

University of Nebraska at Kearney

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Academic Affairs Committee Minutes

Faculty Senate

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3-17-2022

### March 2022 Academic Affairs Minutes

University of Nebraska at Kearney Academic Affairs Committee

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**Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee  
Minutes from Meeting  
Thursday, March 17, 2022  
Meeting held via Zoom**

**Present:** Debbie Bridges (CBT), Steve Hall (CBT), Ted Rupnow (CAS), Julie Shaffer (CAS), Bailey Koch (COE), Kate Heelan (COE), Lindsay Brownfield (LIB), Anthony Donofrio (FS), Joel Cardenas (AA), Lisa Neal (REG), Mark Ellis (AA), Jackson Miller (Student Senate)

**Absent:** Aidan Weidner (SS)

**Guests:** Ralph Hanson (COMM); Scott Darveau (CHEM); Krista Forrest (PSY); Derek Boeckner (FS President)

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Bridges called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

Bridges welcomed Committee members to the meeting and introduced the guests.

Bridges requested a motion to approve the agenda. Shaffer (Donofrio) moved to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Bridges updated the Committee on the proposed changes to the Attendance Policy submitted at the January meeting. Requested feedback has been received from College Ed Policy / Academic Affairs Committees; feedback was also received via email directly to FSAA Chair and individual Committee members (comments are included at the end of the agenda). Bridges also informed the Committee that Faculty Senate President Boeckner emailed to inform the Committee that *“At the March 3rd, 2022 Faculty Senate meeting, the Faculty Senate passed a motion to recommend to the FSAA committee that they reject the new wording in the attendance policy and that the committee looks instead to the UNL attendance policy for guidance.”* After requesting additional clarification and conversation, FS President Boeckner indicated that Faculty Senate acknowledges that the catalog language was changed inadvertently and reverting to original language is desired, that there is limited faculty support for the revised language and no support for upholding the inadvertent change to the language. In addition, if the FSAA Committee determines support for revising the policy, that revision might be best accomplished through the formation of an ad-hoc Faculty Senate committee.

Bridges noted that the lack of faculty support for the revised language was evident in the feedback provided to the FSAA Committee. Bridges inquired if it was possible to have the catalog language returned to its original state. The drafting and approval of revised language could then be undertaken following established process. Given the larger campus representation on Faculty Senate, Bridges encouraged the Committee to allow Faculty Senate’s taking the lead on revising the language. Bridges also noted that the entire issue could have been avoided had appropriate process been followed by the FS Athletic Committee.

Koch (Shaffer) moved to reject the attendance policy as written in the proposed language change. Motion carried.

Shaffer (Brownfield) moved that attendance policy catalog language reverts back to previous year’s catalog language; however, changes for gender identification will remain. Motion carried.

Donofrio (Heelan) moved to turn the revision of the attendance policy over to Faculty Senate with the knowledge that it will come back to this committee for approval/rejection later. Motion carried.

Bridges asked Committee to consider the information item regarding the restructuring of the LOPER 1: First Year Seminar by General Studies Council. Typically, any actions taken by the FSAA Committee are not effective until the meeting minutes are accepted by Faculty Senate; however, the understanding is

that Faculty Senate is willing to carry out a special vote to endorse this change in General Studies if the Committee agrees. Given the time it will take for the Registrar's Office to make the change in myBlue, Bridges encouraged the Committee to give its early approval for this proposed change to the First Year Seminar.

Donofrio (Brownfield) moved to allow Faculty Senate to act on minutes before they are presented at the April Faculty Senate meeting. Motion carried.

Brownfield (Rupnow) moved to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Discussion moved to agenda items #161 - #205. The subcommittee met last week and did not see any major issues. Bridges informed the Committee that agenda items #195 (MATH 300) and #196 (MATH 390) were approved for Experiential Learning by Beth Hinga's committee in March and that the Math Department granted approval to change the course type from "Professional Skills Development" to "Independent Study". Syllabi for items #191 - #194 have been updated to reflect prerequisites. Jenny Jansky stated the COE endorsement, in checking Rule 24, was okay. The updated syllabus for PSY 250 has been received and will be uploaded into the system.

Discussion moved to agenda item #167 (Communication Disorders Comprehensive). Forrest clarified the language and stated that PSY 250 is not "being made dormant." Bridges noted that the language in the rationale will need to be changed in the system. Neal will contact the Department about the language and make necessary changes.

Shaffer asked for clarification on agenda item #199, #200, #201, and #202 regarding minimum grade requirement of "C grade or higher" and asked if there is a plan for students who don't receive a C. Forrest clarified that the Department would suggest students change their major if unable to make the grade.

Neal asked for clarification on agenda item #177 (Early Childhood Inclusive Teaching Field Endorsement). Language needs to be adjusted to "TE 312 and 313 will no longer..." instead of "MATH 312 and 313." This was an editorial oversight and Department has given approval to make changes to the language used in the rationale.

Shaffer (Heelan) moved to approve agenda items #161 - #205 with the understanding that the language in the rationales be adjusted for item #167 and #177. Motion carried.

Bridges reminded the Committee that, as always, quick turnaround on approving the minutes is needed to meet Faculty Senate's submission deadline for the April packet – so please watch email and act on the minutes as soon as possible.

Heelan (Brownfield) moved to adjourn at 4:02 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Bailey Koch (scribe)

Approved via email, March 21, 2022

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**2021-2022 ACADEMIC AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

Academic Affairs Subcommittee 3/9/2022

Academic Affairs Full Committee 3/17/2022

NUMBER, REQUEST, LEVEL, SPECIFIC REQUEST, DEGREE/COURSE, PROGRAM/COURSE,  
TITLE, DEPT, COL, REASON

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**Informational – 2022-2023 Catalog Changes**

The undergraduate, graduate, and emeritus faculty listings will no longer appear in the catalog, effective 2022-23. Neither faculty lists nor emeritus faculty is complete before the catalog deadline resulting in incorrect and incomplete data. Each department has a faculty listing page with contact information. The faculty information that currently resides in the catalog is available department level. Except for "Research and Teaching Interests," all the information is also available in Digital Measures.

Additionally, we have the Digital Measures software that stores and tracks promotion and tenure information by academic year should we need the information for any reason.

