Disabilities Services



**Attendance Flexibility as a Disability Accommodation: A Faculty Guide for Implementation**

All disability-related accommodations are designed to provide the student with equal access to their education at Widener University. A reasonable accommodation preserves both the integrity of the course and the student’s right to participate in classroom activities. Appropriate accommodations do not change or lower the essential elements of the course.

Attendance flexibility is individually determined based on the nature of the course, its content, and its structure. Flexing a course standard can provide an alternate way for a student to meet essential course requirements and actively participate in the course while also managing her/his disorder. Please note: students are expected to request a flexibility accommodation at the beginning of the semester. Retroactive requests should be discussed with the Director of Disabilities Services.

Attendance - Generally, students are expected to follow established classroom attendance policies. When a student has a *chronic condition with unpredictable or cyclical acute episodes*, an accommodation to flex the attendance policy may be appropriate. Examples include but are not limited to Crohn’s Disease, chronic migraines, depression, bi-polar disorder, or a student who has recently suffered a concussion, and is mandated to miss a period of class time as part of their recovery.

The following questions, based on questions developed by the **US Office of Civil Rights**, are guidelines faculty can use when determining whether attendance is an essential function of the course.

1. *How much classroom interaction is there between the instructor and students, and among students?*
2. *Do student contributions constitute a significant component of the learning process?*
3. *Does the fundamental nature of the course rely upon student participation as an essential method for learning, e.g. foreign language?*
4. *To what degree does a student's absence constitute a significant loss to the educational experience of other students in the class?*
5. *How is attendance calculated in the final grade?*
6. *What is the classroom policy regarding attendance?*

Please contact me with any questions or concerns as we work together this semester.

Best Regards,

Rebecca M. Ross, MSW

Director of Disabilities Services

610-499-4179; [rross@widener.edu](mailto:apbachus@widener.edu)

Widener University, One University Place, Chester, PA 19013-5792

t: 610-499-1266 f: 610-499-1192 www.widener.edu