

Urbancrest OMC Attendance Policy:

INTRODUCTION

- A. This policy is intended to support students to achieve their learning potential, considering their investment: in time, money, and personal sacrifice in pursuit of higher education. It sets out the College's expectations of student's participation and attendance in their studies and how the College will support them with their progress. The College believes it has a duty to follow-up promptly on matters of non-attendance so that students can be supported and given every opportunity to succeed.
- B. All students are expected to engage fully with their studies. For the purposes of this policy, this means engagement in learning activities (weekly-online Class Discussions; Volunteer Serving), assessments and other activities (Mission Trips; Internship) which are proved to support them in their program.

C. PRINCIPLES

1. Online Mission College (OMC) believes that learning is a shared experience and students are expected to play a part in promoting collective understanding. Students are also responsible for their participation with the teaching opportunities offered to them in their program.
2. As a missionary training College, OMC, is concerned with the spiritual and personal formation of every student. In addition to personal devotions and other spiritual activities, this is achieved through the College's holistic approach to learning: 'Head (e.g. academic study through a variety of teaching methods and peer learning), Heart (e.g. personal reflection on learning and relationships) and Hands (e.g. through interactive and practical teaching sessions and team dynamics etc.)'. This is only possible through full attendance and engagement with all mandatory sessions which is why they are essential and a course requirement.
3. **Attendance is also necessary to help to:**
 - enhance educational development within the area of study
 - receive information about the program
 - prepare for all assessments
 - undertake any practical work or group work (Class Discussion, Outreach activities, Urbancrest Mission Conference opportunities)
 - contribute to the learning of others and to enhance the community of learners;
 - prepare and develop skills for working in cross-cultural situations.
4. **Inconsistent attendance and poor engagement:**
 - can put a student at risk academically and means they are less likely to benefit and progress in a meaningful way
 - does not only affect individual students, but also has an impact on others. For example, in group projects or other types of peer-learning
 - when identified early and intervention initiated, can be key to activating support or other measures to help students progress and achieve their potential.
5. **Students are responsible** for engaging with the method of attendance-recording used for any mandatory learning activity to ensure their presence is recorded accurately

6. Defining Attendance Requirements and Actions to be taken:

The College expects students to aim to consistently attend 100% of all sessions, and other mandatory activities relevant to their program (see absence below). These may include: lectures, tutorials, online discussion groups, and other practical requirements: Internship and Mission Trip. It also includes attendance for the purpose of assessment such as presentations and/or written Reports, and at least two Individual “Touch-Point” meetings with your primary Instructor. (Online or Telephone)

- Students must attend and make themselves available to undertake assessments, within the dates set for them or by an extension deadline granted due to extenuating circumstances.
 - Attendance is more than just a physical or virtual presence in a room: it is an engagement with the session (e.g. listening to teaching and contributions from others, participation in discussions, clarifying understanding etc.). Therefore, students should not engage with electronic devices during taught or supervised sessions other than to support their learning for that session
7. **Annual Attendance:** There are a total of 31 Online Lesson-Discussions over a period of 9 months; with major holidays off.
- Students must attend all Class time discussions or make-up and fulfill Class expectations. Discuss arrangements with your Instructor.
 - Practical training is an integral part of Certification from Urbancrest, OMC. All students are required to gain experience through 8-Week Internship & Mission Trip Practicum. All students will be required to write a reflective report on the two separate Practicum activities, as well as be responsible for Internship Forms to be sent from the supervising Mentor or Pastor.
 - If you are serving in an Internship for 7 weeks; then your Mission Trip will be 1 week to fulfill the total 8-week Practicum
 - The 7-week-Internship shall be: a total of 35 hours served: if it is a 6-week Internship – you shall serve 30 hours.

