MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Attendance Policy
Disability Resource Center

The Disability Resource Center does not determine class attendance policies. Since attendance may or may not be fundamental to course objectives, attendance policies are set by faculty. Attendance may be essential to the learning process; for example, students may be required to interact with other students or participate in group projects. In other cases, faculty may determine that students can still master the material despite some or many absences. Attendance requirements should be clearly stated on course syllabi, so students with chronic medical conditions can make appropriate choices.

Similarly, faculty also determines policies on makeup work and missed quizzes or exams.

In a legal decision by The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) in 1996, attendance policies and classroom participation were addressed. ***OCR noted that it accords significant deference to a college's determination that attendance is essential in a particular course.*** Several factors were presented that OCR would consider in a given challenge to determine that attendance is essential:

- Is there classroom interaction between instructor and students and among students?
- Do student contributions constitute a significant component of learning?
- Does the fundamental nature of the course rely upon student participation as essential to the learning method?
- To what degree does a student's failure to attend constitute a significant loss to the educational experience?
- Is there a course syllabus and description?
- Does the syllabus contain the classroom policies and practices regarding attendance?
- What is the method by which the final grade is calculated?

The DRC will provide students whose disability may adversely affect attendance with an accommodation form requesting flexibility in attendance. The purpose of this form is not to excuse the student, but to verify the legitimacy of the absences.