

# ATTENDANCE TRACKING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

## Why do instructors need to participate in Attendance Tracking?

The University is required to verify that students receiving federal financial aid are attending the classes for which they have registered. ***If the University cannot verify that a student has attended her or his classes, that student will lose her or his financial aid.*** Attendance verification also ensures that the University has accurate student census data.

## General information about Attendance Tracking:

The Attendance Tracking system opens on the first day of class for a given term.

In order for a student to retain her or his financial aid, each of the student's instructors must verify that the student has attended class ***at least once*** during the term. Instructors are not required to take daily attendance.

The Attendance Tracking system automatically computes an ***attendance percentage*** for each student enrolled in a course. A student's attendance percentage must be ***greater than zero*** in every course for the student to receive her or his full allotment of financial aid.

Because financial aid is disbursed throughout the term, it is helpful for instructors to verify students' attendance early in a term.

## How do I know if a particular student is attending my class?

Instructors can take roll on the first day of class to verify attendance. Some instructors, as part of the first day of class, ask students to fill out an index card that provides the instructor with some information about the student, such as classification (freshman, sophomore, etc.) and major. Instructors can use the index cards as a way of taking roll on the first day.

If you choose not to take roll, you can verify students' attendance in class in other ways. If a student submits the first homework, you can verify that she or he is actively attending. If a student is in class on the date of the first in-class quiz or exam, you can verify that she or he is actively attending. An occasional absence is okay. What you are trying to report is a record of students who just stop attending but have not officially withdrawn. If your class has laboratory or discussion sessions that are led by teaching assistants, you can delegate Attendance Tracking to your teaching assistants. This option is described in more detail below.

## How are students' attendance percentages computed?

For each day of class, a student can be marked present, marked absent, or not marked either present or absent. This screen shot shows an instructor's view of the attendance records for three students:

Attendance	Wednesday 04/13/2016	Monday 04/18/2016	Wednesday 04/20/2016	Monday 04/25/2016	Wednesday 04/27/2016
0 %					
100 %					
100 %					

The red circle with the minus sign indicates that the first student was absent from class on April 27, 2016. The green circles with the checkmarks indicate that the other two students were present on that date.

The empty circles on the other dates listed are not counted as absences. An empty circle means that attendance for that student was not checked on that date.

A student's attendance percentage is computed as the following fraction:

(number of dates marked present) divided by (number of dates marked either present or absent)

Empty circles do not count in the denominator of this fraction. However, a student whose attendance record has **only empty circles** will have a default attendance percentage of zero.

## What can students see?

Students can use the student view in the Attendance Tracking system to view their attendance percentages. Students cannot see their detailed day-by-day attendance record; they only see the attendance percentage. This screen shot shows the student view of attendance percentages (in the right most column):

T...	C...	Subject	C...	S...	Title	Schedule	Time	M..	Perce...
201620	29420	Cultural Studies in Education	592	001	Social Justice and Education	S M T	17:45	0	100%
201625	70189	Forestry/Wildlife/Fisheries	490	001	Intro to GIS for Nat. Res.	S M T	08:00	0	0%

Students will receive a message from the University that encourages them to view their attendance percentages. If a student's attendance percentage is listed as zero in a class that the student has actually been attending, that student will be encouraged to contact her or his instructor for assistance. In the screen shot shown immediately above, the student enrolled in Forestry/Wildlife/Fisheries 490 would be encouraged to contact the instructor of that course to determine why the student's attendance percentage is zero. For Fall 2016 term, students will be able to view their attendance percentages on October 21<sup>st</sup>.

## How instructors can help minimize student anxiety:

As an instructor, you might choose to verify student attendance on a specific date early in the term. There could be some students who are actively attending your class, but are absent on that date for whatever reason.

If you mark those students absent (using the red circle with the minus sign) or if you do not mark those students either absent or present (by leaving their circle empty), those students will have an attendance percentage of zero, and will probably contact you about this.

