



August 31, 2021

Dear Professor,

As the UC Davis Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR), I am writing to request that you consider allowing alternate arrangements for members of UCD intercollegiate athletics teams who are missing assignments, quizzes, or tests while representing our university when traveling for university-sponsored athletics competitions.

In lieu of the current public health concerns, please be aware that sports competition schedule are very fluid and may change throughout the quarter. I appreciate your willingness to work with our student athletes as these changes arise.

UC Davis Athletics places the commitment to academics first and expects all student-athletes to take full responsibility for meeting requirements in their classes. As you may be aware, the Academic Senate endorsed a set of guidelines on the handling of conflicts that arise between academic requirements and university-sponsored extracurricular activities. Attached to this letter are these guidelines for your reference, which detail best practices in handling these potential conflicts, which includes students taking exams while on the road proctored virtually or in person.

Per the Athletics missed class policy and procedures:

1. Student-athletes must speak with each instructor during the first week of class to discuss all potential missed classes for the quarter due to travel and competition for their sport. All student-athletes who might be competing that quarter must receive written confirmation from each of their professors regarding how they may make up, not make up, or take early any quizzes, exams, or labs that will be missed due to scheduled competitions.
2. Once the Missed Class Form has been signed, the student-athlete will give one copy of the form to the instructor, one copy to the coach, and will keep the final copy.
3. Student-athletes will not miss class other than for competition or extreme extenuating circumstances (e.g., severe illness, death in the family, etc.).
4. Student-athletes are required to attend all classes that end 2 hours or more before travel departure from campus for an away competition.

Oversight of intercollegiate athletics is the defined role of the NCAA Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR). Within the responsibilities of the FAR is the academic integrity of the athletics program and the academic performance and welfare of student-athletes. It is also my responsibility to help student-athletes meet their academic obligations while participating in official intercollegiate athletics as representatives of UC Davis.

Please feel free to reach me via my cell phone at 719-244-6576 or by email at secarrell@ucdavis.edu if you have any questions or concerns.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott E. Carrell", enclosed in a thin black rectangular box.

Scott E. Carrell
Professor of Economics
Faculty Athletic Representative

UC Davis Guidelines Concerning Scheduling Conflicts with Academic Requirements

Endorsed by the Executive Council of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate on August 5, 2020

These guidelines focus on the handling of conflicts that arise between academic requirements and university-sponsored extracurricular activities such as intercollegiate athletics (ICA) varsity sports competitions, university-sponsored club sports competitions, university-sponsored music, dance, or theater performances, and other university-sponsored activities with conflicting events.

The aim of these guidelines is to avoid misunderstanding and to foster a climate in which learning can take place. The basic assumption is that matriculated students—while often deeply engaged with other activities—are at the university primarily to achieve academic goals, and that instructors’ judgments about the pedagogical needs of their classes should be respected.

Note: At the instructor’s discretion, these guidelines may also be applied to conflicts arising from non-university sponsored activities (e.g., off-campus job interviews, recruitment visits, etc.).

The Scheduling of Extracurricular Activities

The preferred arrangement is for university-sponsored extracurricular activities to occur outside of the typical hours that students are regularly expected to be in class or to be taking final exams. When such activities are scheduled at times when classes and exams are regularly scheduled, students should be notified of that schedule (and of potential additional late-scheduled obligations such as tournaments and performances) before enrolling in courses for that term. Music directors, coaches, and others who schedule university-sponsored activities that require student absence from regularly-scheduled classes or exams should minimize these conflicts.

In some cases, rules minimizing conflicts are mandated by external agencies. One such example for athletics is NCAA Bylaw 3.2.4.14, which stipulates that each “member institution is obligated to establish policies in all sports concerning student-athletes’ missed class time due to participation in intercollegiate athletics and in athletics competition scheduled during final examination periods.” As such, the UC Davis policy for “Athletics Scheduling of Competitions and Practice” provides a useful template for all activities:

UC Davis Athletics Scheduling of Competitions and Practice

1. Competitions will be scheduled to minimize missed classes (i.e., minimize competitions during the middle of the week).
2. No competitions will be scheduled during finals week each quarter (except conference or NCAA championships outside institutional control).
3. Coaches will track all competitions that occur during the final week of the quarter (week 10) and the midterm weeks of the quarter (weeks 4, 5, and 6), and work to minimize away competitions during these weeks.
4. Coaches will work to accommodate student-athletes who must take required courses that conflict with scheduled practice times.

When circumstances change unexpectedly, resulting in event schedules changing during the semester, the music director, coach or other person scheduling the changed activity should consult the students involved to determine whether there will be any classroom conflicts and

whether they can be resolved. The organizers should accept that students with unresolved conflicts might not be able to participate in the rescheduled event.

Notification of Scheduling Conflicts

It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor in writing, before the end of the first week of the quarter, or upon adding the course, of all foreseeable conflicts between the syllabus (e.g., classes, exams, project due dates, field trips) and scheduled matches, games, performances, potential tournaments, and other university-sponsored activities in which the student will be participating (or may be participating) that would require absence from academic activities during the quarter. It is also the student's responsibility to provide a proposal for potentially resolving these conflicts.

For UC Davis student-athletes, per ICA policy: "The professor and student-athlete both sign the UC Davis Athletics Missed Class Form that details whether any accommodations will be made for quizzes, exams, or labs that are missed due to scheduled competitions."

If unforeseen scheduling conflicts arise later during the quarter, students should notify their instructor within three calendar days of being informed of such conflicts to discuss the situation. For example, these unforeseen conflicts could occur due to a modification to a competition or performance schedule, or they could occur when an instructor updates a course syllabus (including dates). It is important that students closely monitor any changes to their university-sponsored extracurricular schedules and their course schedules.

