

## Declaration of Extenuating Circumstances (within Term – not for Final Exams)

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Student Number: A \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit to:** Course or Lab Instructor, as appropriate – submit with supporting documentation (if required).

**Fill out 2 copies of this form and bring both to your instructor.**

In an effort to ensure that the guidelines for academic integrity are applied to all students equitably, you are asked to sign this declaration summarizing the extenuating circumstances that caused/will-cause you to miss the exam or assignment deadline.

In signing this form, you acknowledge your awareness of the general Faculty of Science guidelines related to missed academic work due to extenuating circumstances (provided as part of this form), as well as your awareness of the “Academic Integrity and Students Responsibility” (*Academic Regulation #19*) section of the Saint Mary’s University Undergraduate Calendar (current Calendar found at <http://www.smu.ca/academics/academic-calendar.html> ).

I (*insert name*), \_\_\_\_\_ hereby declare that due to extenuating circumstances, I was (or will be) unable to write the exam / complete the assignment for the following course: \_\_\_\_\_.  
My extenuating circumstances \* and/or supporting documentation are (*describe below*):

By signing this form, you acknowledge that this statement is truthful. If the statement is false, this will be considered an academic offence and will be investigated accordingly, and as outlined in *Academic Regulation #19*.

\* If you wish that the extenuating circumstances remain confidential, you may enter “Confidential” here and then either: provide medical or counselling documentation, and/or discuss your situation with the Science Advisors at the Science Advising Centre and have them contact your instructor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*For the Instructor:* Please sign below to acknowledge that you have received **and approved** this request, and any associated documentation that was submitted in support of the above reason (if deemed required). Please also note a brief indication of the approved resolution (e.g. write a makeup test, or excuse the test and move weight to another course component, or extend assignment deadline, etc.).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Instructor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**1 Signed Copy** for the student (retain as evidence that the request was approved by the instructor).

**1 Signed Copy** for Instructor. This copy will be retained by the Science Advising Centre (SAC) – it will remain Confidential but may be consulted by the Associate Dean of Science – External & Student Affairs if questions of academic integrity arise. (*Instructor: please forward this copy to the SAC for retention in student file.*)

## **Dispensation Guidelines for Extenuating Circumstances interfering with Academic work**

These Guidelines represent the suggested protocol for Faculty of Science courses when responding to students that request academic dispensation due to Extenuating Circumstances interfering with their academics. Individual courses may have supplemental and/or different policies related to this issue as communicated in their Course Outline; in such cases, policies provided in the Course Outline should be the primary authoritative statement, but do not negate the guidelines delineated herein.

Students who have Extenuating Circumstances interfering with their academics at some point during the regular term (see, for example, “Scenario 1” and “2” below) may submit a dispensation request to their lab or course instructor. The request is accomplished by printing out the Declaration on Page 1 of this form, filling it out, and delivering it in person to the instructor in order that student’s circumstances and request for a dispensation are documented. For web-based courses, students may scan and email their completed and signed Declaration to their instructor; for non-web courses, instructors may accept similarly scanned-and-emailed Declaration forms if the student is unable to attend class or lab in a timely way due to their Circumstances.

Dispensations, based on legitimate excuses **MAY** be granted at the discretion of the instructor. Students unsure of whether their excuse is legitimate should **ask**. (*Submission of the Declaration form is a formal “ask”; students may also ask informally first.*) The two standard Scenarios for which these Guidelines are relevant are:

- **Scenario 1: Student EXPECTS TO miss an exam, presentation or assignment** – student needs to contact the instructor 72 hours **BEFORE** the date. Depending on the situation, student will be required to either submit the form prior to the date at issue, or within 72 hours after the date.

For situations when a student knows of a conflicting event long in advance (e.g. SMU varsity athletic competition or other SMU-sponsored/related activity, other high/national-level extracurricular event, religious/holy-day observance, etc.), the form should be submitted within one week of the announcement of the test/presentation date (in alignment with *Academic Regulation 8g*).

- **Scenario 2: Student unexpectedly MISSES an exam, presentation or assignment** – student needs to contact the instructor within 48 hours **AFTER** the date at issue, and submit the form.

Once an exam/test is written, it “counts”; after-the-fact appeals to change a grade can only be made through an official Appeal of Grade after the course is completed (see <http://www.smu.ca/academics/final-exams-grade-appeals.html> ). If circumstances are sufficiently personal such that the student does not wish to relate them to the course instructor (and/or the situation is affecting multiple Science courses), students may discuss their situation with a Science Advisor at the Science Advising Centre (room AT 301; email [advisor.science@smu.ca](mailto:advisor.science@smu.ca) ) and have the Advisor contact the instructor(s).

**Supporting Documentation:** Students are requested to **not** go to a physician **SOLELY** to obtain documentation of a health issue. Note that the SMU Student Health Centre no longer issues “sick notes” to validate one-time missed classes/labs/tests. However, students may still be asked to provide appropriate supporting documentation, depending on the circumstances, such as:

- Serious long-term illness or injury certified by documentation from a licensed health professional.
- Current or recent treatment from a licensed psychiatrist, or counselling by Saint Mary’s Counselling Centre, certified by supporting documentation from same.
- Recent death or life-threatening illness or injury of a family member or close friend. The course instructor may ask for verification of the situation (e.g., death certificate, published obituary) and may verify the legitimacy of the document.

Note that if any such documentation is determined to be fraudulent, or if the signed Declaration of circumstances is found fraudulent, this will be considered an academic offence and will be investigated as outlined in *Academic Regulation #19*.