Also, I've reviewed our sister and peer institutions and found none listed the faculty emeritus information in the catalog. SVCASA Bicak is supportive of the proposal to remove the faculty list and emeritus faculty from the catalog. However, we must maintain a list of emeritus faculty, and SVCASA Bicak agreed the UNK factbook award page would be appropriate.

It is best to update this information as needed on the website rather than within the catalog publication dates.

Sister and Peer Institution Emeritus Faculty

- **College and/or Departmental Webpages**
  - University of Nebraska Lincoln
  - University of Nebraska Omaha
  - University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
  - Western Illinois University
  - University of Northern Colorado
  - Murray State University
  - University of Central Arkansas
- **Emeritus Dedicated Webpage**
  - University of Northern Iowa: <https://emeritus.uni.edu/member-list?page=9>
  - University of Central Missouri: <https://www.ucmo.edu/offices/ucm-emeriti-association/members/>
  - University of Northern Michigan: <https://nmu.edu/emeritusfaculty>
- **Faculty Distinctions Webpage**
  - Sam Houston State University: <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/distinctions.html>
- **Emeritus Not Found**
  - Minnesota State University Moorhead

**Informational – General Studies**

The General Studies Council voted to restructure the LOPER 1 First-Year Seminar experience. The council approved the creation of a generic subject code, "LOPR" allowing the creation of a LOPR-126 course. The LOPER-126 course is a three-credit-hour rather than three separate one-credit-hour courses. First-Year Seminar course topics approved by the GSC over the past year may be offered as LOPR-126.

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Courses approved by Beth Hinga to satisfy EXL requirement:

CDIS 311 October 2020  
ENG 361B January 2022  
ENG 436 January 2022  
MATH 300 March 2022  
MATH 390 March 2022

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#161, Create, Minor, Nebraska Studies, HIST, CASC, A minor in Nebraska Studies will provide a unique opportunity for UNK students to study the state of Nebraska and its history from interdisciplinary perspectives. Students in the minor will gain a deeper understanding of Nebraska's origins as a federal territory, its statehood and political institutions, and the history of its diverse communities. Courses will address Nebraska's history, literature, and writing in local, regional, and international contexts, fostering consideration of the state's connections to peoples and places outside its boundaries. This coursework will promote interdisciplinary collaboration in the study of topics and issues related to Nebraska across the College of Arts and Sciences. A minor in Nebraska Studies should also be of interest to students pursuing a wide range of careers, including in teaching, museums and public history, recreation, and tourism and business development in the state.

#162, Create, Program, Media Communication Comprehensive, B.S., JMC, CASC, Media Communication Comprehensive, BS, 62 hours. This comprehensive major in media communication replaces the standard journalism major and prepares students to go to work in a wide range of print, broadcast and online media. In addition to courses from within the department, students will also complete a 12-hour support track constructed in consultation with the student's adviser and the department head. Twelve hours of study abroad is an option for completing the support track. It will replace our previous Journalism-BS and Journalism-BA majors.

#163, Create, Program, Multimedia Communication Comprehensive, B.S., JMC, CASC, Multimedia Communication Comprehensive, BS, 62 hours. Multimedia Communication is a cross-disciplinary major offered by the Departments of Communication, Art, and Cyber Systems. The major includes 27 required hours in Journalism classes, 15 hours in Art, and 12 hours in Cyber Systems. Students will also take 8 hours of electives from across the three departments, for a total of 62 hours. This is a major where we have long struggled to get all the necessary classes into the major, and it's something we are still struggling with, even given the greater room in the comprehensive major. Given that they are already taking classes from three separate departments in their major, there will not be a separate support track. This will replace the old Multimedia majors.

#164, Create, Program, Sports Communication Comprehensive, B.S., JMC, CASC, Sports Communication Comprehensive, BS, 61 hours. The Sports Communication major was revived during the previous curriculum revision, and it is growing in popularity. We have been working on the updated major in consultation with the Sports Management program and hope that this greater partnership between our two programs will give a stronger education to our students. Under the new comprehensive major students will take a total of 46 hours from the Department of Communication and 15 hours from the Sports Management program for a total of 61 credits. They will not have a separate support track. This will replace the existing Sports Communication BA and BS degrees.

#165, Create, Program, Strategic Communication Comprehensive, B.S., JMC, CASC, Strategic Communication Comprehensive, BS, 62 hours. This major updates and replaces the Advertising and Public Relations major and prepares students to go to work in a range of persuasive communication fields. When we first merged the advertising and public relations majors several years ago, faculty were wanting to take small steps toward matching the convergence taking place in the advertising, public relations and integrated marketing communication fields. Now that it is clear that is the direction the industry is headed we are prepared to go more completely into this merger. In addition, the courses within the department, students will also complete a 12-hour support track.

#166, Alter, Course, Experiential Learning Status, Prerequisites, CDIS 311, Clinical Methods and Procedures in Communication Disorders, CDIS, COE, This course will be the have an experiential

learning component for the CDIS department; Change to Experiential Learning Status, Old Value: No, New Value: Yes; Change to co-requisites, Old Value: CDIS 312 and TE 319, New Value: TE 319.

#167, Alter, Program, Communication Disorders Comprehensive, B.S.Ed., CDIS, COE, • Replaced PSY 250 with STAT 235 in LOPER 4. PSY 250 is no longer a general studies course.

#168, Alter, Course, Course Type, CHEM 148, Introductory Chemistry for the Health Sciences, CHEM, CASC, An introductory chemistry course for students in the health sciences will allow for better preparation of for students in pre-nursing, pre-radiography, etc.; Change course type, Old Value: Lecture, New Value: Lecture, Laboratory.

#169, Inactivate, Course, CHEM 148L, Introductory Chemistry for the Health Sciences Lab, CHEM, CASC, CHEM 148 class was resubmitted as a lecture/lab.

#170, Inactivate, Course, CJUS 388, Capstone, CJUS, CASC, Course no longer offered.

#171, Inactivate, Course, CJUS 388L, GS Capstone Lab, CJUS, CASC, Course no longer available.

#172, Inactivate, Course, CJUS 415, Correctional Casework, CJUS, CASC, Course no longer being offered.

#173, Inactivate, Course, CJUS 431, Correctional Law and Administration, CJUS, CASC, Course no longer being offered.

