

Student Attendance and Absence Policy

I. Policy Statement

Students are required to attend mandatory sessions as determined by Course Directors, Clerkship Directors and the Office of Student Affairs.

II. Purpose

The purposes of this policy are:

1. To outline expectations of students with respect to attendance and absences.
2. Define excused, unexcused, and approved absences.
3. Define procedure for seeking approval of anticipated absence.
4. Establish protocol for making up missed mandatory work.

III. Scope/Coverage

DEFINITIONS FOR FIRST AND SECOND YEARS (M1 AND M2)

Students are strongly encouraged to attend class during the M1 and M2 years. Students are required to attend mandatory sessions which include but are not limited to the following: Clinical Cases (CCs), Clinical Case Based Learning (CCBL) sessions, Master's Colloquium, Medical Skills, mandatory career advising sessions and any other classes or sessions declared as mandatory by the Course Director or Assistant Dean of the Office of Student Affairs. All summative, NBME, CBSE, CCSE, Shelf and OSCE examinations are considered mandatory and may only be rescheduled due to an approved excused absence.

Students are to remain local and not travel out of the area prior to the end of the semester term in the event of needed summative exam retesting.

Excused Absence

An absence for any of the following reasons is considered excused: medical/illness, observance of a religious holiday, emergency leave, bereavement due to death in the immediate family, military duty, jury duty, involvement in a traffic accident, or immigration/naturalization appointment. The Office of Student Affairs may request documentation to substantiate the nature of the absence. Special circumstances may be eligible for an excused absence but must be approved by the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or their designee.

Family obligation, employment, travel, weddings, and previous plans are not considered excused absences. Excused absences not addressed specifically in this

policy are considered and granted on a case-by-case scenario by the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or their designee.

Approved Absence for Anticipated Excused Absence

Every effort will be made to accommodate student attendance at a national meeting for the purpose of national student leadership representation, significant educational student enrichment, and/or presentation of research. Students who desire to attend professional meetings and conferences must meet with the Assistant Dean of the Office of Student Affairs or their designee to seek preliminary approval prior to registering for the conference and prior to completing the absence request form. The student is also to meet with the designated faculty for the mandatory sessions that will be missed in order to determine a make-up plan. The appropriate staff member should also be notified to document the excused absence ahead of time. Once make-up work is completed, each designated faculty member must sign off, verifying completion. The completed absence request form should be submitted with all signatures to the designated staff member for final documentation.

Unexcused Absence

A student with an unexcused absence (defined as any absence not meeting excused absence definition and/or not approved by the Course Director and the Office of Student Affairs) will be required to make up the missed material and may be subject to a Professionalism Concern Report. Family obligations, employment, travel, weddings, and previous plans are generally considered as unexcused absences.

Emergency Absence

An emergency such as illness, death in the family, or a traffic accident would constitute an excused absence. A student experiencing an emergency that will result in missing a mandatory session is expected to notify the most appropriate faculty member to notify them of the absence. The student should subsequently complete the Absence Form in a timely fashion and complete any needed make-up work. If the emergency absence is expected to last longer than two days, then the student should notify the Assistant Dean of the Office of Student Affairs or their designee.

Recurring Patterns

A recurring pattern of absences is defined as two or more unexcused absences in one academic year. The student will be expected to meet with their college master. If the pattern continues and is not corrected, then the concerns regarding a student's attendance pattern are to be brought by the course director or college master to the attention of the Office of Student Affairs. The Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or their designee will meet with the student to determine if additional interventions are needed. A Professionalism Concern Report may be completed, and the student may be referred to the Honor Council or the Student Promotions Committee. An excessive number of unexcused absences will be adversely reflected in the Professionalism Performance section of the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

IV. Procedure

A student will need to complete the Absence Request Form for any missed mandatory session. Please refer to the Absence Request Form for instructions on how to report the absence, complete the form, obtain the necessary signatures, and complete missed mandatory work. A summary of steps required are as follows:

1. Meet with the designated faculty for the mandatory sessions to be missed/have missed to agree on a make-up plan.
2. If the absence is anticipated, notify the designated staff member (see form) to document the absence ahead of time.
3. Once the make-up plans are completed, ask each designated faculty member to sign the form verifying completion.
4. Submit completed form with all signatures to the designated staff member for final documentation.
5. A student who desires to attend professional meetings and conferences must meet with the Assistant Dean of the Office of Student Affairs or their designee for preliminary approval prior to registering for the conference and prior to completing the form.

V. DEFINITIONS FOR THIRD YEAR (M3)

Students are expected to attend every day of their scheduled third year clerkships as directed by their Clerkship Directors and Preceptors. Didactic sessions, Shelf Exams, and the CCSE exam are all mandatory sessions. Students are not allowed to miss more than 1 day/4 weeks of a clerkship.

Absences

An absence for any of the following reasons is considered excused: medical/illness, observance of a religious holiday, emergency leave, bereavement due to death in the immediate family, military duty, jury duty, involvement in a traffic accident, or immigration/naturalization appointment. The Office of Student Affairs may request documentation to substantiate the nature of the absence. Special circumstances may be eligible for an excused absence but must be approved by the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or their designee. Students will be allowed to make up missed work due to an excused absence.

Every effort will be made to accommodate student attendance at a national meeting for the purposes of national student leadership representation, significant educational student enrichment, and/or presentation of research. Students who desire to attend professional meetings and conferences must first discuss with their Clerkship Director at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the clerkship in order to seek preliminary approval to determine if the absence can be accommodated. Once approved, the student will need to notify the Preceptor, complete the Absence Form, and work with both the Preceptor and Clerkship Director to complete missed work. The appropriate staff member should also be notified to document the excused absence ahead of time. Once make-up work is completed, the Clerkship Director must sign off, verifying completion. The completed Absence Request Form should then be submitted with all signatures to the designated staff member for final documentation.