If coaches, music directors, and others who schedule these activities have stated policies concerning mandatory attendance, punctuality, and participation, students involved in these activities must also notify these individuals before the end of the first week of quarter concerning academic conflicts or potential conflicts.

Guidelines for Accommodations

The pedagogical needs of the class are the key criteria when deciding whether a proposed accommodation is appropriate. Faculty are encouraged to explain to the student, in writing, the specific pedagogical reasons that prevent accepting the student's proposed accommodation. For example, certain course requirements (such as activities requiring students to work in specific groups during class time, participate in certain discussions, or use special resources or equipment) may make it impossible for a student to enroll when it is known that they will miss several class sessions.

Class policies to instructor-drop students who miss a class during the first weeks of class should not be applied to students who have proposed accommodations for those missed classes. The purpose of those instructor-drop policies is to drop students who are not intending to actually take the class. Students who have proposed accommodations intend to take the class.

Absent evidence that a proposed accommodation would create a significant burden on instructor workload or significantly reduce student learning experiences or course requirements, best practice is that instructors should be willing to work with the student to determine a mutually satisfactory accommodation.

Course Syllabus

All major exams, papers, and project due dates, and field trips should be on the course syllabus and available to students the first day of class (or earlier if practical). Instructors teaching courses that are structured so that this early notice is not possible or desirable, should try to accommodate students who have notified them of scheduling conflicts in a timely manner.

Missed Classes

Students are responsible for material covered during missed classes whether or not they have been formally excused; therefore, it is the student's responsibility to obtain and learn the material missed. Because of serious workload issues, it is not the instructor's or the TA's responsibility to tutor students on missed material. For this reason, it is recommended that students absent from class for any reason make timely contact with several other students in the class to arrange for thorough briefing on the material they missed. They are also encouraged to utilize regularly scheduled instructor and TA office hours.

Missed Laboratories or Sections

When a scheduling conflict arises between a university-sponsored activity and a laboratory or section, the student should inquire whether accommodations are available by attending the same laboratory or section at a different day/time. If space is available, instructors are encouraged to make this accommodation.

Missed Assignments

Students whose university-sponsored events conflict with the due dates of assignments must arrange to have their work turned in before they leave campus so that it can be graded with the rest of the class, unless the instructor has agreed in advance to other arrangements.

Exam Conflicts

Making up and proctoring exams for individual students (or groups of students) can be a workload issue for instructors. As such, instructors are not obligated to write alternative assessments for students with a scheduling conflict. Below we offer some suggestions for reaching a reasonable solution.

Instructors sometimes schedule alternative exam times to accommodate, for instance, students with mandated accommodations through the Student Disability Center (SDC) or students who were absent for health reasons. If such alternative exams are being proctored by the instructor or a teaching assistant (TA) for the course, this may also be a potential solution for a student with an exam conflict due to a university-sponsored extracurricular activity. Note, however, that the SDC testing center can only serve students with disabilities documented by the SDC.

The student could take a proctored examination "on the road." With appropriate notice (see "Notification of Conflicts" above), an instructor may decide to assign a proxy proctor to give an exam off campus at the same time (or, if not possible, the same day) the scheduled exam is given in class. Proctored administration of a remote exam, in person, via Zoom, Examity, or using other online proctoring services is an appropriate solution to exam security concerns. UC Davis faculty, TAs, graduate students, and Faculty Athletic Representative (FAR) approved administrative staff (e.g., academic advisors) are also suitable sources of proxy proctoring. Care

should be taken that conflict of interest be absolutely avoided in undertaking any proxy proctorships. In all cases, exams must be kept confidential and in a secure location until they are returned to the instructor or TA. Any academic misconduct on the part of the student or the proxy proctor will not be tolerated per the [Academic Code of Conduct](#).

Some instructors set up their course grading structure to permit each student to drop their lowest exam score. In such courses, if a student needs to be absent from class on an exam day, and a proxy proctorship is not available or feasible, this could be the exam that the student then drops from consideration in their overall grade.

Assistance in Reaching Accommodations that Work for the Instructor and Student

As best practice, an instructor's refusal to provide any type of reasonable accommodation for university-sponsored extracurricular activities should occur rarely as it can impede the student's academic performance and time to degree.

When a satisfactory reasonable solution cannot be reached between the student and the instructor, the student can take the following steps:

1. Contact the appropriate support personnel in their extracurricular organization to help facilitate a potential resolution. For example, in Athletics, students can contact their Outcomes Advisor and/or the Faculty Athletic Representative for advice and assistance.
2. If a resolution is still not reached, as a last resort, the student can send an email to the appropriate Departmental Chair, cc'ing the instructor and other appropriate personnel (e.g., Faculty Athletic Representative). The email should clearly outline the academic conflict and provide the student's request for reasonable accommodations.
3. If the instructor, in consultation with the Department Chair, determines that no reasonable accommodations can be made, the student must accept the instructor's conditions for missed exams (including the consequences for their final grade) or drop the course.

Conclusion

These guidelines are designed to foster communication among students, instructors, TAs, and the professional staffs that arrange university-sponsored extracurricular activities. Minimizing conflicts and facilitating student learning require efforts from all parties: Coaching or other staffs (avoid scheduling university-sponsored events that conflict with course and exam schedules), students (notify instructors as soon as possible of potential conflicts; responsibility for making up all missed work; adherence to the academic code of conduct), and instructors (provide students advance notice of class and exam schedules and be willing to work with students to reach mutually agreed upon solutions when possible).