Factors That Influence Student Attendance

- Students with higher GPAs are less likely to skip.
- Students are less likely to skip classes they freely chose to take.
- Students were less likely to skip professional school classes than humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences – unless the instructor takes roll.
- Attendance policies motivate students to attend.
- Students are more likely to skip a large class than a small class.

Factors That Don’t Seem to Matter

- Student’s Sex
- Student’s Age
- Student’s Employment Status
- Credit Hours Enrolled
- Student’s Residence (living on- or off-campus)
- Student’s Class Standing
- Student’s Tuition Status
- Time of the Class

Reasons Students DO Attend Class*

- I believe I should attend (Not going makes me feel guilty.)
- The teacher notices and cares when I am there.
- Absences above a minimum affect my grade.
- I like participating in this class.
- I want to ask questions in class.
- We work on assignments or projects in class.
- The amount of my class participation affects my grade.
- I am interested in the course content.

Reasons Students DO NOT Attend Class*

- Attendance is not taken or does not influence my grade.
- The teacher doesn’t notice or care whether I am there.
- Course content is available from another source (e.g. I can get it from the text, the web, a tutor, a classmate’s notes).
- I felt tired or overslept because I had fun the night before.
- The teacher digresses, is repetitious, confusing, or goes too quickly, so I don’t learn much when I attend.
- I dislike the subject matter.
- I like the subject matter, but the teacher is boring; I’d attend more often if someone else presented the material.
- Instead of attending, I did an assignment or studied for a test in another course.
- Instead of attending, I wanted to take a break during the time class was meeting.
- It is my first or last class of the day.

*Reasons reported by students, as related to attendance behavior, in descending order.

Friedman, Paul, Fred Rodriguez, and Joe McComb.  “Why Students Do and Do Not Attend Classes:  Myths and Realities.”  