#174, Inactivate, Course, CJUS 476, Terrorism and Crisis Negotiations, CJUS, CASC, Course no longer being offered.

#175, Alter, Program, Supplemental Endorsement in Interscholastic Coaching (7-12), PEREC, COE, Options added for students interested in coaching strength and conditioning.

#176, Alter, Minor, Coaching, PEREC, COE, Adding track for strength and conditioning coaches.

#177, Alter, Program, Early Childhood Inclusive Teaching Field Endorsement, B.A.Ed., TE, COE, Rectify a LOPER general studies requirement option (add HIST 251 back in the choice list); Added GEOG 201, Physical Science to LOPER 8; same as PHYS 201; Reduce/eliminate 1 and 2 credit hour courses which addressed Nebraska Department of Education's Rule 24 requirements for certification but did not give sufficient coverage for students to fully master the content (as measured by past PRAXIS Subject exam scores, interviews of graduates, and general student, performance in senior level courses); 1 and 2 credit hour courses have been either expanded to 3 credit hours (TE 341, 342, 356, 349) or content has been moved to another course (TE 338) or is redundant with other course content (TE 335/335L overlaps with TE 411); Add field components to TE 339 (TE 339L) and TE 336 (TE 336L), and an introductory level observation and assessment course (TE 337) which will better prepare graduates to demonstrate competencies required for Rule 24/PRAXIS Subject exam, and student performance in senior level courses. Drop FAMS 302 since TE 349 is now 3 credits and can address Rule 24 content and add FAMS 251 to provide stronger content in child development which is needed for the PRAXIS Subject exam; Improve the appeal of course transfers from community colleges (3 credit hours transferring to a 1 or 2 credit course is not as appealing as a 3 credit hour transferring to 3 credits), which should help us draw in more of these transfer students to the ECI program; Drop the "specialization" option in the program major so all students take the same courses. The ECI teaching endorsement, regardless of specialization" prepares graduate to meet Rule 24 requirements for teaching ages 0-8, and the specialization has caused confusion for graduates, school districts, and UNK advisors. All of the critical content for the ECI endorsement from both "specializations" will be absorbed into one set of requirements for the major. TE 312 and 313 will no longer be required since TE 311/313 is meeting students' needs for Rule 24 content. MATH 330, which is required for the Age 3 to Grade 3 Specialization is no longer necessary; Math 230 is sufficient for Rule 24.

#178, Create, Course, ENG 316A, Reading Nebraska, ENG, CASC, Course offers in-depth study of literary representations of Nebraska to connect students with the acclaimed literary tradition about the state and with Nebraskan writers who have influenced American literary history. Most 300-level ENG courses focus on literary period and genres. This new course would complement 300-level ENG courses in multicultural American literature, women writers, and the American west. The course is open to all students across the university (who have fulfilled the pre-requisite of ENG 102) who have an interest in local and regional cultural studies. The course is geared to majors and minors in the English program; students who study history, geography, political science, ethnic studies, and women studies; and students interested in the new Nebraska Studies minor.

#179, Create, Course, ENG 361B, Nebraska Life Writing, ENG, CASC, The English department will soon have two experiential learning courses, one for creative writers and another for critical writers in English. In the proposed course, which builds on English 102: Special Topics in Academic Writing and Research and satisfies the new experiential learning graduation requirement, English students with a writing emphasis can prepare for career opportunities with nonprofit organizations or in professional writing. It will also satisfy a need for students interested in life writing and other genres of nonfiction writing, including the environmental humanities. As well, this course is appropriate and open to students from other departments who are interested in the arts or social sciences because the focus of this course involves practicing and developing field and archival research methods that may serve community engagement outcomes. Additionally, it focuses on diverse Nebraska stories, so it offers an opportunity for all students to consider what it means to live and study in this place. The focus on official memory and writers of the past makes it appropriate for students in History. Because the course offers an opportunity to study and gather the stories of people coming to Nebraska as immigrants or refugees, students in the departments of Social Work, Sociology, or Women's, Gender and Ethnic Studies may find the course relevant and engaging. Students will organize panel presentations as a culminating event in the course, so it would be ideal to have an interdisciplinary group of learners.

#180, Create, Course, ENG 436, Critical Writing Professionalism, ENG, CASC, This course will offer English majors or minors in a field pertaining to critical writing an opportunity to satisfy the Experiential Learning requirement by working towards presenting their critical writing in wider venues. Recently, English 435: Creative Writing Professionalism was approved to serve our advanced creative writing students; no course currently exists for our majors and minors in areas focused on critical writing and scholarship. In a typical semester, where the focus is producing new work based on the course content, it is challenging to devote extensive time to the revision process necessary for submitting work to larger scholarly forums. Even the best critical writing requires some revision that considers the particular scope of a given journal. Students seeking to present a conference paper will get to practice the concision and precision required for a 300-word proposal. A course focused on preparing work for publication and presentation not only aligns with UNK's mission to support undergraduate research, but also harnesses the growing opportunities for undergraduates to participate in forums that were once available exclusively to graduate students and professionals. Students who are or will be completing SSRP or URF projects may also be seeking guidance for submitting their work to forums beyond UNK. For students applying to graduate school (whether in English or another field), a peer-reviewed publication or conference presentation at the regional or national level will distinguish their C. V.s. In addition, this course will equip students with the skills and networks to engage in scholarly and professional communities after their time at UNK concludes.

#181, Alter, Minor, English Minor in Creative Writing, ENG, CASC, We are revising our minors to make them more consistent (21 credit hours each) and to make them easier to complete in a timely fashion; We have also added courses relevant to this minor.

#182, Alter, Minor, English (Elementary Education), ENG, CASC, We are updating our minors to make that consistent (21 credit hours each) and to make them easier to complete in a timely fashion.

#183, Alter, Program, English, B.A., ENG, CASC, We have added new classes and need to include them in this program.

#184, Alter, Minor, English, ENG, CASC, We are also changing all of our minors to make them consistent with each other (21 hours each) and easier to complete in a timely fashion.

#185, Alter, Minor, English – Popular Culture, ENG, CASC, The department is updating our minors to make them more consistent (21 credit hours) and to make them easier to complete in a timely fashion. We also found more classes that are relevant to this minor.

#186, Alter, Program, English – Writing Emphasis, B.A., ENG, CASC, We added new classes that are relevant to this program.

