

Attendance Collection Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why do we have to enter attendance? This isn't high school! Adults can choose whether or not to go to class.

A: Students must attend through the census date (aka "pay day") in order to be eligible for their financial aid. The college can only report students attending through census date for our state aid. Because we refund financial aid monies to students beyond tuition and fees, we need to be especially careful that the student qualifies for the excess aid. If for any reason we issue aid incorrectly, the funds must be returned to the government. It is important we know the student's eligibility based on their attendance prior to issuing a refund.

Short answer: We could create huge financial receivables by giving refunds to students who registered but never came to class or stopped attending prior to census.

Q: What happens to a student if I mark them as never attending or stopped attending prior to census?

A: The College reviews their financial status and determines if they should be dropped from the class based on their payment history and pending aid. If the student has not paid tuition or is expecting financial aid, we drop the student from the course. All tuition and fees (and financial aid) associated with the course is deleted.

Q: Are all students marked absent subsequently dropped for non-attendance?

A: No. Only students who are expecting financial aid or have paid less than 50% of their outstanding tuition are dropped. There may be students on your roster that never attended the class but will not be dropped from the course.

Q: What should I do with students who remain on my roster who never or stopped attending?

A: Issue a withdrawal or a grade. All faculty-initiated withdrawals or F grades should include the student's last date of attendance..

Q: Some students would prefer to have the F or W grade instead of being dropped for non-attendance. Can I re-register them and just give them a grade even though they are not actually going to come back to class?

A: No. This situation sounds like a student who needs the course for financial aid eligibility. They'd be willing to take the poor grade in exchange for the financial aid funds. We don't make those kinds of trades. They may want to consider enrolling and attending a late start course. This is what we refer to as a "tough life lesson."

Q: Why do we bother dropping students who don't attend? Let them fail and be charged the full tuition. (Isn't that what they do at other schools?)

A: Because we need to stop their tuition refund. If we don't catch it and send the refund to the ineligible student --- we still have to give the full amount back to the government when the error is found. This means we have repaid the full amount of aid to the government AND lost the additional amount refunded to the student. Scary, huh? Without careful attendance auditing, this figure can climb to over \$1 million dollars. (Yes, you read that correctly. Big number.)

Q: Do we go after the student for the refunded money they should never have received?

A: Of course. The rate of repayment is horribly low. So, we send them to collections. Students in collections can rarely ever re-register for courses at the college when they mature and realize the errors of their past. It does happen, but it is a long road that we'd like to avoid.

Q: When do we drop students for non-attendance?

A: Approximately the end of the 6th week of the full term. We also run a second attendance drop for later starting course approximately three weeks before the end of the full semester.

Q: Why is the census date so important?

A: Everyone gets "paid" on this date. Student earn their aid, the college can submit enrollment for state aid based on students attending on census. Financially speaking, this is an important date at all colleges.

Q: Where can I find the census date for the courses I am teaching?

A: Good question. We are working on making this important date available in your course roster in Banner, so you are always aware of this date. Until this is completed, the dates are available on the MCC web site under the A-Z index, W for Withdrawal Dates. You'll find a listing of course start/end dates and the census and withdrawal deadline. This information is also sent to you in hard copy and e-mail closer to the attendance submission deadlines.

Q: What if a student attends on the census date and I never see her again? Is she considered attending or not?

A: *Yes. Attendance on census means the student is attending the course. She has earned her aid. We may submit her record for state aid.*

Q: What if a student misses class on the census date, but I think she is coming back to the class.

A: *If you know the student is coming back, then mark her as attending. You can change the information if you realize this was incorrect. Attendance is not an exact science, you make the best decisions you can, given the information you have at the time.*

Q: What if I make a mistake on attendance? What if I want to change the attendance I entered?

A: *Send Betsy Ripton (Registrar) an e-mail with the revised information (eripton@monroecc.edu). Once attendance is entered, you cannot change it in Banner yourself. You need "big brother" to make the change for you. (Or in this case, "big sister!")*

Q: What happens if I forget to enter attendance?

A: *Read your MCC e-mail regularly. You will be given at least one reminder before the deadline. Once the deadline is missed, you are notified that you missed the deadline. Unfortunately, your Department Chair, Division Dean and Academic Vice President are also notified.*

Q: What happens if I green slip a student into my course after attendance has been entered?

A: *You can enter their attendance at any point after the green slip is processed. At a certain point in the term, R&R monitors late green slips and makes assumptions for you about attendance. An "8" code means that my office has entered the attendance for you with the assumption that a late registrant is attending. Feel free to contact Betsy Ripton if this information is incorrect for any student. (eripton@monroecc.edu)*

Q: Why do you need a last date of attendance when I enter an F grade or withdraw a student? You already have my attendance for this student! Please stop bugging me.

A: *Students who do not successfully complete any course within the term may have their financial aid recalculated after the fact. We process the required recalculations based on the latest date the student attended. It is easiest for us to obtain this information when you enter the final grade for the student. (You may forget, but then we have to search you out after the fact.)*

Q: How long do I need to keep my daily attendance records after the term ends?

A: *The College is required to maintain the information you enter in Banner for 6 years. You should keep your attendance documents for at least 3 years beyond the course end date. (We can be audited for 3 years beyond the term)*