

Longwood University Faculty Senate
**PROPOSAL/POLICY COVER
SHEET**

This cover sheet is intended to provide information to members of the Faculty Senate about a new proposal/policy or about revisions to an existing proposal/policy. **If you are proposing a new policy, then attach the text of the policy to this form. If you are proposing a change to an existing policy, then attach the text of the current policy with any deleted language marked by a strikethrough and with new language marked by an underline. If you are deleting a policy, then attach the text of the policy to be deleted.**

COMMITTEE(S) that authored or sponsored this proposal: Author: Chris Bjornsen. Sponsor: Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

TOPIC:

Change to the “Class Attendance” policy in the FPPM (p. 31) to include a statement addressing student focus, attention, and engagement during class periods.

BACKGROUND (Provide a brief statement describing the origins of this proposal, the nature of the problem it addresses, and the work completed to devise the proposal):

The problem this proposal addresses is the occurrence of student behaviors in the classroom that disrupt a faculty member’s ability to create and maintain high educational standards, and disrupts other students’ educational experience and learning in the classroom.

SUMMARY OF NEW POLICY OR PROPOSED CHANGES OR DELETIONS TO AN EXISTING POLICY (Provide a brief list or statement describing the content of the policy or the proposed changes or deletions):

Edit the following in section F. Class Attendance, page 31 of the 2017-2018 FPPM.

F. CLASS ATTENDANCE

1. Students are expected to attend all classes. Failure to attend class regularly impairs academic performance. Absences are disruptive to the educational process for others. This is especially true when absences cause interruptions for clarification of material previously covered, failure to assume assigned responsibilities for class presentations, or failure to adjust to changes in assigned material or due dates. Further, students are responsible for maintaining their sole focus and attention on class lectures and activities during class, and refrain from unassigned use of cell phones and other electronic devices.
2. It is the responsibility of each instructor to give students a copy of his or her attendance policy in the course syllabus.
 - a. Instructors may assign a grade of zero or "F" on work missed because of unexcused absences.
 - b. Instructors have the right to lower a student's course grade by no more than one letter grade if the student misses 10% of the scheduled class meeting times for unexcused absences.
 - c. Instructors have the right to assign a course grade of "F" when a student has missed a total (excused and unexcused) of 25% of the scheduled class meeting times.
3. Students must assume full responsibility for any loss incurred because of absence, whether excused or unexcused. Instructors should permit students to make up work when the absence is excused. Excused absences are those resulting from the student's participation in a university sponsored activity, from recognizable emergencies, or from serious illness. Faculty may require documentation for excused absences in their attendance policy. Student Health Services will provide documentation of needed absence in very limited cases: only for those students who are sent home by Student Health (exp. Communicable disease). The Dean of Students may also provide documentation for students unable to attend class due to mental health reasons.

RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY OR PROPOSED CHANGES (Provide a brief statement as to why the new policy, the changes, or the deletion is needed):

Student engagement and attention in class is not a new concern, although attention and engagement in class does seem to be becoming more problematic and, hence, more disruptive to the classroom environment, in part due to the ubiquitous availability and inappropriate use of cell phones, tablets, iWatches, and social media by students.

The 2017-2018 FPPM states: “In accord with its history and mission, Longwood University believes that each individual should be treated with respect and dignity...” (p. 20), and “Longwood University is committed to providing a healthy living, learning and working environment which promotes personal integrity, civility and mutual respect” (p. 20).

The scientific literature is consistent in supporting the notion that a lack of attention and engagement in class, including the use of cell phones etc. during class, is disruptive to the class experience for both faculty members and students, including students who are distracted by other students’ use of cell phones in class.

In order to ensure that faculty and all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, and to promote and ensure the right (and necessity) of the faculty to provide, and students to receive, the highest quality educational experience, the University should support the inclusion of a statement that communicates to all the importance of creating a non-distracting educational environment.

Routing information and signature lines:

Date submitted to Senate Executive Committee for Consideration:

Action(s) Taken:

Date first read at Faculty Senate:

Action(s) Taken:

Date final action taken by Faculty Senate:

Action(s) Taken:

Senate Chair: _____

Date submitted to the PVPAA (within 5 working days of Senate approval):

Action(s) Taken:

PVPAA: _____

Date: _____

Date submitted to other administration:

Action(s) Taken:

Administrator: _____

Date (within 15 working days of PVPAA's signature): _____

Date submitted to the Board of Visitors:

Coversheet updated 9/2017