

	Policy on Excused Absences (LCME Element 12.4)	Effective Date:	September 2018
		Current Date:	
		Contact:	Office of Admissions & Student Affairs
Approved By: Student Professionalism and Promotion Committee, Executive Faculty		Date Approved:	September 2018

1) GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

Students are expected to attend all required pre-clinical sessions and to participate fully in clinical coursework. Part of becoming a professional is to think beyond self and to work for the betterment of the medical profession and patients. However, certain life events including sickness, family emergencies, marriages, etc. may necessitate missing class or patient care activities. Additionally, excused absences are appropriate for routine medical care including diagnostic, preventive or therapeutic health services.

Students in all years should not expect to extend breaks or holidays with Excused Absence requests. For example, travel costs to or from a Thanksgiving destination are not considered legitimate reasons for excused absence requests, and these requests are routinely denied.

The School of Medicine has the following rules concerning absences:

Preclinical (T1 and T2 years):

1. Students are expected to fill out an Excused Absence Request Form to request absences. The form is on TMedWeb on the Institutional Forms page within the Student Guide tab. Excused absences are coordinated through the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
2. An excused absence does not obviate the need to make up work missed. Make-up processes are determined by course directors.
3. Students are also expected to notify their laboratory instructors and course directors of excused absences.
4. Any absence not excused will be considered unexcused.
5. Students should submit Excused Absence Request Forms in a timely fashion. Generally this is at least 30 days before a predicted life event, and within 24 hours following an illness or emergency.

Clinical (T3 and T4 years):

During clinical years, students have responsibilities to their patients and team. Reliable attendance is one significant component of professionalism. Therefore, attendance expectations are high.

Students are required to attend the following activities,

- T3 orientation
- Mandatory Clerkship/rotation orientation days
- NBME Subject Examinations (shelf exams)
- Clinical skills exams

In addition, students may have clinical care responsibilities on the following holidays:

- MLK Jr.
- The Saturday and Sunday before and Wednesday after Mardi Gras
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- The Wednesday before and Monday after Thanksgiving break

Students should not expect to extend holidays or breaks with excused absences. These requests are routinely denied.

Interview season (October through January) and ***USMLE Step 2 CS and USMLE Step 2 CK examination dates*** may provide additional attendance challenges for students.

- During ***interview season***, students are encouraged to schedule vacation time and/or multiple online electives. Whenever possible, students should not schedule required rotations during interview season. This includes the four-week MED4409 and MED3410, but it particularly includes, the sub-internship, and the two-week required rotations: RADS3020, SURG3120, EMER4020. Students who schedule required rotations during interview season should be prepared to schedule interviews around required rotation responsibilities.
 - Course and clerkship directors understand that interviews are a priority and that students may have minimal control over scheduling. It is, however, expected that students will take the necessary steps to avoid conflict as much as possible by:
 1. Scheduling required rotations outside of the heaviest part interview season. These months are generally October, November, December, and January.
 2. When there is an option, scheduling interviews outside of required rotations.
 3. Notifying the course director as soon as possible of the interview, what days are to be missed, and understanding that make-up work will likely be required.
 - If the situation arises in which a student must schedule an interview during a 2- or 4-week rotation that would put the student above the allotted excused absence cap for that rotation, the student must communicate the situation to the appropriate faculty elective director as soon as possible.

- Given the reality that interview slots can fill up in a matter of minutes, it is assumed that the student will schedule the interview and formulate a plan with the faculty elective director AFTER scheduling the interview.
 - The faculty elective director may require that the student make up the lost time, and the student must make up the missed days either during the current block or a later block.
- Students are allowed two days off from an elective rotation to complete the **USMLE Step 2 CS and Step 2 CK examinations**. Students are discouraged from scheduling their Step 2 CS or CK exams during a block when they have a required rotation scheduled, especially a two-week rotation (RADS3020, SURG3120, and EMER4020). Students must submit an Excused Absence request form for Step 2 CS and CK-related absences at least 14 days before the absence.
- Students who request absences for Step 2 CS, Step 2 CK, or interviews should not request Excused Absences for other reasons during the same block.

In addition to the special circumstances above for interview season (October through January) and USMLE Step 2 CS and USMLE Step 2 CK examination dates, the following attendance guidelines apply:

1. Students are expected to fill out an Excused Absence Request Form to request absences. The form is on TMedWeb on the Institutional Forms page within the Student Guide tab. Excused absences are coordinated through the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
2. An excused absence does not obviate the need to make up work missed. Make-up processes are determined by clerkship directors, and may include additional shifts during the current or a later block.
3. Students are expected to notify their attending physicians and house officers of any excused absences.
4. Students can receive a maximum of three days excused absence for any 6- or 8-week rotation, a maximum of two days for any 4-week rotations, and one day for 2-week rotations. The only exceptions are for Step 2 CS exams, Step 2 CK exams, and interviews (see above), and students are discouraged from scheduling Step 2 CS, Step 2 CK, and interviews during required rotations (see above).
5. Excused absences will be given for **significant life events** and are not to be used simply for a day off.
6. Any absence not excused will be considered unexcused.
7. Students should submit Excused Absence Request forms in a timely fashion. **Generally this is at least 30 days before a predicted life event, and within 24 hours following an illness or emergency.**

Interview season/USMLE exam date clarifications to be approved by Curriculum Committee 8/2/2017

a) **Scope:** This policy applies to all medical students.

b) **Responsible Department/Party/Parties:**

- i. Policy Owner: Office of Admissions & Student Affairs
- ii. Procedure: Office of Admissions & Student Affairs/Registrar
- iii. Supervision: Office of Admissions & Student Affairs

3) REVIEW/REVISION/IMPLEMENTATION

- a) Review Cycle: This policy shall be reviewed by the Student Professionalism and Promotion Committee at least annually from the effective date.
- b) Office of Record: After authorization, the Office of Student Affairs shall house this policy in a policy database and shall be the office of record for this policy.

4) RELATED POLICIES

Not applicable

5) GOVERNING LAW OR REGULATIONS

Not applicable

6) ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable