



## USP ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Philosophy

Your child's attendance at school is very important. Our educational program is based on the assumption that students will attend school regularly, in accordance with the School calendar and the daily schedule. The purpose of the attendance policy is to encourage regular and consistent attendance and punctuality in school by all students. There is a high correlation between good attendance, academic achievement and successful every day work experience. To foster positive work and study habits, the United School of Panama administration and faculty believe that students must be in class in order to fully maximize their educational opportunities.

Students are expected to be on time and attend every class daily. Daily teaching strategies, such as, interactions between students and teacher, discussions, lectures, audio-visuals, and reports cannot be duplicated outside of the classroom and constitute a valid and crucial part of course work. Furthermore, each student is expected to contribute to the daily academic activities in their classes. When a student is absent the educational experience of all students will be diminished. Regular and constant school attendance helps develop responsibility, self-discipline and fosters the skills necessary for successful every day work experiences.

The Attendance Policy has been designed to ensure:

- that all members of the school community are clearly aware of their responsibilities
- consistency and coherence of class teaching, thus enabling all students to achieve outstanding levels of achievement, progress and personal growth.

### Absences

Students should, therefore, be absent only for necessary and important reasons, such as illness or family/personal emergency. Parents may excuse their children from school for legitimate reasons. However, because of the inevitable effect absences have on academic progress in particular, the school seeks willing cooperation from parents in exercising the utmost restraint in excusing their children from school.

### Authorized/Excused Absences



A student may be excused from school due to personal illness, death in the family, emergency dental or medical treatment, religious holiday, procurement of essential documents, renewal of passports, or other vital reasons if approved in advance by the Academic Director. At all possible, medical/dental appointments during school hours must be avoided.

### **Unauthorized/Unexcused Absences**

Unexcused absences include cutting/skipping a class, absences that have not been followed up with a note from parents, or other reasons not approved by the Academic Director. Work missed for such absences must be completed. Unexcused absences inevitably affect academic progress and this may be reflected on the student's grades.

### **Consequences of Unexcused Absences**

If poor attendance becomes an issue, it may be necessary to have the student repeat all or part of the school year or to request that the parents withdraw the student from the school.

Compensation (make-up) for extended absences for medical reasons should be arranged through the academic coordinator. Students are responsible for making up all missed work, whether or not an absence was excused.

The Faculty will make reasonable efforts to assist students in making up school work for excused absences, but will also be mindful, as stated previously, that in doing so their attention may be diverted from the needs of the majority of students in the class. Students absent on the day of an assessment are expected to make up the assessment on return to school.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Responsibility**

The Academic Director is responsible for setting and overseeing attendance procedures, and for ensuring that:

- attendance is checked and reported daily
- a daily record of attendance is maintained and logged, and
- written explanations are submitted by parents for all absences



### Late Arrivals

Students are expected to be in class on time 7:50 am. If students arrive in class after this time, they will be recorded as 'Late'.

### Non-Attendance

In the event of illness or other unforeseen absence, parents are requested to call the **USP** office and report the student's absence. They should then follow-up with an explanatory note on the student's return to class. When excusable absences can be foreseen, parents must inform the duration of the planned absence to the academic coordinator who will inform teachers.

The absence will be classified as unexcused until an adequate explanation is received. Parents should notify the administrative office each day of the absence unless the Academic coordinator has been notified of a prolonged absence in advance.

## FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES

The following applies from the start of any one academic year.

- Parents will be contacted by the **USP** Academic Coordinator when the student has reached six days of unexcused absence.
- Parents will be informed in writing by the **USP** Academic Coordinator when the student has reached 12 days of unexcused absence.
- Parents will be called for a meeting when the student has reached 16 days of unexcused absence.
- When the student has been absent for more than 18 days, the School will notify parents and a plan of action must be put in place.

All students shall be in attendance a minimum of 90% of the time.

Long term illnesses and/or family emergencies that require extended absences will be reviewed by the Academic Department to determine whether or not class requirements have been fulfilled.