#187, Alter, Minor, Early Childhood Education, TE, COE, Courses in the Early Childhood Inclusive Major have changed so the courses in the ECE Minor are being adjusted to reflect those catalog changes.

#188, Alter, Program, Supplemental Endorsement in English As a Second Language, MODL, COE, Updated to include more preschool ESL content as per Rule 24 Teacher Certification requirements. TE 336 provides preschool content but not ESL. TE 342 provides both.

#189, Alter, Program, Health Education 7-12 Teaching Subject Endorsement, B.A.Ed., Add PE 301 to enhance student learning; This change was overlooked last time changes were made.

#190, Alter, Program, Health and Physical Education PK-12 Teaching Field Endorsement, B.A.Ed., PEREC, COE, PE 301 was not added the last program change which was an oversight.

#191, Alter, Course, Prerequisites, JMC 302, Digital Storytelling, JMC, CASC, Update pre-requisites to match new Department curriculum. Syllabus is unchanged; Change prerequisites, Old Value: JMC 112 and JMC 215 and JMC 300, New Value: JMC 112 and JMC 300 and JMC 215 or JMC 218 or JMC 219.

#192, Alter, Course, Prerequisites, JMC 343, Video at Antelope, JMC, CASC, This is just an updating of the prerequisites to match the new Department of Communication curriculum; Change prerequisites, Old Value: JMC 250, New Value: JMC 250 or JMC 265.

#193, Alter, Course, Prerequisites, JMC 350, News at Antelope, JMC, CASC, This is just an updating of prerequisites to match changes to the Department of Communication Curriculum. The syllabus is unchanged; Change prerequisites, Old Value: JMC 302 or JMC 318 or permission of instructor, New Value: JMC 302 or JMC 218 or JMC 219 or permission of instructor.

#194, Alter, Course, Prerequisites, JMC 353, Sports at Antelope, JMC, CASC, Updating of prereqs to match the new Department of Communication curriculum. There are no changes to the syllabus; Change prerequisites, Old Value: JMC 302 or JMC 319, New Value: JMC 219 or JMC 302.

#195, Create, Course, MATH 300, Tutoring in Mathematics, MATH, CASC, This course will provide one option for students to meet the EL requirement and earn academic credit for their experiences tutoring mathematics in the Learning Commons.

#196, Create, Course, MATH 390, Research Experience in Mathematics, MATH, CASC, This course will provide one option for students to meet the EL requirement and earn academic credit for their experiences with mathematics research.

#197, Alter, Program, Communication Studies Comprehensive, B.S., This is to implement our curriculum revision that the Department of Communication has been working on for the last two-and-a-half years. The renaming of this major recognizes that we have expanded it so that all students in the program will be study organizational communication, rhetoric, and a range of applied topics in communication. We have hired two new faculty in recent years who have allowed us to expand our offerings in interesting new directions. We are also working to include a limited number of Journalism classes within the program that could serve the needs of Communication Studies majors. In addition to courses from within the department, students will also complete a 12-hour support track constructed in consultation with the



student's adviser and the department head. Twelve hours of study abroad is an option for completing the support track.

#198, Alter, Course, General Studies Status, PSY 250, Behavioral Statistics, PSY, CASC, We wish to remove this course from General Studies; Change General Studies status, Old Value: Yes, New Value: No.

#199, Alter, Program, Psychobiology Comprehensive, B.S., PSY, CASC, To add minimum grade requirement for courses counting for the major and specify the number of classes students must take in the UNK psychology department to complete their degree here.

#200, Alter, Program, Psychology, B.A., PSY, CASC, To add minimum grade requirement for courses counting for the major and specify that 50% of the classes in the UNK Psychology major must be taken at UNK.

#201, Alter, Program, Psychology, B.S., PSY, CASC, To edit BS Science requirements, add minimum grade requirement for courses counting for the major, and indicate that at least 50% of their courses in the Psychology major must be completed at UNK.

#202, Alter, Program, Psychology Comprehensive, B.S., PSY, CASC, To edit BS Science requirements, add minimum grade requirement for courses counting for the major, add minimum grade for the entire major and clarify the number of classes required from the UNK Psychology department to earn the degree.

#203, Inactivate, Course, THEA 222, Oral Interpretation of Literature, MUS, CASC, This course is left over from a degree that I don't think exists anymore. It has not been taught in over 20 years.

#204, Create, Course, THEA 335, Scenic Painting, MUS, CASC, This course been taught several times as a special topics course and we would like to have it as an elective.

#205, Inactivate, Course, THEA 430, Modern Dramatic Theory, MUS, CASC, Course not taught in over 20 years.

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## College Ed Policy / Academic Affairs Committees' Feedback on Attendance Policy Language

### COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

#### FEEDBACK ON ATTENDANCE POLICY AS CURRENTLY PROPOSED

The members of the CAS Educational Policy Committee met on Thursday, February 10, 2022 for our February meeting. In this meeting, we discussed the changes to the Attendance Policy proposed by Faculty Senate Athletic Committee (and subsequently not approved by Faculty Senate or any college committee). For reference, here is the proposed policy italicized (bold are proposed changes to current policy):

*Students are expected to attend all meetings of classes for which they are registered, including the first and last scheduled meetings and the final examination period. Instructors hold the right and responsibility to establish attendance policies for their courses. Each instructor must inform all classes at the beginning of each semester concerning his/her attendance policies.*

*Participation in official University activities, serious health concerns, personal emergencies, and religious observances are valid reasons for absence from classes. Students are responsible for informing their instructors **prior to their absences(s)** about their absence from class and for completing assignments **missed** during their absence(s). No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student with a documented, excused absence. **Those with documented and excused absence(s) must be permitted***

***the opportunity to earn equivalent credit associated with the date(s) of each identified absence(s).***

*Questions may be directed to the Dean of Student Affairs office or to Student Health & Counseling.*

We STRONGLY OPPOSE the language of this proposed policy change. This has been a longstanding issue and the committee believes it is critical that we take the time to get this right rather than rush a policy through for purposes of expediency. While we appreciate the need to protect students, the members of the CAS Educational Policy Committee feel the power to set attendance policy should be with the faculty member who best knows what is required in the course being taught. If a policy change is necessary, we recommend including language like that in the UNL policy (see below), adapted to include other kinds of excused absences, instead of what is bolded above to maintain academic freedom and better reflect what most faculty do anyway: work with the students individually to plan how work will be made up.

