

From: gslate@umd.edu
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2006 9:26 PM
To: skim@gvpt.umd.edu
Subject: Feb. 9 Absence

Dr. Kim:

This is a follow-up to our conversation on January 26 at the conclusion of your Globalization & Governance in the Asia-Pacific class. During our conversation I let you know that I would be unable to attend class on February 9 and I asked if it would be possible for me to sit for the quiz at the begging of class and leave after finishing it. You agreed and I appreciate your flexibility. As you know I am also in your Economics, Security, and Strategy class that will meet at 2 p.m. on the 9th. Unfortunately, I am required to appear in court in New Jersey for a matter related to my work. I am going to delay my departure to New Jersey to take the quiz in your Asia-Pacific class in the morning but due to time constraints I will not be able to take the quiz in the Economics, Security, and Strategy on February 9. I realize that you don't count the three lowest quiz grades but I am uncomfortable getting behind in the course so early in the semester. I am writing to see if I can take the quiz at your convenience before or after the 9th or if you have any other suggestions as to how I could avoid receiving a zero for the quiz. I believe that my absence should fall within university guidelines for an excusable absence and my absence is completely unavoidable otherwise I would not ask.

While I feel that my explanation is satisfactory I want to go a bit further because I do not feel comfortable requesting any favors as they relate to my academic career.

If it were possible I would do my best to resolve the legal issues I am navigating without involving any of my professors by way of requesting schedule accommodations.

However, I believe it would be helpful if you had some additional information so that you are clear that this is not a case of a student simply missing a class for a minor reason.

I currently work for a national nonprofit organization that investigates human and civil rights violations in the United States. The organization, the Police Complaints Center documents cases of police misconduct and civil rights violations using hidden cameras and a variety of forms of digital technology. Part of our investigations requires that staff like myself put ourselves in the position of everyday citizens to determine if police are violating particular laws or policies. Frequently, our organization works in collaboration with national news organizations such as Dateline, 20/20 and 60 minutes. The investigations are extremely dangerous and sometimes result in arrests.

In most cases, we enter and leave the test without the police ever knowing that they were tested. If arrest occurred the police often would withdraw any charges as soon as they learned the test is part of a news report. In some cases however, the police will dig their heels in and continue to resist reforms despite evidence of officer misconduct. The latter is what I am facing today. I was charged with a criminal offense during an undercover investigation with a British documentary film crew last summer. Although we expected the charges to be dropped the police have resisted and continue to claim that I was guilty of a criminal offense.

I hope that the criminal case I'm facing will be resolved quickly after the next hearing. But because the issue may arise again I believe that is important to inform you now that I may be required to appear again before the semester is over. I thank you for any accommodation that you can make when necessary. If you need to verify the authenticity of my comments in this letter please feel free to ask me to provide anything that you feel is necessary.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Regards,
Greg Slate