



Excused or Required Absence Policy & Procedure

For a minor illness, an absence should be handled between the student and the instructor. For the purposes of this policy, a minor illness is defined as one that results in absences of less than two days over a four-week period and does not result in hospitalization or quarantine. It is up to each instructor to state their expectations for class attendance and their excused absence policies in their course syllabus. In these routine cases, it is the student's responsibility to explain the circumstances to the instructor and provide documentation, if required. Instructors are responsible for providing students with an equitable way to make up missed work due to a routine excused absence, following their own policies as set out in the course syllabus. Students are expected to promptly make up any missed course requirements according to the instructor's guidelines.

In the event that a student's absence is due to circumstances that go above and beyond a minor illness, the student may request an excused or required absence from the Provost.

The Provost may excuse class absences for:

- Serious or extended illness, injury, hospitalization, or urgent or time-sensitive medical procedure (see **Medically Excused Absences** section below),
- Intercollegiate athletics, as approved by the Director of Athletics,
- Class-related activities, as approved by the Dean,
- Professional conferences and meetings, as approved by the Dean,
- Student functions approved by the Dean (for academic organizations and clubs) or the Coordinator of Student Life (for all other non-academic organizations and clubs),
- Military service obligations or other civic duties,
- Emergency or death in the family.

The Provost may require absences in cases of:

- Symptoms, exposure to, or diagnosis of highly communicable illnesses or diseases, as recommended by the CDC,
- Interim supportive or protective measures issued under the University's Title IX policy,
- Abusive, disruptive, or disorderly conduct, as determined by the conduct review process and recommended by the Student Conduct & Restorative Practices Coordinator.

The Provost's Office will generate a memorandum excusing or requiring the absence and email it to the requestor. In cases where the requestor is a Director, Dean, or Coordinator, the requestor will distribute the memo to students so they can provide the memo to their instructors prior to their absence.

Make-up Work

In the case of excused or required absences, faculty should excuse students from their classes and permit them to make up missed coursework, assignments, and examinations. The makeup of missed coursework, assignments, and examinations may take an alternative format as to provide reasonable and equitable means for students to achieve their learning outcomes. In most cases, the student is responsible for notifying instructors, making arrangements for missed work, and meeting reasonable

deadlines. In emergent cases, the Provost's Office will provide instructors with a preliminary notification. The student should then reach out to instructors as soon as possible to make arrangements for missed work.

Medically Excused Absences

What qualifies as a Medically Excused Absence? Students who are absent due to serious illness, injury, hospitalization, or urgent or time-sensitive medical procedures may be required by their instructor to provide a Medically Excused Absence Approval Memorandum issued by the Provost's Office. Medically Excused Absences apply only to students who find themselves in urgent need of medical attention resulting in a defined treatment and/or recovery period. Qualifying circumstances include medical treatment/hospitalization, specialty consult, emergency department visit, operation, or urgent or time-sensitive procedures. The Medically Excused Absence Approval Memorandum will specify the duration and conditions (if applicable) of the student's absence from classes, while maintaining confidentiality of personal health information. Students who would otherwise be eligible for approval of a Medically Excused Absence but do not engage in the process, as explained in this policy, are not guaranteed approved absences or the opportunity to make up missed course assignments.

What to do I do in the case of chronic illness? If a student is experiencing chronic illness, which is persistent and long-lasting and requires ongoing support, they should contact the Office of Accessibility Services at accessibility@issu.edu.

What is the procedure for requesting a Medically Excused Absence? Students (or in cases of incapacitation, a parent, guardian, or legal representative) must contact the Provost's Office as soon as possible regarding their absence. The request for an approved medical absence must be submitted in writing via email to provost@issu.edu. In cases of emergency or sudden illness, notification should occur as soon as reasonably possible. Notification may occur before documentation is submitted, but in order for the absence to be fully approved, documentation must soon follow. Students should also communicate with their instructor as soon as possible, providing them with the necessary information so they may determine a course of action. Please note that failure to notify the Provost's Office of a medical absence in a timely manner may result in your excused absence request being denied.

What documentation is required and how is it processed? To qualify for a Medically Excused Absence, students will be asked to submit documentation from their healthcare provider with information about the necessity of their absence, relevant hospitalization or treatment dates, and their expected recovery timeline and restrictions, if applicable. This documentation will be submitted to the Provost's Office (not directly to faculty) to make the process of requesting a medical absence less burdensome on the individual and to reduce sharing of sensitive information. The Provost's Office will review the documentation, checking for legitimacy and gathering information to process the request. In some cases, this review may include the assistance of Accessibility Services in order to determine equitable accommodations. All personal health information will be kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know for academic purposes, in accordance with University policy and applicable privacy laws. Please note that failure to provide documentation from a licensed medical provider with the required information may result in your Medically Excused Absence request being denied.

What happens if my absence takes me away from class for an extended period? A Medically Excused Absence does not override the criteria for an "I" (Incomplete) grade, as outlined in the [Academic Policy](#) section of the [Academic Catalog](#). If a student has not completed the majority of the semester's work by the end of the term, they may not qualify for an Incomplete. In such cases, students should refer to the [Withdrawal Policy](#) in the [Academic Catalog](#), consult their advisor, and

contact the Financial Aid Office. A [Late Withdrawal](#) may be an option in some circumstances. Open communication between the instructor and student is recommended in order to determine the best course of action.

Military Obligations, Civic Duties, or Emergency/Death in the Family

Students with required military service obligations, civic duties such as court subpoenas, jury duty, or other mandatory legal proceedings, or who are experiencing an emergency or death in the family may request a Provost Excused Absence in writing via email to provost@lssu.edu. The duration of the excused absence may vary based upon circumstances. The Provost's Office will notify instructors. Students should then contact instructors to make arrangements for missed work within 48 hours of notifying the Provost's Office.

All Other Absence Requests

The Director of Athletics, Academic Deans, or the Coordinator of Student Life should submit requests for such notices to the Provost's Office seven business days prior to the start of the requested absence so that students can notify their instructors five days before departure. The request must use the excused absence template provided by the Provost's Office, which includes the name of the activity, the date(s)/times of class absence, the name of the supervising instructor or staff, and the names of all participating students.

It is the policy of Lake Superior State University to allow representatives of recognized student organizations and student government groups to engage in off-campus travel. Travel is permitted in order to fulfill the purpose of the organization or in service of the University. A Provost Excused Absence is only one step in the approval process. When traveling off-campus with the approval and authorization of the University, members of student organizations must comply with LSSU's Student Code of Conduct, policies outlined in the Registered Student Organization Handbook, all other University policies, and federal, state, and local laws.

Students traveling off-campus on behalf of their student organization without authorization, and not on behalf of the University and/or not for University-sanctioned events, shall not be considered to be traveling under the auspices of, or with the approval or authorization of, the University and are ineligible for a Provost Excused Absence.