

Class Attendance Expectations – CAP Undergraduate Students

The Attendance Policy: As stated in the Defiance College catalog, “A student is expected to attend all classes, as well as any special conferences, meetings, and field trips included on the syllabus for the course.” (p.28)

How to deal with unforeseen issues: We understand that illnesses and emergencies arise. If you absolutely cannot make it to class, you must contact your instructor (before the absence whenever possible) and make arrangements regarding missed work. If you cannot contact the instructor directly, you must notify the CAP Office and ask us to inform the instructor. Keep in mind, however, it is up to the instructor’s discretion as to how to handle the absence and missed work.

It is up to **you** to learn about, and adhere to, your instructors’ attendance policies. He or she may spell out a specific attendance policy and identify consequences of missing even one class. It is often spelled out in the syllabus that you usually receive at your first class meeting. **Note:** We do ask instructors to notify the CAP Office of student absences so that we can be aware of potential problems early on.

Why do we monitor attendance for adult students? We have to maintain the integrity of our class sessions and academic programs. Active class discussions, lectures, and presentations are critical parts of the course content and engaged learning. A traditional day class may meet 40 – 45 times during the semester but our classes often only meet eight times over a 15-week period. When a class meets only eight times, each session is 12½ % of the total class time. Missing more than one class is rarely acceptable since that means you would have missed at least 25% of the class.

When you miss this number of classes, you risk being dropped from the class, regardless of how you are performing academically. An instructor has the right to withdraw a student for excessive absences after consultation with the Assistant Academic Dean, Adult and Graduate Programs (for Weekend College or adult evening classes) or the Interim Academic Dean or the Vice President for Student Engagement & Dean of Students (for traditional classes).

Missing classes can lead to other problems. Assignments build up; grades can suffer; and students end up dropping classes. This can have a negative impact on financial aid as well. Dropping a class can take you below the 6-credit minimum required for loans which may mean you then have to pay out of your own pocket for that semester. In addition, all financial aid programs require students to make “satisfactory” progress toward earning their degree. It is possible to be placed on Financial Aid Probation or lose financial aid assistance completely because you are not completing enough credits or are not in good academic standing. (For more information regarding satisfactory progress related to financial aid, please see p.15 of the 2009-2010 undergraduate catalog.)

The bottom line is that missing class is strongly discouraged. It can lead to negative effects that you cannot control or change but that can impact your academic progress in a number of ways.

FAQs – CAP Expectations re: Class Attendance

Question: What is the attendance policy for weekend classes?

Answer: The catalog states “A student is expected to attend all classes, as well as any special conferences, meetings, and field trips included on the syllabus for the course.” p. 28, 2009 – 2010 undergraduate catalog)

Question: What if I absolutely have to miss class?

Answer: We understand that illnesses and emergencies arise. If you absolutely cannot make it to class, you must contact your instructor (before class whenever possible) and let him/her know. If you cannot contact the instructor directly, you must contact the CAP office at 419.783.2351 and ask us to get a message to the instructor.

Question: Can I make up the work that I miss?

Answer: You need to contact the instructor as soon as possible about making up any missed assignments, tests, etc. It is up to the instructor’s discretion as to how to handle the absence and missed work. It is your responsibility to learn the instructor’s policies about missing class and making up work. This is frequently outlined in the instructor’s course syllabus.

Question: I’m an adult with a lot going on. Why can’t I miss classes as long as I keep up with the work?

Answer: We have to maintain the integrity of our class sessions and academic programs. Small classes are one of the advantages of attending a small college. If a class has only 6 or 7 students enrolled, each student’s participation is even more critical for active discussion and exchange of ideas. Your presence and participation in the classroom is important, not only for your own benefit but also for the benefit of the other students in the class whether the class has 6 students or 26.

Question: Can I get dropped from a class because of lack of attendance?

Answer: Absolutely. Weekend College and adult evening classes meet no more than eight times so each class is at least 12½ % of the total class time. Missing more than one class is rarely acceptable since that means you have missed at least 25% of the class. When you miss this number of classes, you risk being dropped from the class, regardless of how you are doing grade-wise. An instructor has the right to withdraw a student for excessive absences after consultation with the Assistant Academic Dean, Adult and Graduate Programs (for Weekend College and adult evening classes) or the Interim Academic Dean or the Vice President for Student Engagement & Dean of Students (for traditional classes.)

Question: Does my attendance affect financial aid?

Answer: It can if you end up dropping a class or getting a lower grade because of missing too much. For one thing, dropping a class can take you below the 6-credit minimum required for loans which may mean you then have to pay out of your own pocket for that semester. In addition, all financial aid programs require students to make “satisfactory” progress toward earning their degrees. It is possible to be placed on Financial Aid Probation or lose financial aid assistance completely because you are not completing enough credits or are not in good academic standing. (For more information regarding satisfactory progress related to financial aid, please see p.15 of the 2009-2010 undergraduate catalog.)