

Guidelines for Symposium Absence Excusal

The JGB Curriculum Committee passed a ruling to assist and support LGBs in their decisions concerning students needing excused from symposia. This will provide statewide consistency. This year, the original letters of request from the students and the LGB decision letter will be sent to Sean Freeland, sean.freeland@hsc.wvu.edu who will then get them to the Curriculum Committee for final review.

The Annual Symposia are an important part of the HSTA experience. These events are mandatory for students to attend as the presentation of their projects helps develop crucial skills for our students, in addition to fulfilling requirements of the HSTA waiver. However, we understand that sometimes circumstances arise that require special attention to students' attendance. Please make every effort to ensure that your students understand the importance of their attendance at Symposium and that your board understands this importance as well. We appreciate your help in regulating these absence approvals and developed the guidelines below to help you and your board to make decisions regarding this matter a little easier.

Guidelines for Symposium Exemptions

Students that need to make special arrangements for attendance at Symposium must adhere to the following protocol:

1. Students must petition (letter to the board, visit the board, etc) their LGB with the reason for their need for special arrangements.
2. Approved LGB excuses are due to the Joint Governing Board on April 12th.
 - i. LGBs will need to send their approved letters to Sean Freeland, Curriculum Coordinator, at sean.freeland@hsc.wvu.edu, before or on April 12th.
3. Students will need to complete the letter at the end of the document.
4. LGB letters of approval along with the original student request will be sent to Sean to be presented to the curriculum committee for review and final approval
5. Decisions will be finalized as soon possible and notification sent to the field sites
6. Any student excused for the entire day must make arrangements to present their project to the LGB **after their region's state symposium**.
 - a. Students' score must be emailed to the appropriate CRA along with the rubrics.
 - b. All re-presentations
 - i. Judges are to include at least two LGB members, FSC and CRA.

- ii. Students include
 - 1. those who have been excused from symposium
 - 2. those who were not in compliance with symposium policy
 - a. failing scores at symposium
 - b. behavior problems
 - c. **Unexcused absences or leaving event without pre-approval by the April 12th deadline will result in dismissal from program.** Student(s) must appeal to LGB.
- 7. Teachers needing to miss the Symposia must follow the same procedure as outlined above for approval to miss and must make arrangements to see that their students' needs are met at Symposium.

The following circumstances are acceptable reasons for exception:

- 1. Prom –Students can be excused for only part of the Symposium if there is a conflict due to Prom. They should be expected to attend either the morning session (9-12) or the afternoon session (12-4).
 - a. Hair appointments, nail appointments, make-up sessions, etc. are not acceptable reasons to leave Symposium early.
 - b. Travel arrangements should be made prior to Symposium day if only a few students are affected by Prom. Students unaffected by Prom from that region are expected to stay all day.
- 2. College Graduations – Students with immediate family members graduating may be excused.
- 3. Serious Illness
- 4. Other valid reasons could include
 - a. Funeral
 - b. Wedding
 - c. Other major family events