- D. **AUTHORIZED ABSENCE-** defined: the excused Absence is one that has been discussed in advance and approved by your Instructor. Students are responsible to place Lesson requirements on the OMC web page in advance of their absence; unless other arrangements have been made.
1. 100% attendance should be the aim of all students, the College recognizes that this is not always possible if genuine extenuating circumstances occur.
 2. Students **MUST** either attend or make up missed sessions to ensure they engage fully with all their learning. Speak to your Instructor for make-up arrangements.
 3. Students should always notify their Instructor as soon as they are aware they cannot attend if they know in advance. If a student is unwell and knows in advance, email your Instructor. (or Text if it is unexpected)

4. It is the student's responsibility to arrange an alternative make-up Online Discussion meetings; or other Projects & Reports.
5. However, since all Lessons are on the OMC Website, you can participate even while you are traveling. And all homework can be finished in advance and sent to your Instructor.
6. Students who are granted an authorized absence will not receive a refund of tuition fees. Nor will their expected end date of studies be amended to reflect the period of time away from their studies

E. ACTION IN THE EVENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE – defined: an unexcused Absence is non-compliance of said required work and with no action on the student's part to inform your primary Instructor. Usually, but not always accompanied by delayed or non-communication from the student.

1. Interaction with learning materials and attendance at all mandatory learning experiences is part of the learning agreement signed by every student. Therefore, non-attendance in mandatory sessions may lead to disciplinary action, if the following procedures are unsuccessful
2. **Meeting 1:** If a student's absence from class causes concern, a meeting will be arranged with the student and their Instructor (and possibly a second person from Urbancrest OMC).
3. Support may be offered through action plans or other support. Discussions, action plan (if required) and outcome of the session will be formally noted. Attendance will be monitored closely with further meetings.
4. It is expected that the student will improve attendance after Meeting 1.
5. **Meeting 2:** If attendance does not improve immediately after the verbal warning and actions are not met, Missions Pastor or Executive Pastor and OMC Education Director will meet with the student, to ascertain difficulties with attendance and non-compliance with action plan.
6. A written warning will be issued; noncompliance of this agreed step ends with dismissal of student from Urbancrest Online Mission College, without tuition refund.

E. ACTION IN THE EVENT OF CONCERN FOR A STUDENT'S WELL-BEING (Fitness to Study)

1. Should poor attendance be the result of challenging personal circumstances, personal and emotional support is offered first through the student's primary Instructor.
2. Where possible, reasonable adjustments will be implemented to ensure as far as possible that the student is not disadvantaged in relation to their peers. Suspension from studies via a leave of absence may be an appropriate option to discuss.
3. If a concern is raised about the student's ability to continue to study at the level and intensity of study required, or their condition is impacting negatively on other students and staff as well as themselves, the College will follow the procedures contained in its **Fitness to Study** policy. (See Policy, next page).

Urbancrest Online Mission College

Actions: Fitness to Study:

A. OVERVIEW

The procedure set out below comprises two distinct levels: Level 1 and Level 2. It also includes provisions for temporary suspension in situations that require immediate action and a process for appeal against decisions.

Level 1 will typically be utilized in response to initial (non-critical) concerns about a student's fitness to study, with the intention of seeking a successful resolution of the matter at that level through low-key/informal interaction with the student.

However, depending on the nature/severity of the concerns and the student's own response to the situation, the procedure may be initiated directly at Level 2 without any requirement for Level 1 to have been commenced or exhausted.

The Case Officer will arrange a meeting with the student, giving them at least three working days' notice in order to:

- explain the concern;
- discuss its perceived impact/implications and the student's perception of the matter;
- allow the student opportunity to respond to the concern;
- identify any related support needs the student may have; and
- allow the Case Officer to reach an informed decision on the matter

A time-bound action plan to be drawn up, with the agreement of the student (where possible), setting out the ways in which the matter will be managed including any obligations on the part of the student (e.g. in respect of their conduct, engagement with studies, or support that they should seek)

B. Level 2: PROCEDURE: SERIOUS/CONTINUING CONCERNS

Level 2 of the procedure can be used where, in the opinion of the College:

1. it has not been possible to put in place further adjustments;

2. action already taken at Level 1 has not resulted in a satisfactory outcome
3. the student did not take advantage of the adjustments put in place;
4. the student's health, wellbeing or behavior worsens or has an adverse effect on the health or wellbeing of the community;
5. the concern is sufficiently serious or persistent as to require the procedure to be initiated directly at Level 2

A **Protective Suspension** is a neutral act and is not in itself a determination of a student's fitness to study.

The **student may, within three working days** of the date of notification of the imposition or continuation of a Protective Suspension, appeal against that decision, on the grounds that the Protective Suspension is unreasonable in the circumstances. Such an Appeal will be considered by the Missions Department and/or Executive Pastor as soon as possible and no later than within three working days. Their decision on the matter shall be final.