

Traveling for Breaks & Holidays, Office Hours and Provost's Excuses

Provost

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To: Provost <provost@belmont.edu>;

Cc: FACULTY GROUP <faculty@belmont.edu>; ADJUNCTS GROUP <adjuncts@belmont.edu>;

Bcc: Students

Dear Students,

As we begin the semester, I would like to remind you of our academic calendar and related attendance requirements. Attending class is a crucial component of academic success. Consequently, we require attendance for each class at Belmont. We understand that there are occasions that may arise requiring you to be absent from class, however travel arrangements that conflict with your scheduled classes and exams should not be one of these occasions.

Your semester schedule is outlined in each of your course syllabi and the final exam schedule is posted well in advance on the Belmont University website (<http://www.belmont.edu/registrar/exam-schedules.html>). These schedules provide you with ample time to make travel arrangements that do not conflict with course requirements or exams. Please be advised that exams, especially final exams, cannot be moved for travel for personal reasons and we recommend that you make travel arrangements accordingly.

Office Hours

For the past few years, I have held office hours as a way to be more accessible to the campus community. These office hours provided many of you with the opportunity to discuss concerns and share ideas, and I will continue to offer office hours as an avenue for individual, personal conversations with faculty, students and staff. During the 2017-18 academic year, I will hold office hours weekly on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 11:00am-Noon and Thursdays from 2:00-3:00pm in my office in Barbara Massey Hall, Room 235.

These times are aimed at providing students, faculty or staff who have questions, comments or thoughts to share to spend a few minutes with me directly. To ensure that I am able to devote full attention to each of these conversations, we ask that those wishing to take advantage of these opportunities please contact Ms. Kim Carr (Kim.Carr@Belmont.edu or 615-460-6400) to schedule an appointment within these time slots. We anticipate that most of these initial conversations would be 10 – 15 minutes in length, though we also understand that many issues at the University might require additional time and discussion. As has always been the case, if a particular idea or conversation needs more time than could be accommodated within an office hours visit, you are encouraged to schedule a longer appointment at another time by contacting Ms. Carr directly. I look forward to seeing many of you during open office hours.

Provost-Excused Absences

Finally, over the past few semesters we have seen an increase in the number of students seeking Provost's excuses for reasons that typically do not fall within the purview of a Provost-excused absence. In an attempt to alleviate confusion, we offer additional information about the purpose of Provost's excuses below.

There are various reasons why a student may need to be absent from class, and a Provost's excuse is generally only provided for class absences that arise as a result of University-sanctioned activities (e.g. class activities,

student organization competitions, faculty-sponsored conference attendance). The request for a Provost's excuse must come from the sponsoring faculty or staff member, thus students do not request these types of excuses directly. Please note that internship activities that conflict with class attendance do not qualify as a university-sanctioned activity. Internship obligations should be scheduled around your class schedule.

We encourage students who will be absent for any other reasons to review the class attendance policy outlined in the course syllabus and discuss the absence directly with their professors. When absences are the result of a family emergency or long-term medical illness or issue, students are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students office (615.460.6407) for assistance with notifying professors. When a Provost's excuse is not presented, faculty may use their discretion to excuse any absence(s) they deem appropriate.

We hope that this helps to alleviate any confusion that surrounds Provost's excuses. As always, please contact us should you have any questions about this, or any other University policy.

Wishing you much success in the upcoming semester.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Burns
Provost