Recommendations and Opportunities to consider:

1. How do you define "attendance" and/or "participation"?

It is common practice for faculty, at their discretion, to include class attendance and/or class participation as a criterion in determining a student's overall grade in the course. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic and the many alterations in course delivery modalities, the likelihood of the typical course engagement environment to be altered is high. This includes courses being taught in a different modality (i.e. face-to-face, 100% online, hybrid with a percentage in-person and the rest in some altered format, etc.). A faculty member's "normal" definition of "attendance" and/or "participation" is likely to be altered.

Recommendation to broaden your definition of "attendance" and/or "class participation."

Recommendation to consider the weight of attendance and/or participation in final grade for your course.

There is a high probability that some students and perhaps faculty will be absent from class due to illness for extended periods. Faculty should consider expanding their attendance and/or participation policies to include participation and engagement in the course in other ways. Faculty are encouraged to review their course requirements and activities and potentially develop alternatives or optional ways to augment the essential course requirements. These alternatives should be equivalent experiences which do not lower or alter the standard for your course(s). These alternatives should provide flexibility with physical attendance and/or participation.

Physical attendance in the classroom or in a synchronous environment online is not the only way that students participate in the class. There are a variety of ways that faculty can maintain and even enhance student participation and engagement in the course. Many of these activities may increase the amount of work that faculty put into each of their course, but they are viable options that have been developed and implemented by faculty in the past. Option things to consider:

- Use lecture capture or recording options (i.e. Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, Zoom, etc.) to make the physical lecture available to students outside of the classroom environment.
- Using the various tools within Blackboard to augment your course delivery. Blackboard resources are available at the following address: (https://www.shawnee.edu/areas-study/clark-memorial-library/blackboard). Blackboard support is available 24/7 by contacting the ITS Blackboard Support Number: (740) 351-3682.
- Allow students to attend class remotely (i.e., Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, Zoom, etc.).
- Permit alternative course participation through alternative means (i.e., discussion board forum activities, various other alternative assignments).
- Provide alternative methods for assignment submission other than physically turning in papers (i.e., electronic submission via e-mail, Blackboard, etc.).
- Permit the completion and submission of equivalent alternative work versus that which might be completed in during class (i.e., discussion forum, Blackboard assignment, quiz, exam, etc.).
- Offer expanded dates/times for submission of assignments.

- If you use attendance and/or participation as a criterion for grading, consider alternatives for assigning point values for attendance and/or participation (i.e. do not hold any excused absence against the total for the attendance – if you meet on 10 days and would assign 1 point for each attendance for a total of 10 points out of 10 points possible, consider not counting an excused absence against the total score. So if the student had 2 excused absences, she or he would have 8 points out of 8 points possible in place of the 10).

2. Identify challenges students my encounter with regard to physical class attendance.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our students as well as faculty are experiencing an increase in challenges to their schedules. It is helpful to keep in mind that students may:

- Become exposed to COVID-19 and need to be quarantined;
- Become ill and need to isolate;
- Have a family member or other loved one become ill or exposed to COVID-19;
- Experience increased anxiety and mental health issues;
- Be in a recognized high-risk category.

Recommendation to be cognizant of the challenges faced by our students and ourselves.

COVID-19 related absences may take several forms which can and will impact your course. This is true whether you are teaching face-to-face, online, hybrid, etc. For example, if a student is sick, he or she may not be able to attend class physically or synchronously or do the assigned work in the timeframe given. Keep in mind the number of class sessions missed or the time needed to recover will be different for each individual student. Due to patient confidentiality, faculty members may not be informed of the positive status for the student. Students may present with an excuse from their health care provider with no specifics in regards to their illness. Please refer to SSU's Excused Absence Policy: https://www.shawnee.edu/about-us/university-policies/academic-policies-and-appeals/absence-policies

If a student wishes to disclose to you the nature of their illness, they can but they are not required to.

3. Are you aware of available resources to assist you.

Shawnee State University has many resources to help faculty in designing and redesigning nearly every aspect of your course. SSU is a vibrant community with caring and compassionate individuals who are willing and able to assist.

Recommendation to consult the various resources available to SSU faculty for course design and development.

The Teaching and Learning Center has developed and provided resources throughout the year and has stepped up its support for developing webinars and additional trainings for faculty throughout spring

and summer. Please see the following website for specific categories: https://www.shawnee.edu/areas-study/clark-memorial-library/teaching-learning-center/help-transitioning-courses-online

These resources include information and links to information on a number of topics including but not limited to:

- ADA Resources;
- Advising;
- Assessment;
- Blackboard;
- Online course compliance;
- Connecting with Students and Building Community;
- Designing Online Courses;
- Hybrid Course Creation;
- Library Resources.