If such a student is actively attending your class, you will need to mark her or him present **on at least one day** in order for the student to receive financial aid. So, you will need to verify attendance on at least one other day of the term in order to be able to mark that student present.

However, if you have marked a student absent (red circle with the minus sign) on an earlier date, and then mark the student present (green circle with the checkmark) on a later date, that student's attendance percentage can never be shown as 100% in Attendance Tracking. It's possible that such a student may contact you to ask what effect this will have on her or his performance in your course.

Instructors who will use Attendance Tracking **only** to verify attendance for financial aid purposes can adopt the following approach. By only marking students present (using the green circle with the checkmark) and never marking students absent (using the red circle with the minus sign), an instructor can ensure that each student will see an attendance percentage for the class of either 100% or zero. This is all that is needed for Attendance Tracking to verify attendance for financial aid purposes.

## I have a really big multi-section class. How can I speed things up?

Attendance Tracking is done at the section or CRN level. If your class has multiple meeting types, such as a lecture and a discussion, or a lecture and a lab session, then each meeting type for each CRN will be shown in your Attendance Tracking system. This screen shot shows an example of a single CRN for Chemistry 130, which has four different meeting times during the week:

201620	23168	Chemistry	130	001	General Chemistry II	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	12:20	Take Roll
201620	23168	Chemistry	130	001	General Chemistry II	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	14:30	Take Roll
201620	23168	Chemistry	130	001	General Chemistry II	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	15:35	Take Roll
201620	23168	Chemistry	130	001	General Chemistry II	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	16:40	Take Roll

The instructor for this class only needs to verify attendance using **one of the four meeting times** shown. The instructor does not have to separately verify attendance at the lecture session, the discussion session, and the laboratory sessions.

In addition, Attendance Tracking **can be completed by teaching assistants** that are assigned as secondary instructors. Unlike the Grade Entry system, Attendance Tracking does not have to be completed by the primary instructor.

So, the primary instructor for the Chemistry 130 class shown above might ask her or his teaching assistants to verify attendance in the laboratory sessions or the discussion session, rather than verifying attendance for the large lecture as a whole. Each teaching assistant assigned to the course as a secondary instructor will be able to use Attendance Tracking (as described below) to verify attendance for students in that teaching assistant's section.

## Is there anything else I should know?

If you are teaching a cross-listed course, your course will have multiple CRNs, one for each cross-listing. You will need to complete Attendance Tracking for all of the CRNs for which students have registered.

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS

### Logging in:

Instructors can access Attendance Tracking by logging into MyUTK and clicking on the “Attendance Tracking” link located in the Staff/Academic Resources column.

After clicking on the link, you will navigate to the first page of Attendance Tracking which displays course sections in which you are listed as an instructor.

To mark attendance for students, click on the Take Roll Button.

201620   20308   Mathematics   125   008   Basic Calculus   S M T W T F S   17:05   [Take Roll](#)

Select your date of attendance from the calendar option. The default is the current date. You may select any valid class meeting date within the term.

04/28/2016 

Attendance	Wednesday 04/13/2016	Monday 04/18/2016	Wednesday 04/20/2016	Monday 04/25/2016	Wednesday 04/27/2016
0 % 	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
100 %	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
100 %	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

You may mark students individually if you wish or select from the “Update All” options to mark students as present or absent.

The “Update All” button will allow the instructor to mark all absent, present, or update empty records. For example, an instructor can mark absences first, then use “Update Empty Records to Present” to mark the rest of the students as present.



Students who have withdrawn will appear at the end of the attendance roll. ***Please mark attendance for withdrawn students in your sections.***

The “Class” button allows the instructor to cancel a class meeting and notify the students via email that the class has been cancelled. This only cancels individual class meetings – it will not cancel the entire section or course for the term.



If you encounter any issues with performing Attendance Tracking activities, please contact the Office of the University Registrar, [kcooper@utk.edu](mailto:kcooper@utk.edu) or [plove1@utk.edu](mailto:plove1@utk.edu) .