

Dickinson College Wellness Center Class Absence Policy

Policy/Procedure

The Wellness Center does not provide excuses for missing class for routine appointments, as these kinds of absences are taken care of by faculty attendance policies regarding class absences. When a clinician recommends that a student refrain from going to class (e.g., mono, going home for specialty healthcare, experiencing a mental health crisis), the staff will request that the student sign a release permitting the Wellness Center to inform the Student Care Coordinator, whom they will copy on an email notification back to the student regarding their recommendation that the student not attend class. **It is the student's responsibility to communicate all absences with their faculty unless extenuating circumstances make them unable to do so.**

The notification to the Student Care Coordinator can be initiated for a 1-day recommendation to miss class. It does not need to be an extended illness/injury (i.e. mono, concussion).

Normally, for a 1-day absence the student should notify their professor(s), so that the missed class can be worked out between the student and the professor. If this cannot be done and it is medically justified, the student may be referred to the Student Care Coordinator. For Wellness Staff to notify the Student Care Coordinator, the student will need to sign a Release of Information (ROI) form.

The front desk staff cannot mediate disagreements between a professor and student. By law, staff are only permitted to share certain information, and only with a signed release. A student can meet with the Administrative Manager to discuss the particular situation and they will explain the options. Students will not be given any other note such as an appointment verification. However, the Health Services clinicians will give a discharge summary; which states "The sole purpose of this document is to provide health education and follow-up recommendations from your health care provider. It is not intended to be used as an excused absence from class or work." If a student provides said documentation, it is at their discretion. Professors have authority regarding whether the class absence will be excused, and the Wellness Center does not have authority over them.

Related Information

The purpose of this 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 clinicians at the Wellness Center. When professors require a note from the Wellness Center for a class absence, it creates a situation that forces the student to make an appointment whether or not they need one. When this happens, appointment times are taken up by students for the sole purpose of obtaining a class absence note, leaving fewer available appointments for students with more immediate needs who should be seen sooner rather than later. When students experience delays in their treatment, their recovery time may be prolonged, which could cause them to miss more classes than is otherwise necessary.

History/Revision Information

Responsible Division/Office: Student Life/Wellness Center

Approval Date: 10/12/2011

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Next Review Date: 09/30/2025

Also Found In: