



Elizabeth G. Lobo, Ph. D.
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of the Provost

August 9, 2022

Expectations Regarding use of Technology for Absences:

The mission of Southern Methodist University is to “create, expand, and impart knowledge through teaching, research, and service, shaping world changers who contribute to their communities and excel in their professions in a global society.” As a result, SMU offers a student-centered environment that privileges and values direct, interpersonal, engagement among faculty and students. The face-to-face instruction of the traditional classroom setting is the cornerstone of the SMU educational experience, even in a world where technological innovation affords the possibility of other modalities. It is in the spirit of the SMU mission and in the awareness of the technological context in which we operate, that SMU faculty - in collaboration with the Provost Office – offer guidance on supporting students who find themselves in circumstances that render them unable to attend classes in person.

Regular, in-person, synchronous instruction is expected for all undergraduate courses. For excused absences and situations not covered by [policy in the SMU catalog](#), the manner in which activities may be made up is left to the discretion of each individual faculty member and/or department, with the understanding that some students will have [DASS accommodations](#) in place to be followed. In addition to traditional means, synchronous, remote instruction (Zoom), asynchronous, remote instruction via recordings, videos, and course management systems (Canvas), or other technological means may be used as means to accommodate situations. However, due to pedagogical, practical, and/or technical limitations, these options may not be available in all

courses and/or in all class periods and should not be expected or required. Accommodation made in one course does not imply similar accommodations will be made in other courses. Faculty should include applicable policies for attendance and means of makeup to students at the beginning of the term in writing in the syllabus.

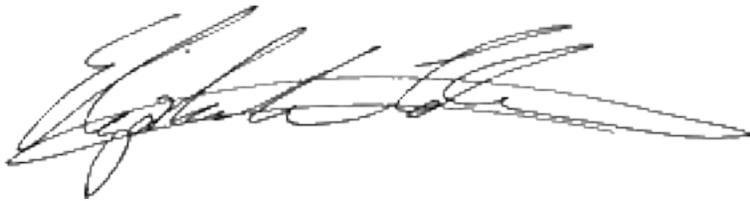
To maintain the high level of instruction to which SMU is committed, the following guidelines should be used to govern expectations and policy:

- Regular, in-person instruction is expected for all undergraduate courses. While neither expected nor required, at their discretion faculty may make use of remote synchronous or asynchronous instruction - if feasible and appropriate – for excused absences.
- For excused absences up to 3 hours of instruction per course: use of remote synchronous or asynchronous instruction is at the discretion of the instructor and/or department policy.
- For excused absences between 4-6 hours of instruction per course: use of remote synchronous or asynchronous instruction is at the discretion of the instructor and/or department policy, and subject to approval by department chair.
- For excused absences of more than 6 hours of instruction per course: use of remote synchronous or asynchronous instruction is at the discretion of the instructor and/or department policy, and subject to approval by the department chair, Dean of the School or College, and also may require consultation with the Dean of Students.

Faculty accommodations for remote modality courses after Spring 2022 –
The President's Executive Council approved the following language and requested that it be shared with all faculty:

“During the last two years [2019-2021], teaching face-to-face courses as emergency remote courses was authorized by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). In light of the expiration of the emergency remote authorization by SACSCOC, beginning with May term 2022, emergency remote teaching will no longer be allowed. Faculty who need to request a reasonable accommodation on the basis of a disability for teaching should contact The Office of Institutional Access and Equity (IAE) to request on-campus accommodations. IAE will continue to assess each request on an individualized basis. Any courses at SMU that are taught through online modalities must be approved by the Educational Programs Committee and fully follow the SMU Office of Global, Online and Continuing Education process and production model.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth G. Loba', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Southern Methodist University
<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

SMU

World Changers Shaped Here