

Guidelines for Absences from Class and Make Up Quizzes/Exams

Brandeis is a research university with a wide range of classes from large lecture-based courses to small discussion-based courses. Given this breadth, no single policy regarding attendance, quizzes and exams can be set for the University. Instructors are strongly encouraged to include their policies regarding attendance, quizzes and exams in their syllabi and to discuss these policies during the first day of class. Students are expected to recognize that these policies are not meant to hinder students but rather they define the rigor of a Brandeis education. Documentation of a disability does not exempt a student from these guidelines and expectations.

The following are practices that instructors use at Brandeis which are supported by the University:

Attendance

- Regular class attendance is expected at Brandeis. Attendance policies should be consistent for all students. An instructor may require full attendance in the class in order for a student to pass the class. An instructor may decide that even if a student performs well on quizzes or exams, the student will not be able to pass the class if the student has not had regular class attendance. Students who are currently on Academic Probation are required to attend all classes.
- Students are expected to attend class on time. Instructors may lower a student's grade because of repeatedly being late.
- Instructors may track attendance through sign-in sheets, submissions of quick questions, the use of clicker or other methods. Instructors may use attendance as all or part of a class participation grade. Students who sign-in for their classmates may be in violation of the University Code of Conduct.
- Instructors may have different policies for absences from class. Some instructors will have a system of "excused absences" and "unexcused absences." Other instructors will simply allow a total number of absences from a class regardless of the reason. How absences are counted are at the discretion of the instructor.
- An instructor may ask for documentation for an absence. Documentation may include but is not limited to doctors' notes, hospital discharge papers, and obituaries. The Brandeis University Health Center does not issue sick notes for students. If an instructor is unsure of whether or not to ask for documentation, they can contact an advisor in Academic Services.
- In rare circumstances, a student may have to miss more than a week of class due to serious illness or to a family emergency. In these cases, a student should be in immediate contact with his or her faculty member and advisor in Academic Services to discuss what options may be available. Should a student have to miss more than two weeks of class, it is generally in the student's best interest to withdraw from the semester.

Quizzes and Exams

- Quizzes are a frequent teaching tool, particularly in entry level mathematics courses and language courses. Each quiz generally comprises a small amount of a student's total grade. As such, different instructors will have different policies regarding the make-up of quizzes. Illness, family emergencies, and other conflicts are not necessarily grounds for an instructor to alter his or her academic policy to allow for a make-up quiz.
- Instructors may allow for a certain number of quizzes to be made up at a later date. If a student has surpassed this number, then the instructor may count each additional missed quiz as a zero in the grade.
- Instructors may allow a certain number of quizzes to be dropped. If a student is absent on the day of the quiz, the instructor is not required to give a make-up quiz. Instead, the student may use one of his or her "dropped quizzes" for that day.
- Exams are a common evaluation tool, particularly in large lecture classes. Unlike quizzes, exams comprise a significant portion of a student's final grade. Different instructors may have different policies regarding the make-up of exam. Illness, family emergencies, and other conflicts are not necessarily grounds for an instructor to alter his or her academic policy.
- An instructor may decide a pre-determined time for a make-up exam. If the student is unable to attend either the original exam or the make-up exam, the instructor is not required to provide additional opportunities for the student.
- An instructor may waive a missed exam. Rather than offering a make-up, the instructor may distribute the point value of the missed exam into other exams offered in the semester. For example if the first of four exams is worth 25% of the final grade, the 25% would be distributed to the remaining three exams.
- When giving make-up exams, an instructor may alter the format of the exam. Instructors may decide to have make up exams which are multiple-choice, open-ended questions, or problems sets. The format of the make-up exam is entirely at the discretion of the instructor.
- An instructor has the right to determine the numerical value for a letter grade and to use professional discretion when assigning a letter grade. Different instructors may use different numeric values to determine a letter grade.