UNL's Student Absence Policy:

### **Student Absence Policy**

University sponsored activities, including intercollegiate athletics, may cause a student to need to be excused from a class, lab, or studio obligation. In all such instances, it is the student's responsibility to request permission for the absence (preferably in writing) from the instructor and to discuss how the absence would affect her/his ability to meet the course requirements. A student should do this as soon in the semester as possible. While instructors should seek to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with course requirements, to make reasonable accommodation for a student involved in University sponsored activities, a student should recognize that **not every course can accommodate excused absences, and neither absence nor notification of an absence, relieves them from meeting the course requirements.**

[https://studentaffairs.unl.edu/sa\\_policies\\_absences.shtml](https://studentaffairs.unl.edu/sa_policies_absences.shtml)

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To: Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee  
From: CBT Academic Affairs Committee  
Date: March 4, 2022  
Subject: Feedback on Attendance Policy as Currently Proposed

The members of the CBT Academic Affairs Committee met on Monday, February 7 for our regular monthly meeting. At this meeting, we discussed the proposed changes to the Attendance Policy:

*Students are expected to attend all meetings of classes for which they are registered, including the first and last scheduled meetings and the final examination period. Instructors hold the right and responsibility to establish attendance policies for their courses. Each instructor must inform all classes at the beginning of each semester concerning his/her attendance policies.*

*Participation in official University activities, serious health concerns, personal emergencies, and religious observances are valid reasons for absence from classes. Students are responsible for informing their instructors **prior to their absences(s)** about their absence from class and for completing assignments missed during their absence(s). No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student with a documented, excused absence. **Those with documented and excused absence(s) must be permitted the opportunity to earn equivalent credit associated with the date(s) of each identified absence(s).***

*Questions may be directed to the Dean of Student Affairs office or to Student Health & Counseling.*

Committee members were also tasked with taking the proposal back to their individual departments to seek feedback; the Committee also communicated the request for feedback through email to the entire college. Feedback from the College and Committee is summarized below.

General agreement expressed for addition of language "**prior to their absences(s).**"

Some concern expressed over what constitutes an "excused absence" and the definition of "documented, excused absence."

I noticed that "documented" was already in this statement. Does this word allow leeway in how the instructor would define documentation? Some instructors require simply an email and take the student's word. Other instructors may require doctor's notes or official emails from coaches, etc. This may also depend on one's history with a particular student, as well.

Definition of "an excused absence" appears to be "... official University activities, serious health concerns, personal emergencies, and religious observances.." but there is no mention of how long or often a student can be absent before it affects the integrity of the learning experience.

Question of who defines or determines if the event is official? (referring to "official University activities").

Serious concerns raised over language: *No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student with a documented, excused absence. **Those with documented and excused absence(s) must be permitted the opportunity to earn equivalent credit associated with the date(s) of each identified absence(s).***

There are some activities within the classroom that cannot be replicated on an individual student basis outside of class (e.g., replicating a live speech; replicating class discussion when the process of discussion is part of the intent of the assignment).

The concern that some class projects can not be made up especially experiential activities requiring specific tools and locations.

No room for the understanding that some things cannot be made up. If you miss there could be consequences.

Other comments / suggestions received:

These revisions appear to essentially negate the instructor's ability to enforce a course policy for attendance.

An instructor needs to be able to decide the line between another excused absence and the need for an incomplete.

The changes are an improvement. But, our policy is still inferior to UNL's in my opinion (see [https://studentaffairs.unl.edu/sa\\_policies\\_absences.shtml](https://studentaffairs.unl.edu/sa_policies_absences.shtml)). Our policy reduces faculty input regarding whether or not a student is likely to be able to successfully complete the course with the absences and whether or not reasonable accommodations can be made without compromising the course quality. This could be especially problematic in courses where classwork is done in groups, especially if the course is blended and the absences occur on the face-to-face days. There is nothing specified in the UNK policy about how qualifying events are determined, which our policy did previously specify. UNL's policy puts academics first by requiring the student to meet with the faculty member early in the semester to set expectations in advance. They also have an appeals policy that is in place so that if a student believes a faculty member is being unreasonable the student can appeal the decision. Our process does not seem to even acknowledge that academics might be more important than an extracurricular event.

The current policy is based on the assumption that it is the faculty member's responsibility to make sure that the student does not suffer any adverse consequences. But, that is often not possible because there are tradeoffs. If a professor has a class requirement that can't be made up it is also possible that it would be in the student's best interest to miss the extra-curricular activity instead of the class. That should at least be an option to be discussed.

Default Report

**COE Feedback - UNK Attendance Policy**

February 28th 2022, 10:29 am MST

**NOTE: feedback included respondent names; these have been removed to maintain anonymity of respondents.**

**Q2 - What are the pros of the proposed UNK Attendance Policy?**

Faculty need to be flexible when a student has a documented and legitimate reason for missing class. Student should have to opportunity to make up material, assignments etc.

students are able to stay current with course content and activities

The proposed policy endeavors to make sure that a student's grades are not negatively impacted by an excused absence

Holds students accountable while recognizing that there are times that one must miss class

This policy needs to include a virtual/zoom option, which would be a major pro for individuals who are working hard to complete their work but unique, but routinely ignored home situations

Clear and to the point

clarity

I think it's good to hold students accountable for attendance.

Emphasis that assignments be made up in advance for known/planned absences.

It provides specific examples and clarity.

It supports students

None

Holding students accountable for missing classes due to absences. This is what professional employers will expect when they are out of college in the workforce. Learning how to communicate the importance of being absent and communicating with the instructor on making up missed work.

Clearly defines what is expected of students and faculty

Everyone would have the same policy

It provides flexibility for faculty members to establish certain aspects of the attendance policy on their own. It places responsibility on students in certain aspects.

It permits the students to acquired missed content and score points for "Excused Absences" and keeps faculty from punishing students for missing due to an "Excused Absence."

