</sup> The Personal Holiday of faculty on a 12-month appointment (e.g., many department chairs) and other 12-month employees is normally used as part of the holiday break at the end of December.

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You are not allowed to arrange informally for another person, faculty member, or graduate or undergraduate student to take over your class in your absence. All such arrangements must be made in consultation with and with the approval of your department chair or program coordinator.

If you have questions regarding absences from class, please do not hesitate to consult with your department chair, program coordinator, or me. Thank you!

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MEMORANDUM

TO: University Community

DATE: August 21, 2007

FROM: Milton A. Gordon  
President

SUBJECT: Observance of Religious Holidays

At California State University, Fullerton, our students and employees represent many different races, ethnicities, and religions. We are proud of the diversity of our campus and respect the many documented religious holidays throughout the year that take place. These holidays are not, however, recognized as State holidays. There are, however, student, faculty, staff and administrators who will want to observe these religious holidays.

I encourage you to consider the importance of these days as you decide questions of absences. Formally, the following guidelines should be used regarding requests to be absent on a recognized religious holiday(s):

1. Students should not be penalized for absence and arrangements should be made to permit these students to make up the work or any exams missed on the documented holiday(s) of their religion.
2. Faculty should make appropriate arrangements with their department chairs or deans to have their classes covered on the documented holiday(s) of their religion; and
3. Staff and administrators should request permission from their immediate supervisor to use either vacation or CTO on the documented holiday(s) of their religion.

Thank you.