

**Policy Title:** Attendance Policy

**Policy Number** (relate to LCME Element as applicable): UCF COM Policy 8.8.2

**Applies to:** All medical students at the University of Central Florida College of Medicine (UCF COM).

**Date:** 6/21/2024

**1.0 Purpose:**

To specify anticipated and unanticipated absences during medical school.

**2.0 Policy Statement:**

**General Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend all scheduled hours of clinical responsibilities and didactic instruction. Mandatory session and clerkship participation requirements in courses and clerkships and remediation due to absence are determined by the course/clerkship directors. The student will be held responsible for any material covered during the excused absence, but will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to complete any missed work. Recognizing that situations arise which require students to miss time from their course/clerkship responsibilities, the procedures presented below will be followed when absence is necessary:

**M-1 and M-2**

***Mandatory Attendance Policy M-1/M-2 Years***

Students are required to be at their local residence during term time. Mandatory sessions will be identified in the course calendar. Notice by UCF email is given within three days if changes to the calendar are made. An excused absence form is completed whenever a mandatory session is missed. The course director should be notified **prior to the start of the course** of requests for absences for religious observances (see “Religious Observances”). Unexcused absences are reported as a professionalism violation to the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC).

***Late arrivals***

Students are expected to arrive at sessions with mandatory attendance in time for the session to begin at the listed start time in Webcourses. Arrival at sessions after the listed start time will be considered a late arrival and will be a part of the students’ professionalism assessment. See the Grading and Assessment Policy (9.9.3) for detail.

***Excused Absences – Definitions and Required Actions:***

For a given course, students are allowed to have, on average, up to 1 excused absence every other week for the length of the course, up to a total of 5 absences for courses longer than 10 weeks. Any excused absences in excess of these limits will be allowed at the discretion of the course director and will require the student to make up this excess missed time through an alternative/equivalent experience. The student will receive an incomplete in the course until the alternative/equivalent experience is completed.

The student must provide any documentation requested to the Office of Student Affairs addressing

absenteeism. Students who miss scheduled time are expected to acquire the same level of competency as other students involved in the course.

### ***Emergencies – Personal Illness, Family Illness, etc.***

#### ○ **Mandatory sessions:**

The student must e-mail or telephone the Office of Student Affairs to report his or her absenteeism on the first day of being absent. The student should indicate the nature of the emergency. The Office of Student Affairs will take whatever action is necessary and will notify the course director of the student's absence. If possible, the student should contact the course director as well. Upon return the student absence form must be completed by the student.

#### ○ **Assessment Absences:**

Excusal from an assessment may only be granted by the course director in cases of significant personal illness on the day of the assessment or in the 2-days prior to the assessment. If the student will miss an assessment due to illness, a physician's note is required from a physician with whom the student has a legitimate patient relationship (e.g., their primary care provider). For assessment absences outside of these circumstances, including significant illness or death of a family member, approval will need to be obtained from the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs via communication with the Assistant/Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

### ***Anticipated Absences:***

#### ○ **Presentation of research at professional meeting and/or representation of UCF as an officer of an organization.**

This is for the student presenting the research only (e.g. poster presentation, oral presentation or workshops). Excused absences will not be granted for attendance of the meeting only or for non-presenting authors. Students who are officers in the local chapter of a national organization may request an excused absence for required national meetings that are a part of their role as the organization officer.

- Maximum of one meeting per academic year.
- A student will not be granted an excused absence for presenting the same research project at more than one meeting, regardless of academic year.
- Time away is only for presentation of data and travel time.
- Requests must be submitted to course directors for approval no later than **6-weeks prior to date of presentation**.
  - If the student receives notification of acceptance less than 6-weeks prior to the date of the presentation, they must include documentation of the date of the notification and make the request no more than 5-business days after receipt of the acceptance.
- Presentations that overlap with course assessments are not guaranteed approval.
- The student must complete the absence form.

#### ● **Health-care visits:**

Given the amount of unscheduled time during the week in the pre-clerkship phase of the curriculum, students are expected to make preventative health and other routine health-care visits outside of regularly scheduled class time and not in conflict with mandatory class sessions. If this is not possible, the student must request the excused absence within 5-business days of making the appointment or release of the course schedule. **This is for mandatory sessions only and does not apply to assessment events.** For urgent/emergent illnesses that overlap assessments, see the section on "Emergencies" above.