**Q3 - What are the cons of the proposed UNK Attendance Policy?**

Students abuse the policy. They don't notify the professor, especially in case of illness. What proof can you ask them to provide doesn't violate HIPPA. Example student is ill then, their child is ill, then their child is ill again, then they are ill.... all notification is 20 minutes or less before a class starts. You advise them to seek accommodations and about the 5-6 time this happens the student is asked for proof they won't because it violates privacy and that of a minor child. So a professor is then incumbent to provide equal opportunity. That equal opportunity is the time spent creating an additional assignment and grading no small task given everything else that a professor has to do. The student only has to deal with a single class issue, the professor has to deal with many issues all different across all of their courses.

COVID has expanded the impact of illness to family, work environments, childcare. Thus, a student-scholar may not be sick but be impacted by ... sick family, sick employees, childcare issues.

There are some class activities that simply cannot be "made up" outside of the class period when and where they happen. While it is reasonable that a faculty member should make sure that a student's grade is not negatively impacted by an excused absence, a student that misses a learning activity cannot be guaranteed an equal learning experience.

N/A

Individuals who are the parent(s)/guardian(s) of individuals with exceptional needs have a unique situation that is routinely ignored by schools and businesses. These individuals have a unique responsibility that needs consideration.

Students may not always be able to notify ahead of time, but that should be the norm.

none

What are the time limits for makeup work? How long do students have to make up work missed during an absence? For example, if a student has a bereavement, do we allow one class period if they missed one class period, or do we allow a week, two weeks, etc.? Or is this at the discretion of the instructor? Some clarification or information pertaining to this within the policy would be helpful.

It adds to faculty workload, in addition, it does not account for situations where an "equivalent" experience is not possible. An example is a class-activity that requires group work.

This is just an example of trying to homogenize every class. Each class member should be able to make their own decisions regarding attendance.

Instructors need to be available by phone/text, email, whatever means of communication to receive this information from the student. Instructors need to be held accountable to be checking emails promptly to receive these notices from students.

none

Not everyone's class is the same. This cannot be a one size fits all.

An extra requirement to allow students to have an assignment that is equivalent to the one they missed can add extra work to those who already have much on their plate.

Faculty may have to find time to meet with students outside of regular class time. This is not a con as it is their job.

#### **Q4 - Do you have any other comments or concerns about the proposed UNK Attendance Policy?**

Professors do the best they can to accommodate students and meet their needs. The greatest responsibility is on the professor here and it gets exhausting. Most of us continue to do it but it takes a toll.

any policy needs to be student-centered; student-friendly; respectful of instructors.

I think the policy needs to be worded to give flexibility to faculty indicate that there are some learning experiences simply cannot be "made up". For example, a guest speaker who comes to a class may be a once in a semester (or even once in a lifetime) opportunity that cannot be made up (the same can be

said for a group discussion, or a field trip) no matter whether an assignment of equal point value is provided.

N/A

Exceptional needs families are in a unique situation. As a member of that community who attended higher learning, I was more than willing to share documentaion about my child's exceptionality, not as an excuse, but reather an explanation of a situation that I, as well as others experience in our daily lives. We should not be ignored.

In class discussions as in philosophy, political science, and similar courses cannot easily be made up.

I would add "work-related activities" to the list of valid reasons for absence.

This is very similar to what I already use.

It must leave some flexibility for faculty decision in each circumstance.

I am concerned about how we are going to identify a personal emergency and how documentation of such would be provided

No

no

I am not sure why were even having this conversation. We have the protected right to do what we want in our classes. Attendance should be the same.

Personal emergencies is vague and hard to determine. Is documentation needed for this? I suppose we tend to worry about those who will abuse the system, when in reality the majority do not and will not.

This should not be a contraversy. We should be assisting people for who miss for an "Excused Absence"!

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#### Individual Faculty comments submitted directly to FSAA Committee Chair:

Hello Debbie,

I am writing to voice my disapproval of the proposed changes to the UNK attendance policy.

1. Classroom attendance policy is the perview of the Faculty, not of extracurricular groups.
2. While some classes can accommodate multiple excused absences, others, especially courses with labs and experience-based activities, cannot.
3. I would like to see a statement, similar to UNL, that recognizes my point 2 above.
4. Perhaps our extracurricular groups should be told that "*Those with documented and excused **academic** absence(s) must be permitted the opportunity to earn equivalent credit associated with the date(s) of each identified **academic** absence(s).*" For example, if a starting football player misses a game due to a documented and excused academic absence (being a college student), maybe they can simply complete an "alternate activity" as championed by Scott Unruh. Maybe they can write a paper about the game afterward? That should be good enough, right? Or maybe missing multiple practices due to academic commitments (being a college student) can be accommodated for by having the coaches make Zoom recordings of the practices and the student-athletes can then "practice along with the team" in their dorm rooms. That should be good enough, right? Or maybe coaches should be required to hold individual, full-practice sessions for each and every student athlete who misses a practice due to an excused academic

absence. As Scott Unruh would say, "do your job!" And, of course, the student-athletes should be assured that "*no adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student with a documented, excused **academic** absence.*" Miss multiple practices? Miss a game or two? No worries.

Yes, number 4 includes some sarcasm, but I believe that the points stand.

Thank you,

Debbie, Julie, and Ted,

The policy as stated takes a very narrow definition of "excused" and uses a remedy for it in a way that restricts a faculty member's professionalism and control of their own class.

Here is one of many hypotheticals: A class has a daily quiz as a formative assessment – one that is immediately graded and answers posted. Otherwise, what would be the point? A student that has an excused absence cannot reasonably take that assessment and along with the other students has access to the answers to the assessment even before returning to class. According to the new proposed policy, the faculty member would have to create a new assessment for the missing students, and grade those. And now imagine that this faculty member has 3-4 classes each with a variety of students missing days throughout the week. You will nearly double the number of assessments the faculty member will need to create and grade.

I think a much better policy that is fair to the student and reasonably allows a faculty member to handle the workload would be as follows:

***Those with documented and excused absence(s) must be permitted, at the discretion of the faculty member, the opportunity to earn equivalent credit associated with the date(s) of each identified absence(s) or have those grades excused and not counted in their course grade.***

It is easily manageable within canvas, and within Excel, to mark an assignment as excused which then does not affect their grade. This option makes a lot of sense for assessments in which there are numerous other opportunities during the semester to earn the grades.

Of course, in the case of a major assignment, the faculty member would opt to have the student turn it in late, take an exam at another date, etc. But to force a faculty member to routinely make up small-stakes assessments is not productive.

