

DATE: September 30, 2014

TO: Academic Community

FROM: Claude Brulé, Vice President, Academic

SUBJECT: Student Absences (Doctor's Notes)



With the flu and cold season upon us, it is unavoidable that some students will likely miss classes due to illness. In order to avoid the unnecessary spreading of diseases, the College has adopted in consultation with faculty and academic staff, since the H1N1 crisis of 2009, the practice that faculty not ask in every instance of student illness for a Doctor's note.

The purpose of this memo is to remind you that the College continues to support that faculty **not** request a doctor's note when a student misses a class, lab or other learning activity.

College Academic Council has endorsed the following policy statement on student absences and this is supported by Deans Council:

Addressing student absence from class requires a common sense approach, assumes honesty, and allows faculty to exercise judgment while keeping student success foremost in mind.

- a. *The student is asked to contact the course professor **before** the class takes place to indicate that he/she is ill. If the student does not make the attempt, then they may be subject to whatever penalty is outlined in the course outline.*
- b. *For prolonged illness, or where more than one assessment is missed, the course professor can request the student to provide a doctor's note in order to help accommodate the situation.*

Frivolous cases of abuse are to be avoided, yet not make the environment such that students who are clearly not well feel the need to still come to class for assessments for fear of negative consequences on their academic progress.

As always, faculty retain the responsibility and right to manage their classes in a way that ensures students demonstrate the learning outcomes of each respective course.

You will recall that the Centre for Organizational Learning, in conjunction with the College Academic Council, created a "tip sheet" with suggestions on how you can support students to ensure they stay connected with their peers and accomplish some or most of the course

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work and assessments while away from class (due to illness or other reasons). This document can be found at:

[http://www.algonquincollege.com/col/files/2014/10/Academic Continuity Tips for Faculty 2014.pdf](http://www.algonquincollege.com/col/files/2014/10/Academic%20Continuity%20Tips%20for%20Faculty%202014.pdf)

I appreciate your flexibility and understanding and I thank you for your continued commitment to our students' success.