Nothing in this policy statement should be construed as students having an allotment of personal days in which absences can occur.

Emergency Absence

An emergency such as illness, death in the family, or a traffic accident would constitute an excused absence. A student experiencing an emergency that will result in missing any clerkship time is expected to notify the Preceptor and Clerkship Director immediately. The student should subsequently complete the Absence Form in a timely

fashion and complete any missed work. If the emergency absence is expected to last longer than two days, the student should communicate daily with the Clerkship Director and also notify the Assistant Dean of the Office of Student Affairs or their designee.

Recurring Patterns

Questions or concerns regarding a student's attendance pattern are to be brought by the Clerkship Director to the attention of the Clerkship Department and Office of Student Affairs. All absences are to be reported as part of the student's evaluation and may result in a referral to the Honor Council and/or Student Promotions Committee. Repeated tardiness, excessive absences, unexcused absences, and unreported absences may result in make-up days, remediation, Professionalism Concern Report, or course failure. An excessive number of unexcused absences will be adversely reflected in the Professionalism Performance section of the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

Shelf Examinations

A student is expected to sit for the clerkship Shelf exam when it is scheduled. Shelf exams will not be offered at alternative times for unexcused absences. A Shelf exam may be offered at an alternative time if needed to accommodate an excused absence.

University Holidays

CNU observes federal holidays and these are noted on the university calendar. It is possible that a student may be scheduled on a clerkship rotation with a preceptor that does not observe all federal holidays and/or may be scheduled to work on a federal holiday. The student may inform the preceptor of the university holiday but is to follow the instructions of the preceptor with respect to expected clinical duties and/or taking time off.

VI. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING AND REPORTING ABSENCES FOR THE M3 YEAR Students must request advance approval for ANY ABSENCE from their Clerkship Director at least four weeks before the start of the rotation.

1. A student **must** complete and submit the Absence Form to the M3 Clerkship Coordinator.
2. A student can miss up to:
 - 1 days** / 4 week rotation
 - 1.5 days** / 6 week rotation
 - 2 days** / 8 week rotation

Regardless of the reason for the absence (excused or unexcused), if a student misses a total of ≥ 1 day/week of a clerkship, the clerkship will need to be repeated in its entirety.

VII. DEFINITIONS FOR FOURTH YEAR (M4)

Students are expected to attend every day of their scheduled fourth year rotations as directed by their course director.

Excused Absence

An absence for any of the following reasons is considered excused: medical/illness, observance of a religious holiday, emergency leave, bereavement due to death in the immediate family, military duty, jury duty, involvement in a traffic accident, or immigration/naturalization appointment. The Office of Student Affairs may request documentation to substantiate the nature of the absence. Special circumstances may be eligible for an excused absence but must be approved by the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or their designee.

Emergent Absences for Interviewing or Step 2 Scheduling

A student may request an emergent absence for an interview invitation if the invitation is received less than four weeks in advance of the start of the rotation. Written documentation of the invitation for the interview must be submitted to the Course Director and Clerkship Department prior to approval. Emergent scheduling of the Step 2 CS or Step 2 CK may also be approved as an excused absence if documentation of an exam opening in less than four weeks is provided to the Course Director. Failure to provide written documentation will result in automatic denial.

Unexcused Absence

A student with unexcused absence (defined as any absence that is not approved by the Course Director in advance) will be required to be made up and may be subject to a Professionalism Concern Report. Nothing in this policy statement should be construed as students having an allotment of personal days in which absences can occur. A student who misses a mandatory session without an approved excused absence should reach out to the Course Director to make up the content. The Course Director will determine how the unexcused absence is to be made up. Repeated tardiness, excessive absences and unreported absences may result in make-up days, remediation, or course failure.

Recurring Patterns

Questions or concerns regarding a student's attendance pattern are to be brought by the course director to the attention of the Clerkship Department and Office of Student Affairs. All absences are to be reported as part of the student's evaluation and the Honor Council and Student Promotions Committee will discuss reoccurring absence patterns with the student. In the case of reoccurring patterns, the Honor Council and Student Promotion Committee will determine the appropriate course of action.

VIII. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING AND REPORTING ABSENCES FOR THE M4 YEAR

Students must request advance approval for ANY ABSENCE (INCLUDING RELEASE TIME FOR STEP 2 CK and CS AND RESIDENCY INTERVIEWING) from their Course Director at least four weeks before the start of the rotation.

1. A student **must** complete and submit the Absence Form to the M4 Clerkship Coordinator.
2. A student can miss up to:
 - 4 days** / 4 week rotation
 - 2 days** / 2 week rotation
3. Unexcused absences will result loss of credits for the rotation.



If properly arranged and approved by the Course Director in advance, a student will be excused one day for Step 2 CK and up to three days for Step 2 CS. A student cannot schedule both examinations during the same required rotation or elective.

Course Directors may determine that multiple absences will be detrimental to the student's educational experience and therefore require that the course be rescheduled if openings are available. For elective courses, Course Directors will have the discretion to assign make up days, supplemental readings or other assignments to account for the missed days. Failure to properly arrange the excused absence before the start of the rotation, unless emergent due to a last-minute scheduling opportunity may result in the makeup of missed time with penalty or denial of request.

Resources and Tools

Absence Request Form

APPROVED BY: SPC 5/14/20

REVIEWED BY: DAC 12/23/20

APPROVED BY: FEC 12/24/20

APPROVED BY: PEC 12/24/20

REVIEW/REVISION SCHEDULE: every 2 years

INDEXES: Absence, Attendance, Absence Form, Excused Absence, Unexcused Absence, Approved Absence