

**STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1360**

**TITLE: Graduate Absence Inclusion and Normalization (GAIN) Act**

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CHAPTER 323 SENATE ATTENDANCE (73-150, 74-133, 75-182, 76-204, 76-206, 76-245, 77-118, 80-180, 81-112, 82-177, 82-122, 82-170, 83-111, 83-115, 88-133, 94-114, 97-108, 98-100, 98-119, 2000-146, 2002-128, 2002-159, 2004-127, 2005-123, 2006-125, 2007-144, 2008-118, 2008-129, 2011-117, 2012-102, 2014-111, 2015-109, 2020-1022, 2020-1042, 2020-1066, 2023-130)

- 323.1 Student Senators are required to attend Student Senate meetings.
- 323.2 A roll call shall be made at the beginning and end of each Student Senate meeting. Absence from either a quorum call, roll call, or roll call vote shall constitute one half (1/2) absence. Absence from both roll calls shall constitute one (1) absence, provided that only one absence may be accumulated per meeting.
- 323.3 Upon accumulation of two (2) absences in the Fall or Spring term or one (1) absence in the Summer A or Summer B term, a Student Senator shall receive an attendance warning letter via e-mail.
- 323.31 Absences shall reset at the beginning of each new term. The Rules and Ethics Committee may take action on absences from the previous term within one month of the new term beginning provided the Student Senator has not been re-elected.
- 323.32 All Student Senators, whether elected or appointed, shall submit an affiliation form to the Senate President or Senate Secretary by the third meeting after the Student Senator's election or appointment, otherwise the seat may be declared vacant as provided by the Rules and Procedures.
- 323.33 During the Summer A and Summer B terms, if a Student Senator accumulates two (2) unexcused or three (3) combined absences (excused or unexcused) from the

Student Senate, it shall constitute resignation by non-attendance. During the Fall and Spring terms, if a Student Senator accumulates three (3) unexcused or four (4) combined absences (excused or unexcused) from the Student Senate, it shall constitute resignation by non-attendance.

323.34 Upon resignation by nonattendance of a Student Senator, the Rules and Ethics Chairperson shall send a letter by email or standard post to notify the Student Senator of their resignation. The Rules and Ethics Chairperson shall notify the Senate President Pro-Tempore before the next regularly scheduled Student Senate meeting.

323.4 The Rules and Ethics Committee shall hear appeals from this chapter.

323.41 If a Student Senator wishes to submit an appeal of their resignation by nonattendance, the Student Senator must do so within seven (7) calendar days of postmark to the Rules and Ethics Chairman via email or standard post. Provided the Seat has not been filled, this deadline may be waived at the discretion of the Rules and Ethics Committee only in extenuating circumstances.

323.42 If a Student Senator appeals after having resigned by non-attendance, that Student Senator may be reinstated and up to two (2) absences removed for good cause shown, upon recommendation by two-thirds (2/3) of the Rules and Ethics Committee and majority vote of the Student Senate, provided such Student Senator has not been replaced in accordance with Chapter 340.

323.421 If a Student Senator was excused for a religious holiday during the term they were resigned by non-attendance, the committee will give strong weight to this evidence during an appeal. If the Rules and Ethics Committee approves the appeal, the committee shall expunge one (1) absence from the senator's record.

323.422 Failure to receive a warning letter after reaching two absences during the Fall or Spring term or after reaching one absence in the Summer A or Summer B term shall not be used as an acceptable argument in appeal.

323.43 Any newly elected Student Senator, whether elected for the first time or re-elected

to the Student Senate will begin the term of office with "zero" absences.

323.44 The following guidelines shall be used for unacceptable reasons for absences from the regular Student Senate meetings.

- a. "Regular meetings of organizations, clubs, committees, etc."
- b. Studying or non-University of Florida sponsored review sessions.
- c. Out-of-town trips not pertaining to approved Student Senate, Student Government, or University of Florida business, or trips not properly documented for employment interviews (out-of-town trips for reasons of unavoidable personal emergencies may be approved).

~~4. d.~~ Regular employment schedules.

~~5. e.~~ Regularly scheduled classes.

~~6. f.~~ Graduate/Professional School entrance exam preparation courses.

This includes but is not limited to LSAT, GMAT, GRE, etc. preparation courses.

323.45 Guidelines to be used for acceptable reasons for absences from the regular Student Senate meetings shall include, but not be limited to:

a. Death in the family

~~b. Exam, with proper authority signature (This includes, but is not limited to, professor, teaching assistant, and academic advisor.)~~

b. Illness

c. Car accidents

d. Acts of God

e. Academic commitments, with proper documentation, this includes, but is not limited to:

i. Exam, with proper authority signature (This includes, but is not limited to, professor, teaching assistant, and academic advisor.)

ii. Fieldwork pertaining to their degree.

iii. Presenting at an academic research conference(s).

f. Religious holiday, with pertinent information about the observance

323.46 The Student Senate reserves the right to determine the validity of all excuses.

323.47 If a Student Senator believes that an absence should be recorded as excused, that Student Senator must submit an excuse no later than seven (7) calendar days following the absence.

323.5 Student Senators shall receive an attendance credit of one half-absence against past or future absences, provided that such Student Senator has not accumulated the number of absences that would constitute resignation by non-attendance:

1. When the Student Senate meets more than one time per week and said Student Senator is present at four (4) attendance roll calls during a week. This shall not exceed one full credit per semester.

2. The Rules and Ethics Committee shall deem a meeting or event deserving of an attendance credit, and must be approved by the 2/3 vote of the Student Senate no less than one week prior to the event or meeting. There will be one half credit per event or meeting, not to exceed one full credit per semester.

323.6 Once a Student Senator has accumulated enough absences to constitute resignation by non-attendance, the Rules and Ethics Committee shall expunge one half-absence from that Student Senator's attendance record for every standing committee for which that Student Senator has attended 80% of meetings held in that term prior to that Student Senator's last absence from a meeting of the Student Senate, even if that Student Senator is not a member of that committee, so long as:

1. In the Fall and Spring terms, that standing committee has met at least eight times in that term prior to that Student Senator's last absence from a meeting of the Student Senate.

2. In the summer terms, that standing committee has met at least three times in that term prior to that Student Senator's last absence

from a meeting of the Student Senate.

- 323.61 Only one half-absence may be expunged from a Student Senator's attendance record through this method per standing committee per term, with a maximum of one absence being expunged from a Student Senator's attendance record through this method per term.
- 323.7 The Rules & Ethics Committee may recommend to the Student Senate to expunge absences from a Student Senator's record by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.
- 323.8 Absences, attendance credits, and waivers under this Chapter shall apply only during the term in which they accumulate.