

## **Application of Attendance Policy to Educational, Law School Related Activities**

Under the Law School's attendance policy, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is permitted to allow absences beyond the maximum of 20% of the regularly scheduled class sessions if:

1. A student's participation in an educational, law school related activity ("school related activity") is the predominant reason for a violation of the 80% rule, and
2. The student has consulted with the professor and the academic dean regarding anticipated absences prior to participating in the school related activity.

For this purpose, "[p]articipation in a school related activity will be deemed the predominant reason for violating the 80% rule if at least three-fourths of a student's absences are for actual participation in (rather than preparation for) the activity."

Participation in moot court competitions and court appearances related to work in one of the Law School's clinics (but not absences for preparation for these activities) are examples of "school related activity" that may fall within this exception. The exception does not, however, contemplate excusing in advance all such absences from counting toward the maximum allowable number of absences from other Law School courses. Rather, the exception only affords the Associate Dean the discretion to allow additional absences for students who would otherwise be in violation of the 80% rule. And even that discretion is limited to situations where the school related activity is the "predominant reason" for violating the 80% rule. Nevertheless, the attendance policy does require students to consult with the Associate Dean prior to participating in the school related activity (and, presumably therefore, in advance of violating the 80% rule).

In keeping with the attendance policy, students participating in a school related activity must keep track of *all* of their absences from all of their courses during the semester and must consult with the professors whose classes they will miss in advance of absences arising from participation in a school related activity. As students participating in a school related activity approach—but before reaching—the maximum allowable number of absences in a course (e.g., when they have been absent two times from a course that meets once per week, four times from a course that meets twice per week, or six times from a course that meets three times per week),

they must consult with the Associate Dean to determine how their school related activity absences will be treated under the attendance policy.

The Associate Dean will make determinations regarding whether absences are for school related activity and, if so, whether those absences are the predominant reason for a potential violation of the 80% rule on a case-by-case basis. Accordingly, in their initial communication to the Associate Dean, students participating in school related activities should indicate: (1) their total number of absences from the relevant course(s) thus far during the semester, (2) the number of those absences that are due to school related activity (as well as the nature and duration of that activity), (3) the reasons for their other absences during the semester, and (4) the number of (and reason for) other anticipated absences during the semester. The Associate Dean may request additional information or a meeting with the student, if necessary. The Associate Dean will communicate a decision regarding the allowance of additional absences beyond the 20% maximum within a reasonable time of receiving all requested information.