



## Student Attendance and Absence Policy

### I. Policy Statement

Students are required to attend mandatory sessions and exams as well as other required course components as determined by Course Directors, Clerkship Directors, and the Office of Student Affairs. For Phase B, ALL patient care shifts, didactic sessions, shelf exams, and the CCSE exam are mandatory. Students are not allowed to miss more than 1 day/4 weeks of a clerkship.

### 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.

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

### III. Scope/Coverage

A. 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, The 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 exams are mandatory.** These include, but are not limited to, NBME (Summative, CBSE, CCSE, Shelf) and practical exams such as OSCE and Anatomy examinations. They 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 remediation.

#### B. Excused Absences

Examples of excused absences are:

- Medical/Illness
- Observance of a Religious Holiday
- Presentation at National Scientific Meeting
- Emergency Leave
- Bereavement Due to Death in the Immediate Family
- Military Duty
- Jury Duty
- Involvement in an accident or other unforeseen emergency
- Immigration/Naturalization Appointment
- Other as Determined by the OSA

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. 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.

**C. Examples of Unexcused Absences**

- Family Obligation
- Employment
- Vacation/Travel
- Weddings and previous plans are not considered excused absences
- Other as Determined by the OSA

**D. 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 clinical 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.

**E. Planned Excused Absences**

Every effort will be made to accommodate student requests for planned excused absences. This includes 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 assignment. 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.

**F. Unexcused Absence**

A student with an unexcused absence defined as any absence not meeting excused absence definition and/or not approved by the Director and the Office of Student Affairs will be required to complete a make-up assignment to be determined by the Course Director. Failure to do so may result in a Professionalism Concern Report (PCR). Family obligations, employment, travel, weddings, and previous plans are generally considered as unexcused absences.

**G. 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 within two days 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.

**H. Recurring Patterns**

A recurring pattern of absences is defined as more than 3 absences, excused or unexcused, in one academic year. Continued absences may result in the following:

- An Incomplete or Failing grade for the course
- Repeating a course, clerkship or elective
- Professionalism Concern Report (PCR)
- Dismissal from the COM

If the pattern continues and is not corrected, a PCR will be filed and forwarded to the SPC for review. Absences in excess of the above limits will be reflected in the student's Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

**IV. Procedure**

**a. Phase A M1 & M2 Year**

A student will need to complete the Absence Request Form PRIOR to the start of 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.

**b. Phase B**

***i. General Guidelines***

1. Students must request advance approval for ANY ABSENCE from their Clerkship or Elective Course Director at least four weeks before the start of the rotation.
2. If properly arranged and approved in advance, a student will be excused one day for Step 2 CK.
3. 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 any absence before the start of the rotation, unless due to unforeseen circumstances, may result in the makeup of missed time with repercussions (as outlined in Section III, Recurring Patterns) or denial of request.

***ii. M3 year***

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
3. Regardless of the reason for the absence (excused or unexcused), if a student exceeds the maximum allowable absences, the rotation may need to be repeated.
4. 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.

**iii. M4 year**

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.

**Resources and Tools**

Absence Request Form

**Approved By Curriculum Committee: 2/24/2026**

**REVIEW/REVISION SCHEDULE:** every 2 years

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