Attendance Guidelines and Procedures

Guidelines and procedures governing mandatory attendance administered by the Academic Programs Office are described below. The responsibilities stated here do not in any circumstances excuse the student from following official sign-out procedures when leaving campus or from securing parent or guardian permission forms required by Student Life.

Class Absences and Tardies

It is the responsibility of every student at NCSSM to attend all scheduled classes, meetings or other required activities on each academic day. Instructors enter into the school database a report of student attendance for all class periods. It is imperative that students be both present and on time to each of their classes to avoid disrupting other students and to fully benefit from the learning opportunities afforded. The same is true for all required meetings and mandatory community activities.

A student who is up to 5 minutes late to a scheduled class (or activity) is dealt with by the instructor in accordance with his/her published course expectations. A student who misses from 5 up to 15 minutes of a scheduled class period (or activity) is reported as Tardy (T), and a student who is from 15 up to 25 minutes late is reported as Severely Tardy (ST). Following the initial report of a tardy by any instructor—which is treated as a warning with no response—the student is assigned thirty minutes of the next Attendance Restricted Study (Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m.) for each Tardy and assigned one hour of the next Attendance Restricted Study for each Severely Tardy. If a student misses 25 minutes or more of a single class period (or required activity), the instructor reports the student as absent for that day’s class.

Repeated tardies result in additional sanctions as follows:

- 5th Tardy – four afternoons Restricted Study (4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.) with no exceptions for clubs, athletics, or other extracurricular activities.
- 10th Tardy – four nights Room Restriction beginning at 8:30 p.m.
- 15th Tardy (and each subsequent multiple of 5) – will be charged as a Level II with a Weekend at Home Restriction (from 5:00 p.m. Friday to 5:00 p.m. Sunday) as the standard sanction.

Absences from class or other required activities are coded as medical (M), excused (E), approved (A), or unexcused (U) by the Attendance Coordinator. Absences caused by illness are generally coded as medical, provided appropriate NCSSM personnel verify the illness. Students who are ill should report to the clinic prior to missing any class or required activity. The clinic advises the Attendance Coordinator when students have been authorized to miss a class or activity because of illness by providing records of clinic visits each school day. Students who have been excused by a Counselor for emotional or psychological reasons are reported to the Attendance Coordinator and are coded as excused. Students who are excused from classes for medical reasons are not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities and are confined to their hall for the remainder of the day. A violation of this rule automatically changes medically excused absences to unexcused absences.

Absences due to school sanctioned activities (e.g. field trips, athletic events, AP tests), verified emergency situations (either at home or school), religious holidays not included in the School Calendar, and other required events which students (or their parents) have no control in scheduling, are coded as excused. NCSSM staff members are obligated to provide students an opportunity to make up work missed as a result of absences coded either medical or excused.
It is expected that students, with their parent/guardian’s assistance, will make every effort to avoid scheduling any outside activities (e.g. family events, college visits, off-campus medical appointments) that conflict with classes or other required activities. Thus, NCSSM allows a student no more than two non-school related approved absences in a trimester course. Exceeding this maximum number of non-school related absences will result in the denial of a request for approval or an unexcused absence(s). The student is responsible for arranging make-up work for approved absences at the convenience of the instructor and student.

Students who will be absent from one or more scheduled classes or required activities for any reason (except a verified illness or emergency) must request approval by submitting a completed Prior Approval of School Absence form to the Academic Programs Office at least two academic days, or five academic days for a lab class, before the date of the absence. Written parental permission must be attached to all Prior Approval of School Absence forms for requests that are not school related. Absences about which instructors express reservations may be coded as unexcused.

Class absences that are not caused by illness or an emergency situation, or are not specified and approved by appropriate NCSSM personnel on a Prior Approval of School Absence form, are coded as unexcused. Instructors are not required to provide an opportunity to make up work missed during an unexcused absence. Notice of any absence coded unexcused is provided students electronically by the Attendance Coordinator. Students have two academic days from the date of notification to present to the Academic Programs Office written documentation showing the coding as unexcused to be incorrect.

A report of all class absences (regardless of code) is readily available to students and their parents online in the school’s Focus database. As NCSSM places a high priority on learning opportunities in the classroom, a student who for any reason misses ten classes in the same course during a single trimester will not be granted academic credit without the specific permission of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs.

Response to Accumulated Unexcused Absences
Unexcused absences are addressed under the disciplinary provisions of the NCSSM Code of Student Conduct. There is no response for the first unexcused absence reported each year. The second such absence is addressed by notification of parents or guardian along with the NCSSM Support Team (i.e. Advisor, Student Life Instructor and Counselor) and a mandatory meeting with the NCSSM Attendance Coordinator. The accumulation of four unexcused absences results in a Level II violation, notification of parents and NCSSM Support Team, an informal hearing with the Director of Academic Programs (or Residential Life) and appropriate sanctions (e.g. study hall, labor detail).

Two additional unexcused absences (a total of six throughout the year) warrants a second Level II charge, and the resulting notification and informal hearing with the Director of Academic Programs (or Residential Life) as above, along with potential penalties of increased severity (e.g. in-room restriction, required essay). Students who accumulate eight unexcused absences over the course of the academic year are charged with a Level III violation of the Code of Student Conduct and have an administrative hearing with the Vice Chancellor for Administration (or designated Administrative Hearing Officer). Parents or guardian are asked to be present, and penalties (in addition to those cited for previous violations above) may include loss of student leadership position or athletic participation, at-home suspension, and extended probation. If the total of a student’s unexcused absences over the academic year reaches ten a second Level III violation is charged, again resulting in a formal hearing for which dismissal is a potential outcome.
Late or Make-up Work
Students are expected to complete and submit all coursework, exams, quizzes and labs by the deadlines established by the instructor. Late Work (i.e. failure to complete a course assignment by the announced deadline) is reported in the school’s database and penalized with the same sanction as that for a Severely Tardy—one-hour of Restricted Study at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. Students will be reported for Late Work only once for any assignment that remains outstanding, however they may continue to accrue a grading penalty based on the number of days any assignment is late.

Repeated incidents of Late Work result in the same additional sanctions as for multiple tardies (listed above). However the count of Tardies (whether standard or severe) will remain entirely separate from that of Late Work. For example, over the course of the academic year, a student could accumulate four Tardies and four Late Work incidents and still not be charged with a multiple violation; however, a student with no Tardies but five Late Work incidents will be penalized for the multiple Late Work. Consequently, it is very important that students either complete each assignment on time or contact their instructor in advance to arrange for an extension.

Instructors may establish further procedures regarding late work for particular courses in the statement of Courses Expectations distributed at the beginning of each course. However, no such work (except Trimester exams) may be accepted after the last class day in each grading period. Trimester Exams must be completed no later than the examination period scheduled for that course.

When students do not complete and submit assigned work due to an excused or approved absence, they are allowed to make up the work on a schedule established by meeting with the instructor. If at all possible, this meeting should occur prior to the day of the absence. The additional time to make up the work will vary depending on the subject and the nature of the assignment. All sections of the same course, however, have the same policy for make-up work.