

POLICY TITLE: <i>Attendance and Absences Policy – M3/4</i>	APPROVAL DATE: <i>July 3, 2019</i> <i>Revised June 4, 2020</i> <i>Revised July 2, 2020</i> <i>Revised June 3, 2021</i> <i>Revised May 5, 2022</i>
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: <i>Office of Medical Education & Office of Student Affairs</i>	APPLIES TO: <i>M3 and M4 Students</i>

I. PREAMBLE

This policy applies to all M3/4 medical students while they are enrolled at the College of Medicine.

All M3 clerkship and M4 acting internship (AI)/elective activities are mandatory events and will comply with the Student Duty Hours Policy. Along with the privileges that go along with medicine, there are responsibilities for that care. Attendance is one of those responsibilities.

Absences are days that a student misses when they are **scheduled** to report for M3/4 learning activities/clinical duties in their designated course(s).

Students must be granted permission to attend medical (diagnostic, preventative, and therapeutic) health service appointments. Students do not have to disclose the type/reason of medical appointment.

Make-up clinical dates may be required for absences.

II. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, two types of absences are defined, planned and unplanned absence:

Planned absence: Any planned time off that the student can notify the course director with as much advance notice as possible but not less than 2 weeks. Planned absences include personal days, residency interviews, medical appointments, conference travel, and jury duty.

Personal Day: A personal day is an absence planned in advance for which students do not need to disclose a reason.

Unplanned absence: An unforeseeable circumstance in which the student is unable to report to clinical duties (e.g. illness, accident, hospitalization, other catastrophic event)

III. ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

Any planned absence in the clinical years requires prior submission of an MSSF with at least 2 weeks' notice. In the instance of an unplanned absence, the student will immediately notify the course director and coordinator, as well as the clinical team with whom they are working and then submit an MSSF as soon as they are able to do so.

Submission of an MSSF does not guarantee automatic approval for an absence.

Students who miss any days may be required to make up the missed time and any assignments at the discretion of the course director.

The following details the number of planned absences that may be requested by course type and length. Planned absences cannot be requested on blackout dates. M3 students should refer to the blackout calendar and M4 students should not request the first or last day of a rotation. M4 students should refer to their course regarding any additional blackout days (e.g. long admitting day and post long admitting days on an AI).

Students may not exceed a TOTAL number of planned absences, as follows:

M3 courses

- 2 absences in a 4 week M3 core clerkship
- 3 absences in a 6 week M3 core clerkship
- 3 absences in an 8 week M3 core clerkship
- 1 absence in an M3 2-week specialty elective
- In a 6-week or 8-week rotation, the student may not take time in the same 4-week period as 2 other absences (i.e. cannot take all 3 absences within a 4 week continuous period)

M4 courses

- 2 absences on a 4-week rotation
- 1 absence on a 2-week rotation
- Students are encouraged to avoid scheduling USMLE Step 2 CK examination during an AI

Should a student need to miss additional days due to **residency interviews and/or medical appointments**, this needs to be discussed with the course director and should be discussed prior to the start of the elective or with as much advance notice as possible.

Should a student have any unplanned absences in addition to the total number of planned absences, the student should work with the course director to discuss a make-up plan. If the student needs to consider a leave of absence, they should meet with the Office of Student Affairs.

Students who miss a significant number of days such that the make-up activities would need to fall outside the dates of the scheduled rotation, the student will need to meet with the course director and the Office of Student Affairs regarding a plan for completing the course requirements.

Tardiness

Students will contact their team and the coordinator if they will be tardy (will not arrive on time) to a required activity. A Formative Feedback Form will be submitted.

V. PROCESS OF SEEKING APPROVAL FOR ABSENCES

An absence for any reason must provide proper notification and appropriate approval.

Proper Notification

- Students should submit their request for **ANY** absence using the online MSSF.
 - Absences of 1 hour or less do not require an MSSF.
 - Absences greater than 1 hour but less than a full day require a “half-day” MSSF (note: half day absences are tallied and count toward the total number of absences)
- MSSFs are routed to the course director for review.

Failure to submit the MSSF and any additional documentation that is required may constitute unprofessional behavior and may be documented in the student file via a Formative Feedback Form.

Appropriate Approval

- The course director will review absences and make a determination as to whether the absence is excused or unexcused.
- Absences requested less than 2 weeks prior to the planned absence will not be considered for a possible excused absence unless extenuating circumstances prevented the student from providing timely notification per the policy.
- If you are absent and it is unexcused, this may constitute unprofessional behavior and may be documented in the student file via a Formative Feedback Form. Absence from a course without written notification on an MSSF, in addition to notification to the clinical team, may result in a below passing grade (C or F). When the unexcused

absence occurs in a required and/or graded activity, a zero (no credit) is automatically given. No make-up is permitted.

- Absences may be required to be made up at the discretion of the course director (see section VI below).

Special Requirements for Attending a Conference

- If the student has received a Letter of Concern, the PAC chair will also be consulted on the decision.
- Notification of attendance at a conference or seminar through an MSSF must be submitted with as much advance notice as possible (e.g. 6 weeks) prior to the start of the course in which the absence will occur.
- Students presenting posters or who are invited to present at a meeting must provide a copy of the invitation and seminar/conference agenda listing their participation.
- Absence from mandatory activities is limited to two academic days (including travel time).
- Refer to the pre-approval process if attending a conference during the COVID pandemic ([COVID-19 Medical Student Conference Attendance Approval Process](#)).

Special Requirements for Jury Duty

Students should notify the Registrar immediately upon receipt of a summons for jury duty. Students are encouraged to fulfill their obligation but should work with the COM to reschedule for a time that will allow for minimum negative impact on the educational experience. The COM will provide a statement documenting the student's situation and requesting relief or rescheduling. If you fulfill your jury duty obligation, you must submit documentation of jury duty attendance.

VI. SCHEDULING MAKE-UP WORK FROM EXCUSED ABSENCES

In the event a student missed a final exam due to an excused absence, the student must meet with the assistant dean of student affairs to determine an appropriate make-up date. Preparation for a make-up exam while completing subsequent clinical rotations can jeopardize a student's performance in both activities; therefore, all students must take a make-up examination on an approved make-up date. Proposed make-up dates will be reviewed by M3/4 curriculum director, course director, course coordinator, and OME director for consideration.

Students who miss any days may be required to make up the missed time and any assignments at the discretion of the course director. The course director has the discretion to specify the time and nature of make-up activities.

If a student fails to meet the make-up requirements, this can result in a below passing grade (C or F) and possibly a professionalism report on the Formative Feedback form.