Sincerely,

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#### **Individual Faculty comments submitted directly to FSAA Committee Member(s):**

#### **Feedback from CAS faculty in response to the CAS Educational Policy Committee statement...**

##### Faculty A:

Here's my feedback. The following statement is obviously an infringement upon academic freedom:

"Those with documented and excused absence(s) must be permitted the opportunity to earn equivalent credit associated with the date(s) of each identified absence(s)."

Pretty much any time you tell professors they "must" do something regarding the way they teach their classes you are infringing upon their academic freedom, and for every instance where you can think of it as being appropriate someone's going to be able to come up with several examples of instances in which it is not.

I see it as part of a growing tendency both from within and without academia in which people who have no idea what they are talking about are forcing those who do to comply with their ill-informed judgements on things. It's a form of bullying and it needs to stop.

Faculty B:

You should change "strongly oppose" to "absolutely oppose". The athletic coaches can always advise Athlete-Students which faculty members not to take, which is what happens at division one schools (at least it was happening at my division one school, where I ran cross country and track, 45 years ago); I have no doubt that this is how Lincoln solves their attendance problems. The STUDENT-athletes will know whether to take their advice or not.

Let's stop letting the tail wag the dog.

**Feedback from CAS faculty in response to the FSAA request for feedback...**

Faculty A (same as Faculty A listed above):

As per Ross' suggestion below, I'm expressing to my FSAA representatives my disapproval of the proposed attendance policy alteration. I think it's too confining and intrudes on academic freedom.

I can sympathize with Scott and others because I used to get complaints when I directed Nebraskats for taking the students out of class too much for touring performances, but really, he seems like he's grabbing more leeway than he already has, and last semester I had one student athlete with eleven "excused" absences. Athletics needs to rein it in a bit, it seems to me.

I don't see the point of the change. As it is, it already gives professors lots of room to support athletics without pushing beyond their limits.

Faculty C:

I think the revised attendance policy looks fine, except that the reference to instructor's attendance policy should be gender-inclusive (i.e., "their" rather than his/her).

Thanks for your work on this important committee.

Faculty D:

Hi Julie and Ted,

I'm opting to follow the directions and contact you both directly, as the CAS representatives, instead of a mass reply-all that I'm sure we all enjoy.

I think this is a great policy and a significant improvement from the current attendance policy. I specifically like that it is described as "equivalent credit" rather than just making up missed assignments, as that is not always possible depending on the nature of the assignment. Specifying that the notification must happen prior to their absence is also very appreciated. Thank you for working on updating this policy.

Faculty E:

**Tiny suggestion:** Eliminate the pronouns from "Each instructor must inform all classes at the beginning of each semester concerning his/her attendance policies." And possibly say that class attendance policies must be included in the course syllabus.

There is, of course, a gray area of "official University activities" and what constitutes documentation (a letter from a parent?) Accordingly, I might suggest strengthening the last sentence "Questions may be directed to the Dean of Student Affairs office or to Student Health & Counseling." to say something more like faculty can request that the Dean of students to verify that an absence qualifies as a valid absence. Or something like that.



Finally, although I likely understand the intent of "No adverse or prejudicial effects ...," maybe I'd look for an alternative to the word "adverse." Missing classes is always a problem--and for some classes, sometimes missing a class is not something that can be entirely made up. I think the intent is that an instructor won't retaliate by requiring an odious assignment as make up work.

Faculty F:

Julie and Ted,

Thank you for serving on FSAA and dealing with this issue. This has been an ongoing issue with academic and athletics for decades. The problem with the current policy is that it takes the flexibility of teaching away from the teacher.

In my Genetics class, I give 12 quizzes. Only 10 count towards their grade. I do this so that I do not have to do makeups. In addition, these quizzes are unannounced. The reason for the "pop quiz" is to make sure the student is keeping up with the material. Having a policy like this, stifles my ability to give unannounced work and assessments. I will have to plan for the large number of athletes and other university activities so that I don't have to schedule makeups. In addition, I will have to work around a number of schedules just to do makeups. This can become unreasonable.

The other part is that this makes dealing with laboratory sections hard to deal with if you are not allowed to have a policy in your class for students missing multiple sessions.

Lastly, I also teach Bioethics, which is a discussion based class. Discussion and participation is mandatory. When they miss class and discussion, this can't be made up. I can't recreate the discussion so they get the points.

As Julie knows, I was the person that brought up this issue. I have a long string of emails that I am more than willing to share with you.

Faculty G:

Response 1:

The concept that every student has to be able to make up every missed assignment for excused absences has a very different impact on a large class like mine than on a small class. As I said earlier, I used to give either a quiz or exam in lecture every week. I counted only a certain number of the quizzes in a student's final grade, the highest X scores. If a student was absent for any reason, that quiz was just one of those dropped. If a student was going to end up having too many drops, then I would allow the student to make up the quiz. This resulted in maybe a handful of students making up a quiz toward the end of the semester. If every student with an excused absence has to be allowed to make up missed work, I would have 15-20 make-ups a week in my fall class (enrollment this past fall was 213 students in the two sections of BIOL 225 combined). How does a faculty member confirm a student had a personal emergency or is ill? If a student has noravirus and is vomiting, for example, that student shouldn't go to a doctor just to get a note that they were seen because noravirus is so contagious. Our student health service won't diagnose a student as "too ill" to attend class, just that they were seen. Is a student who commutes supposed to go their family doctor and perhaps have a pricey co-pay to confirm illness? How do I confirm a personal emergency? If a student is sexually assaulted, do I expect them to tell me that? I treat students as responsible adults and anyone absent must have had a good reason because I can't evaluate 10-20 student absences a week as excused or not.

I have interacted with athletics for 10 years over the idea of dropped quizzes and had to bring Chancellor Kristensen in one year because it became harassment. EVERY YEAR I would have a new student in class who would complain to Scott Unruh over the same concept as a student the year before and he would complain to the athletic director and they would come to me. Year after year. Making up every quiz for every student is too much in a class my size so I got tired of the fight and gave up giving quizzes at all. I changed the way I teach my class and not for the better because they wore me down. Students now do not have "low stakes" quizzes to judge their preparation for exams. Scott is convinced that if a student has to count a quiz with a score of 13/20, when that student surely would have earned a score of 17/20 on a quiz they missed, that will affect their overall grade in the class. With 1000 points in the class

that is unlikely, and as the faculty member I do have the ability to make judgment calls about the appropriate grade for a student in a case like that.

