Heartland Community College

Policy for the Equitable Treatment of Students Participating in College-Sponsored Events

This policy reflects the rights and responsibilities of impacted parties when participation in College-sponsored events conflicts with classroom attendance to ensure that students participating in College-sponsored events have the opportunity to be evaluated on course material and are not penalized for their absence from the classroom.

The heart of learning and academic success takes place in the classroom, and as such, classroom attendance and participation is vital to student success. Therefore, every student at Heartland Community College (HCC) must make classroom attendance a priority.

HCC is also committed to promoting and supporting co-curricular engagement and success by its students, in large part because co-curricular success can work to strengthen classroom and academic success.

Because there are times when college-sanctioned participation in co-curricular events may conflict with classroom attendance, HCC has established the following policies outlined below.

**Student Participants** will:

1. Remain mindful that they are representatives of HCC and thus, academics is their primary responsibility. As such, students will remain diligent in their focus on success in the classroom which enables their participation as HCC representatives outside the classroom.
2. Inform instructors at the beginning of the semester of their affiliation with a student organization and of scheduled absences through a formal letter from the organization they will be representing.
3. Inform instructors of specific classroom absences two weeks in advance, or if that is not possible, as soon as the absence is known.
4. Request from their instructor the opportunity to complete evaluated coursework and exams prior to the College-sanctioned event which will cause their absence, and take responsibility to make up any work that has been missed by adhering to the instructor’s policies regarding making up missed coursework. In the event of a disagreement regarding the Instructor’s policy, the student will discuss it first with the instructor, and if no resolution can be achieved, the student will proceed through the Student Appeals process as outlined in the Student Handbook.
5. Absence is not an excuse for late work.

**Student Organizations** with activities resulting in classroom absence will:

1. Make every reasonable effort to minimize conflicts between activity scheduling and student classroom attendance (e.g., avoid scheduling events on the same days and
times) and give primary attention to the fact that excessive absences lead to missed learning opportunities and may result in lower grades.

2. Communicate to students that their first responsibility is that of a student, and that they are responsible for the completion of all coursework in their classes. As such, student organization leaders should encourage students to excuse themselves from participation in events if the student or the organization leader feels the student's academic performance is suffering.

3. Provide updated formal documentation of the schedule for the season (including campus departure times) to students as soon as it is available, and maintain an updated version on the College’s shared drive for access by all Instructional staff.

4. Inform student participants of their responsibility to notify instructors regarding impending absences two weeks in advance, or if that is not possible, as soon as the absence is known.

5. Refer the student with a concern to the Division Dean.

6. Refrain from contacting any instructor directly when a disagreement occurs in an attempt to intercede on the student's behalf.

**Academic Advisors** will:

1. Make every effort to avoid schedule conflicts for student participants during the course selection process.

2. Actively dissuade student-participants from enrolling in classes that present them with such conflicts.

3. Advise students regarding their participation in co-curricular events based on their academic performance.

**Instructors** will:

1. Afford student participants who are absent from class due to College-sanctioned events the opportunity to make up and be evaluated on any missed coursework or exams that were assigned a point value.

2. Not penalize student participants who are absent from class due to College-sanctioned events.

3. Provide reasonable accommodations to ensure student participants have opportunity for classroom evaluations assigned a point value.

Examples of reasonable accommodations include: 1) Advanced make-up of an assignment or exam; 2) attending an alternative class session to participate in a classroom activity; 3) an alternative assessment and evaluation.

Examples of unacceptable accommodations include: 1) Requiring that missed evaluations be counted as a low grade to be dropped; 2) Requiring that missed exam points be added to a future exam; 3) Denying the student the opportunity to make up missed points.

4. Notify their supervisor in the rare case when no reasonable accommodation can be made within the classroom (e.g., science lab that cannot be replicated; nursing clinicals required by accrediting bodies, etc.). If the Division Administrator deems
When no reasonable accommodation can be made, the instructor will notify the student and the Division Administrator will notify the Vice President of Instruction.

**The Vice President of Instruction** will:

1. Determine what constitutes a college-sanctioned event, in consultation with the Chair of the College’s Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee.
2. Act as the arbiter when all avenues to resolve conflicts have been exhausted.

This document was formulated after an extensive review of student attendance policies, including those at Dyersburg State Community College, Illinois Central College, Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Lakeland Community College, Moraine Valley Community College, Parkland College, Rock Valley Community College, Tallahassee Community College.