

Missing Classes due to Extra- and Co-curricular Activities

Some extra- and co-curricular events will conflict with your classes. If you participate in a judging team, the Animal Health Corridor Tour, AFA, FFA or a number of other opportunities, you will almost certainly miss some class sessions. You may also have instructors that will schedule field trips that conflict with some of your other classes.

Is it a big deal to miss classes even if you are representing the college and university in the name of professional development? Absolutely! Your choice to miss a class must be carefully considered, as the information shared in class cannot be made-up. Mizzou's policy on missing class is:

Absences

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions. A student who does not complete assigned academic work because of absence from class is responsible for making up that work in accordance with instructions provided by the faculty member consistent with any policy established by the faculty of the respective department, school or college. A school or college faculty, a department faculty, a course director or an individual instructor may establish attendance standards and will determine whether a student will be permitted to make up work missed as a result of absence(s). There is no dean's excuse or official absence. [<http://registrar.missouri.edu/policies/absences.php>]

Does this mean that you shouldn't participate in the many excellent professional development opportunities offered by CAFNR, Mizzou and other organizations? Absolutely NOT!

So, what can you do—you've been told not to miss class AND to participate in activities that require you to miss class? Follow these steps to ensure that you minimize the negative effects of missing class while gaining experiences that will result in a resume robust with professional development activities:

1. **Carefully consider the activities** that might take you out of classes. If it is a program or activity that you find very interesting and/or related to your future career goals, then do some investigation. Begin by finding out exactly how much you will need to be gone and when.
2. When you know what the requirements will be for the extra-/co-curricular opportunity, **examine your course schedule**. If you have courses this year that include complicated laboratory exercises and tests, you should visit with the professor(s) at the beginning of the semester. Some instructors are able and willing to provide students with opportunities to make up missed work and tests, while others will not provide such alternatives. Determine whether it will work for you to participate in the activity and take the class simultaneously. Examine syllabi carefully to determine policies on absences and late work. It may be advantageous to take certain courses during semesters in which you aren't participating in events that cause several absences.
3. Once you have determined both the activities/events and your courses for the semester, set up a time to **visit with each professor**. The key is to communicate with your professors early. Be

prepared to explain the importance of the activities to your career goals and to share tentative dates that you will need to miss each professor's course. Respectfully ask if your professors will work with you. Some may want to meet with you during their office hours while others will expect you to check Blackboard or with other students in the course.

4. **Ask a fellow student in your courses if he/she would be willing to share notes** on what you miss. Remember to choose this person strategically—the student who you rarely see taking notes during class or who often misses class themselves is probably not the best person to rely on. Do NOT ask or expect your professor to provide class notes, unless they already routinely post these on blackboard.
5. **Contact your professors one-two weeks prior to the date(s) you will be absent from class. Ask if they will allow you to make up any missed work and turn it in PRIOR to your absence.** If you choose to turn in your work late, be prepared to accept applicable penalties.
6. Be sure to **thank professors who take extra time** to explain assignments and other course materials to you. They aren't required to do so; nor are they recognized for doing so. Your appreciation means a lot—and identifies you as a courteous and professional student.