

**Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness
– Undergraduate Students**

Policy Category:	Rights and Responsibilities
Subject:	Academic Consideration for Medical Illness – Undergraduate Students
Subsections:	Documentation from Family Physicians/Nurse Practitioners and Walk-In Clinics ; Documentation from Student Health Services ; Documentation from Hospital Urgent Care Centres or Emergency Departments ; Academic Consideration by Instructor for work worth less than 10% of the overall grade in a course
Approving Authority:	Senate
Responsible Committee:	Senate Committee on Academic Policy
Related Procedures:	*
Officer(s) Responsible for Procedures:	*
Related Policies:	Student Medical Certificate (SMC) Attendance Regulations for Examinations
Effective Date:	September 1, 2022
Supersedes:	September 1, 2012 and previously in effect to August 31, 2019)

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. Academic Consideration provides students with consistent, fair, and pedagogically appropriate consideration, without compromising the academic integrity of the course or program, when they have been unable to complete some component of a course due to short-term extenuating circumstances. Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions (physical or mental) that may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities are directed to seek Academic Accommodation through Accessible Education ([Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)).

Policy for Academic Consideration for Medical Illness – Undergraduate Students

The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic consideration for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the end of the period of absence covered, to the Academic Counselling unit or Dean's Office of the student's Home Faculty together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the academic consideration being requested. These documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's [Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy](#). Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic consideration shall be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic consideration may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty. Academic consideration shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”)

Whenever possible, students who require academic consideration should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

Documentation from Family Physicians/Nurse Practitioners and Walk-In Clinics

A Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic consideration. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Documentation from Student Health Services

At the time of illness, students should make an appointment with a physician/nurse practitioner at Student Health Services. During this appointment, request a Student Medical Certificate from the Physician/Nurse Practitioner.

Policy for Academic Consideration for Medical Illness – Undergraduate Students

Documentation from Hospital Urgent Care Centres or Emergency Departments

Students should request that an SMC be filled out. Students may bring this form with them, or request alternative Emergency Department documentation. Documentation should be secured at the time of the initial visit to the Emergency Department. Where it is not possible for a student to have an SMC completed by the attending physician, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that their ability to meet their academic responsibilities was seriously affected.

Academic Consideration by Instructor for work worth less than 10% of the overall grade in a course

Instructors are encouraged, in the first instance, to arrange participation requirements and multiple small assignments in such a way as to allow students some flexibility.

A student seeking academic consideration for any work worth less than 10% must contact the instructor or follow the appropriate Department or course specific instructions provided on the course outline.

In arranging academic consideration, instructors will use good judgment and ensure fair treatment for all students. Instructors must indicate on the course outline how they will be dealing with work worth less than 10% of the total course grade. In particular, instructors must indicate whether medical documentation will be required for absences, late assignments or essays, missed tests, laboratory experiments or tutorials, etc. Where medical documentation is required, such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office, and it will be the Dean's office that will make the determination whether academic consideration is warranted. Given the University's [Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy](#), instructors may not collect medical documentation.

In all cases where academic consideration is being sought for work totalling 10% or more of the final grade in a course, students will be directed to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office.

Students who have been denied academic consideration by an instructor may appeal this decision to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

A student may appeal a decision on academic consideration made by the Dean's Office of the student's Home Faculty to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA) as set out in the [Undergraduate Student Academic Appeals](#) policy.