Class Absence Notes

Policy

The Health Center does not write excuses for students missing class due to most common illnesses. At the beginning of each year new faculty are provided the rationale for our policy and asked to help in this effort to make the health care system on campus efficient and effective for those students who are truly ill and need timely care.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to eliminate unnecessary visits from students who make appointments for the sole purpose of obtaining class absence notes for their professors. Some illnesses may legitimately prevent a student from attending classes, but are not serious enough to require evaluation and treatment from the health care professionals in the Health Center. Students often provide self care, which is very appropriate for many common illnesses. When professors require a note from the Health Center for class absence, it creates a situation that forces the student to make an appointment whether or not they need one. Often this occurs several days after the missed class when the student is no longer ill. When this happens appointment times are taken up by students for the sole purpose of obtaining a class absence note. These students take up valuable appointment slots leaving fewer appointment times for the truly ill student who should be seen sooner rather than later. When healthy students take up valuable appointment time, ill students then must wait until the next day to be seen. This delays treatment and recovery time which causes the ill student to miss more classes than otherwise necessary.

Procedure

Students requesting class absence notices are told to speak with their professors directly and informed of the Health Center policy. The student may ask for an appointment card from the front desk personnel upon exiting. Professors may call the Health Center to verify a student visit. No other information regarding the student's condition will be given in accordance with HIPAA privacy laws.

If, in the judgment of the medical professional, the student will be out of classes for an extended period of time, with the student’s permission, an e-mail will be sent to the class dean who will in turn notify the student’s professors. Such situations may include but are not limited to:

- Mononucleosis, which requires bed rest and/or removal from campus.
- Hospitalization and/or surgery
- Severe back spasm requiring bed rest
- Severe flu and/or dehydration requiring bed rest
Highly contagious diseases (chicken pox, measles)

Related Information

History/Revision Information

Responsible Office/Division:

Effective Date:

Last Amended Date:

Next Review Date:

Also Found In: Health Services Web Site (www.dickinson.edu/departments/health/notes.html), Student Handbook