This also doesn't teach our students that everything in life can't be made up, even if you have a valid reason to be absent. Life just doesn't work that way. Absences have consequences, even if the absence is out of your control.

Response 2:

Just more "this is my life" about making up work.

Friday I gave an exam. Today I have 5 hours supervising students making up either the exam or last week's lab. One student who needs to make up the exam hasn't set a time yet. Two students have "family matters" that are keeping them from attending lecture and need me to send the recording. One student has already let me know she'll be gone for lab this week and lecture Friday and needs to make arrangements for that. It never stops and it's not trivial.

Response 3:

Julie knows all this because she has to cope with it, too, but I thought I would share this with you. In many of our classes we give lab practical exams where students have to look at or manipulate displays we have made and interpret information. We have to set up a separate time for the exam for students who have accommodations through the disability office for distraction reduced environment and/or additional time. So, this week we had 7 sections of the lab meet on Wednesday and Thursday and are running the lab for the students with accommodations this afternoon. One student has an accommodation that allows double the time normally allowed, which comes to 3 hours and 40 minutes (!). [redacted for confidentiality] When it's one student we don't sit with them the entire time, but now faculty have to be aware to check on the student regularly for nearly 3 hours that day. When Scott Unruh complains that we aren't doing enough for students, he doesn't understand what we are doing already.

### **Feedback posted to UNK Faculty email list in order...**

Faculty B (same as CAS Faculty B above):

I am not sure where to send this comment, so I'll make sure I cover all the bases.

If a faculty member's course is run by discussion about the books being read, then it is impossible to make up for absences. If participation in the discussion is part of the semester grade, this cannot be adjusted for the missing. It is possible not to fail that "student" for excessive absences under such conditions, but it is not possible to give a grade for those days in which one does not discuss.

Pretend we want our students to become adequate at both written and oral presentation and defense of their ideas. Pretend we want them to practice "critical thinking" concerning ideas presented. That is why a person might run a class this way. If you aren't there to participate in the aural and oral discussion, you can't be given credit for it.

Faculty H (not CAS):

If COVID has taught us anything, it has taught us that any of this can be done in a variety of ways. The bottom line is that when a student misses because of an "Excused Absence" then the absence should be excused and faculty should work with that student to make up missed work. That is our job!!!!

Faculty I (not CAS):

I respect Dr. Fendt's professional judgement about how his course can best be taught. His argument that work that requires group discussion has to be completed in a group seems reasonable to me.

The Lincoln campus of the University of Nebraska explicitly puts academics first and gives shared responsibility to the student and the faculty member to draft a plan for student success and acknowledges that not every course can accommodate excused absences. As the content domain expert, the decision is ultimately up to the faculty member with the student having the right to appeal the decision.

### **Student Absence Policy**

University sponsored activities, including intercollegiate athletics, may cause a student to need to be excused from a class, lab, or studio obligation. In all such instances, it is the student's responsibility to request permission for the absence (preferably in writing) from the instructor and to discuss how the absence would affect her/his ability to meet the course requirements. A student should do this as soon in the semester as possible. While instructors should seek to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with course requirements, to make reasonable accommodation for a student involved in University sponsored activities, a student should recognize that **not every course can accommodate excused absences, and neither absence nor notification of an absence, relieves them from meeting the course requirements.**

[https://studentaffairs.unl.edu/sa\\_policies\\_absences.shtml](https://studentaffairs.unl.edu/sa_policies_absences.shtml)

Delivering a high quality education is our job as faculty. In most cases, that can be accomplished even with some excused student absences during the semester. But, where that is not possible, I believe that Dr. Fendt's point is well made and commendable.

#### Faculty H (not CAS):

In no way should a student not be held responsible for material or duties required for a course. That is in bold for the Lincoln campus statement and is not suggested in the new UNK statement currently in the catalog. Faculty, however, need to work with students to meet that responsibility. The simple point is that it is called an "Excused Absence"! There is no reason what-so-ever, that a student cannot be asked to meet a requirement ahead of the absence or in some way other than the time missed for class. In many cases the student can attend virtually. This is what we are currently doing when a student or faculty member tests positive for COVID. As for discussion, virtual input either by zoom, FaceTime or discussion thread is available.

#### Faculty I (CAS):

I think the key part of that statement from UNL's policy is that not every course can accommodate excused absences. There are some things that you just can't make up though, either before or after an absence, as the experience of doing it is part of the learning experience and objectives. For example, when I take my lab section on a field trip to the Crane Trust to practice distance sampling (a technique used to estimate wildlife abundance), there is not an activity that a student could do that would replicate that experience. There is not a way to have the student join an experience like that via zoom, facetime, or discussion thread. In most cases it is absolutely possible for alternative activities that the student can complete to receive the same credit, but there are cases where it just isn't possible, especially in labs. There needs to be some room in the policy to allow for these circumstances.

#### Faculty H (not CAS):

I would suggest that while the actual experience may not be available, an alternate activity is always available! Sometimes or occasionally that means faculty might have to schedule an alternate time or experience so that students have the opportunity to score equivalent credit. We do this all of the time in athletic training and allied health education when preparing students to address a wide variety emergency situations that may not actually occur during face-to-face clinical education. Additionally, there are many faculty who do create alternative situations for lab, activity-based or hands-on learning experiences.

#### Faculty J (CAS):

Hi everyone,

I disagree with the statement that an alternate activity always exists and that all credits can be made up for. What is possible in one course might not be in another, it is the complex nature of academia. In my opinion, the attendance policy should account for this complexity and not enforce alternate activities that might offer credits that are equivalent only on paper, to the students' detriment (they think that they are offered the full experience when they're not). In my view, these alternate activities can also create some level of unfairness, as students end up being assessed on different metrics for the same credits. Gene' and Dustin's comments are very reasonable and make a lot of sense to me. In my classes, if a student

misses a discussion entirely and can justify of the absence, I excuse him/her for that discussion; I don't create a new assignment that obviously cannot be discussion-based to fill a discussion grade. I can't see how that could make any sense. But of course I offer make ups for papers, quizzes, problems, etc.; because it makes sense to do so.