#### ○ **Personal Circumstances or Events:**

A student may request an excused absence for a major family event, such as a wedding or graduation of a first degree relative. The request must be submitted **at least 6-weeks** in advance of the scheduled event. The absence will be granted for the time of the event and the time required to travel to and from the event only. The decision to grant or deny the request will be at the discretion of the course director. **This is for mandatory sessions only and does not apply to assessment events.**

○ **Summer Research Experiences**

- An excused absence may be granted for the M2 Orientation.
  - The student will be required to first communicate with the director of the research program to determine if adjustments can be made to allow them to participate in the required M2 Orientation sessions.
  - The request should be submitted prior to the start of the research experience but must be no later than June 15th (or the next business day after).
  - Documentation of the communication with the research program is required.
- Excused absences will not be granted for participation in a summer research experience after the start of the academic year.
- If a student is presenting their work at a conference, then excused absences may be granted for the day of the presentation per the usual Attendance Policy

***Unexcused Absences: Definitions and Required Actions:***

○ **Unexcused Absences include:**

- Vacations, personal days, birthdays or social events
- Scheduling meetings with mentors/advisors in conflict with mandatory class sessions
- Any of the events listed in the section on “Anticipated Absences” without prior approval.
- If the student chooses to travel for personal reasons during the course (e.g., a weekend off), it is expected that the student will schedule travel in a way that would reasonably allow them to return in time for mandatory sessions. Delays in returning (e.g., bad weather, missed flights) will be generally considered as unexcused. The course director does have the discretion to consider granting an excused absence for travel delays for mandatory sessions only and not for assessment events.
- Unexcused absences impact upon assessment of a student’s professionalism and will be reported to the SEPC.

**M-3 and M-4**

As a member of a health care team during the third and fourth years of medical school, students are expected to attend all scheduled hours of clinical responsibilities and didactic instruction. There is no guaranteed time off for secular holidays. Students are expected to follow the holiday practice of the clinic/hospital/site at which they are rotating. Clinical responsibilities such as night call and rounding take precedence over holiday schedules. If situations arise which require students to miss time from clerkship responsibilities, the guidelines below will be followed. Additional remediation may be required at the clerkship director’s discretion (e.g., the taking of extra call). The clerkship or rotation director should be notified **prior to the start of the rotation of requests for absences for religious observances** (see “Religious Observances”).

**Excused Absences – Definitions and Required Actions:**

Students are allowed to take an excused absence for 1 day (for a 2 week rotation), 2 days (for a 4 week rotation) and 3 days (for a 6 or more weeks rotation). Any excused absences in excess of these limits will be allowed at the discretion of the clerkship director and will require the student to make up this excess missed time through an equivalent experience, e.g., through weekend or on-call duties.

### ***Anticipated Absences:***

- **Presentation of research at professional meeting**

This is for the student presenting the research only (e.g. poster presentation, oral presentation or workshops). Excused absences will not be granted for attendance of the meeting only or for non-presenting authors.

  - Maximum of one meeting per academic year.
- A student will not be granted an excused absence for presenting the same research project at more than one meeting, regardless of academic year.
  - .
  - Time away is only for presentation of data and travel time
  - Requests must be submitted to clerkship directors for approval no later than 6 weeks prior to date of presentation.
  - If approved, the student is responsible for notifying the attending/resident and their team in advance of all anticipated absences.
  - The student must complete the absence form.
  - **Requests for exceptions to this policy (e.g., for those on National Committees or those with compelling reasons to give additional research presentations) must be discussed with the clerkship director in advance.**
- **Residency interviews**

During interview months of October-January, students will be allowed to take time off for interviews.

