

CLASS ABSENCE GUIDELINES

Background

Colgate's class attendance policy is described in the University Catalogue:

Students who have enrolled at Colgate have made a commitment to participate in the educational program of the institution. Attendance at all classes is expected and is an important part of one's academic development. Since most faculty at Colgate put a premium on student participation in class, absence is likely to be detrimental to the student's learning in any course.

Attendance practices for each course will be announced by the faculty member at the beginning of each term. Conflicts between curricular and co-curricular activities should be avoided by careful planning and scheduling of activities. *The rare but unavoidable conflict should be worked out well in advance by the student with the faculty member's permission.*

In a similar vein, the Intercollegiate Athletics Philosophy in the Student Athlete Handbook states:

The educational purposes of the university and the welfare and commitment of the student-athletes to formal education are paramount considerations within each [athletic] program and are not compromised in the pursuit of competitive excellence. Coaches understand and support the fact that academic achievement is the priority for every Colgate student-athlete.

Athletic activities (including workouts, practices, meetings, competitive schedules and travel) are arranged with these principles in mind. Athletic team workouts, meetings and practices should not conflict with the daily class schedule and every attempt should be made to schedule games and travel in ways that minimize conflicts with classes.

It is the student-athlete's responsibility to discuss with his or her coach and professors conflicts that arise between travel for games and classes. Some faculty may treat an absence due to a game as an excused absence and simply arrange for the student to make up any missed work. Other faculty may not necessarily excuse such absences; if a student makes a choice to miss class to travel to a game then the absence may affect the evaluation of a student's work for a course.

In the end, it is the student's responsibility to decide how to manage any scheduling conflicts.

Procedures

It is extremely important that student-athletes communicate with their coaches and professors, at the start of each semester, about potential conflicts between athletics and academics. Since some

instructors wish to communicate solely with students, while others prefer to communicate with coaches, the recommended steps for communicating about potential conflicts are as follows:

1. Guidance by the Coach:

- A. As early as possible in the practice season, student-athletes should be given the schedule of athletic contests and estimated departure times.
- B. Student-athletes should identify any conflicts between academic and athletic contests.
- C. In a team meeting early in the practice season, coaches should instruct student-athletes that it is each student's responsibility to meet as soon as possible with their course instructors to discuss class attendance and the instructors' class absence policies.
- D. Student-athletes should be encouraged to make an appointment with each course instructor to discuss potential conflicts rather than just handing the instructor a list of the games and proposed travel schedule.

2. Discussion with the Course Instructor:

- A. Student-athletes should discuss with each course instructor the implication of class absences arising from games and travel for covering class material and meeting course requirements. At this time the student can seek clarification regarding the instructor's policies about class attendance and excused absences. The student should also check whether there will be any special out-of-class speakers or academic events that might require missing athletic activities.
- B. The student should also ask whether the instructor would like to receive a letter or phone call from the coach concerning the athletic schedule and possible permission for a student to miss a class. This will give the course instructor the opportunity to express his or her preferences about contact with the student and/or coach concerning class absences.
- C. The student should also alert the instructor that the arrangements for possible post-season competition are determined late in the season by non-Colgate officials.

3. Follow-up with the Coach:

- A. The student-athlete should let his or her coach know the outcome of the conversation with the academic faculty. The coach can then respond appropriately.