Proposal to Promote Mental Health and Equity in the Excused Absence Policy
(Senate Document #21-22-04)

Academic Procedures & Standards (APAS) Committee | Chair: John Lea-Cox

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) and Senate Chair Williams request that the Academic Procedures & Standards (APAS) Committee review the concerns raised regarding student mental health and equity in the University’s Excused Absence Policy.

Specifically, the APAS Committee should:

1. Review the Proposal to Promote Mental Health and Equity in the Excused Absence Policy (Senate Document #21-22-04).
2. Review the University of Maryland Policy on Excused Absence (V-1.00[G]).
3. Review any recent exceptions to University policies that recognized the impact on student mental health.
4. Review provisions for addressing student mental health concerns in excused absence policies or through other procedures and processes at Big10 and other peer institutions.
5. Consult with the proposers.
7. Consult with Associate Chairs and Directors of Undergraduate Studies across the whole University.
8. Consult with a representative of the University Counseling Center.
10. Consult with a representative of the Office of the Senior Vice President & Provost.
11. Consult with the Senate Student Affairs Committee.
12. Consider whether the University should have specific provisions that address excused absences associated with student mental health in its policies.
13. Consider whether the requirements for excused absences associated with student mental health concerns should be made more flexible.
14. Consider whether the University should allow designated self-certified wellness days or designated university-wide mental health days off built into the calendar.
15. Consider the impact of excused absences from laboratory or other experiential courses on student learning outcomes.
16. Consider the resource and workload implications of mandated make-up laboratory or other experiential assignments if additional options for excused absences are permitted.

17. Consider whether there are equity implications related to documentation for excused absences, and whether any such implications should be addressed in policy or practice.

18. If appropriate, recommend whether University policy and/or procedures should be amended.

We ask that you submit a report to the Senate Office no later than **November 11, 2022**. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Reka Montfort in the Senate Office, reka@umd.edu.