  - On 4-week rotations, the maximum number of days allowed is 4 (no more than 3 consecutive days). On 2-week rotations, the maximum is 2 days. Requests for additional days must be discussed and approved by the rotation director. If request exceeds the maximum number allowable, student may be required to repeat the rotation.
  - Requests must be submitted in writing to rotation director/s prior to the start of the affected rotation/s or within 24 hours of an interview offer during the course of the rotation.
  - Once approved, the student is responsible for notifying the attending/resident and their team in advance of all anticipated absences.
  - The student must complete the absence form, have it signed by the rotation director and forward it to the Office of Student Affairs.
- **Meeting with Advising Academy Leader, specialty advisor, or associate dean for students**
  - May schedule one meeting with advisor or associate/assistant dean for students during each clerkship/elective
  - Meeting/s must be approved in advance by the clerkship director; and
  - Meeting/s must be scheduled at a time that minimizes disruption of clinical responsibilities, didactics and other clerkship activities; and
  - Absence includes time for meeting and appropriate travel time only; and
  - Students are required to be present at clinical sites before and after meeting/s as dictated by their clinical schedules.
- **Health Care Visits (e.g., well visits, preventive care): students should try to schedule these appointments when on vacation or not on clinical duty, but if this is not possible, they can apply for an excused absence:**
  - Meeting/s must be approved in advance by the clerkship director; and
  - Meeting/s must be scheduled at a time that minimizes disruption of clinical responsibilities, didactics and other clerkship activities; and
  - Absence includes time for meeting and appropriate travel time only; and

- Students are required to be present at clinical sites before and after meeting/s as dictated by their clinical schedules.

***Unanticipated Absences:***

- **Hospitalization of student**
- **Death of family member**
- **Illness**
  - An excused absence may be granted if you are ill when:
    - The clerkship coordinator and the attending physician/resident physician on your clinical team are notified by you in a timely fashion (e.g., before the start of AM rounds); and
      - The student absence form is completed
  - An excused absence due to illness requires that a note from your physician be obtained and given to the clerkship coordinator within 24 hours of the first day missed if:
    - Illness lasts 72 hours or more at any time
    - lasts 24 hours during the final week of a rotation
    - or at the discretion of the clerkship director

***Failure to comply with any component of the above instructions will result in unexcused absence and loss of 5 points from the final clerkship grade for each day missed***

***Residents or faculty directly working with students cannot grant approval for absence. Please do not approach these individuals, as approval by them is not official.***

***Unexcused Absences: Definitions and Required Actions:***

- **Unexcused Absences include:**
  - Vacations, personal days or social events, including weddings, graduations or birthdays
  - Taking Step 2 exams during the third year
  - If the student chooses to travel for personal reasons during the rotation (e.g., a weekend off), it is expected that the student will return to her/his clinical responsibilities on time. Delays in returning (e.g., bad weather, missed flights) will be considered as unexcused.
  - Missing any portion of the Orientation to the Third Year, the M-3 Capstone, the M-4 Capstone or the Longitudinal Curricular Theme sessions
- In the event of an absence from the clerkship without permission from the clerkship director, the student will lose 5 points for each unexcused day. These points will be taken off the final clerkship grade.
- Additional remediation may be required at the clerkship director's discretion (e.g., the taking of extra call).
- Unexcused absences impact upon assessment of a student's professionalism and will be reported to the SEPC.

The Third and Fourth Year Attendance Agreement Form is included in Appendix A.

**Religious Observances**

***M-1 and M-2***

Under the guidance and protection of Affirmative Action and the Office of Institutional Equity, and in accordance of the bylaws of the Board of Governors, it is the policy of the University of Central Florida to reasonably accommodate the religious observances, practices and beliefs of individuals in regard to admissions, class attendance and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. A student who desires to observe a religious holy day of their religious faith during the M1 and/or M2 academic year must follow the below procedure:

1. **During the first week of each academic school year**, the student must register with the Medical Students Accessibility Office in the Office of Student Academic Support Services in the College of Medicine and state the requested dates to be observed.
2. The student will complete the "Religious Observances Request Form" provided by the Medical Students Accessibility Office, and turn it in to the Medical Student Accessibility Liaison.
3. The Medical Students Accessibility Office will provide a copy of the "Religious Observances Request Form" to the specific course director(s)/coordinator(s) whose course occurs during the requested religious holy day(s).
4. The student will be held responsible for any material covered during the excused absence, but will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to complete any missed work. Where practicable, major examinations, major assignments and university ceremonies will not be scheduled on a major religious holy day(s).

In the event a student will need to make up an exam after the exam has occurred, the student will be held to the standards of the UCF Golden Rule, and will be instructed not to discuss any of the exam material with fellow classmates, as this will result in a violation of professionalism standards and the Golden Rule, which could lead to dismissal.

