

Academic Advising Council  
**Guidelines for Students, Faculty and Professional Staff Regarding Student Bereavement**

Oregon State University (OSU) recognizes students may experience times of grief and bereavement due to the loss of someone close. The development of the Student Bereavement Guidelines was a collaborative effort of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Academic Advising Council, Academic Affairs and the Office of the Dean of Student Life. The guidelines are intended to help students and faculty navigate a difficult situation while supporting academic success.

**Students:** In the unfortunate event that you experience a personal tragedy such as the loss of a parent, guardian, sibling, spouse, roommate, or other person close to you, please notify or have a friend or family member notify your instructor(s) and academic advisor(s) if an absence is needed. Should you need to be absent from classes, please remember that you are responsible for providing documentation of the death or funeral services attended to your academic advisor(s). Documentation may include, but is not limited to a Memorial Service program or newspaper/website obituary notice.

If you are absent, upon your return to OSU please arrange to meet with your instructor(s) and advisor(s) to discuss options and strategies for catching up with missed academic work and for completing the term successfully, if possible. *Consideration for academic assistance and the opportunity to complete the course are at the discretion of your instructor(s) and dependent on the nature of the course.* Your advisor(s) can also help you access support resources in the OSU community, such as Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and Religious Life at OSU staff. OSU recognizes that in the immediate aftermath of a tragic loss, the farthest thing from your mind may be your academic situation. However, when you are ready and able to resume your studies or to take appropriate steps affecting your academic future, we in the OSU community are available to help you.

For additional information regarding absences from classes or Academic Regulations, please refer to the Dean of Student Life FAQs page:

<http://oregonstate.edu/deanofstudents/faculty/absences>

**Faculty:** The student is responsible for providing academic advisor(s) with documentation of the death or funeral service attended. The advisor(s) will notify instructors of the receipt of documentation. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, a Memorial Service program or newspaper/website obituary notice. Given proper documentation, the instructor may choose to excuse the student from class absences and provide the opportunity to earn equivalent credit and to demonstrate evidence of meeting the learning outcomes for missed assignments or assessments. *Consideration for academic assistance and the opportunity to complete the course through alternate arrangements are at the discretion of the instructor and dependent on the nature of the course.*

In support of these guidelines, it is hoped that OSU instructors will not penalize students who have provided verification of their bereavement needs. Additionally, OSU instructors are asked to offer reasonable compensatory experiences if appropriate, to ensure that students' academic progress in the course will not be unduly compromised.

These might include extending deadlines, allowing make-up exams, recalculating the weighting of scores from other course assignments or exams, or offering an Incomplete, to name a few. The Center for Teaching and Learning is available to consult with instructors about options for designing compensatory experiences (737-2804; [ctl@oregonstate.edu](mailto:ctl@oregonstate.edu)). It is up to the instructor to determine what constitutes a reasonable compensatory experience in a given course.