Students who are absent from academic or social activities because of religious observances will not be penalized. A student who believes that they have been unreasonably denied an educational benefit due to their religious belief or practices may seek redress under the Student Grievance Procedure, located in the Golden Rule.

The student must provide any documentation requested to the Medical Students Accessibility Office addressing absenteeism. Students who miss scheduled hours are expected to complete these hours in order to acquire the same level of competency as other students involved in the module.

Students or faculty with questions may contact the Medical Students Accessibility Liaison in COM 205. All religious requests are viewed case by case.

The Religious Observance Form for M-1 and M-2 is included in Appendix B.

### **M-3**

Under the guidance and protection of Affirmative Action and the Office of Institutional Equity, and in accordance of the by-laws of the Board of Governors, it is the policy of the University of Central Florida to reasonably accommodate the religious observances, practices and beliefs of individuals in regard to admissions, class attendance and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. A student who desires to observe a religious holy day of their religious faith during the M3 Clerkship year must follow the below procedure:

1. **Six months prior to the beginning of the M-3 year**, a student must register with the Medical

Students Accessibility Office in the Office of Student Academic Support Services in the College of Medicine and state the requested dates to be observed.

2. The student will complete the "Religious Observances Request Form" provided by the Medical Students Accessibility Office, and turn it in to the Medical Student Accessibility Liaison.
3. The Medical Students Accessibility Office will provide a copy of the "Religious Observances Request Form" to the specific Clerkship Director(s)/Coordinator(s) whose clerkship occurs during the requested religious holy day(s).
4. The student will be held responsible for any material covered during the excused absence, but will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to complete any missed work. Where practicable, major examinations, major assignments and university ceremonies will not be scheduled on a major religious holy day(s).

In the event a student will need to make up an exam after the exam has occurred, the student will be held to the standards of the UCF Golden Rule, and will be instructed not to discuss any of the exam material with fellow classmates, as this will result in a violation of professionalism standards and the Golden Rule, which could lead to dismissal.

Students who are absent from academic or social activities because of religious observances will not be penalized. A student who believes that they have been unreasonably denied an educational benefit due to their religious belief or practices may seek redress under the Student Grievance Procedure, located in the Golden Rule.

The student must provide any documentation requested to the Medical Students Accessibility Office addressing absenteeism. Students who miss scheduled hours are expected to complete these hours in order to acquire the same level of competency as other students involved in the clerkship.

Students or faculty with questions may contact the Medical Students Accessibility Liaison in COM 205. All religious requests are viewed case by case.

#### **M-4**

Under the guidance and protection of Affirmative Action and the Office of Institutional Equity, and in accordance of the by-laws of the Board of Governors, it is the policy of the University of Central Florida to reasonably accommodate the religious observances, practices and beliefs of individuals in regard to admissions, class attendance and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. Due to the scheduling structure of the M4 year which requires students to be placed in various locations across the country, the student will work with their respective site with any religious observance requests. However, in the event a student believes that they have been unreasonably denied an educational benefit due to his or her religious belief or practices, they may seek redress under the Student Grievance Procedure, located in the Golden Rule. In addition, the student should contact the Medical Student Accessibility Liaison in the Office of Student Academic Support Services in the College of Medicine for assistance with this matter.

The Religious Observance Form for M-3 and M-4 is included in Appendix C.

#### **3.0 Definitions:**

N/A

#### **4.0 Responsibilities:**

Module, clerkship, and rotation directors are responsible for adherence to the policy.

**5.0 Monitoring Procedures:**

- After review of this policy during M-3 Orientation, all students will sign the attendance agreement. Students can sign this policy electronically in WebCourses.

**6.0 Related Policies:**

N/A

**7.0 Key Search Words:**

Attendance	Anticipated absences	Unanticipated absences
Unexcused absences		

**8.0 Revision History:**

Version	Date Approved	Modifications
V1		Original
V2	2/14/2014	Additional information on anticipated and unanticipated absences, and compliance
	6/29/2015	Additional information on reporting to the student SEPC
V4	Approved by M-3/M-4 Subcommittee on 12/16/2016	Clarification regarding holidays and health care visits
V5	1/20/2017	Minor updates
V6	7/21/2017	Included M-1/M-2 and religious observances sections
V7	10/18/2019	Update on excused absences
V8	12/17/2021	Addendum regarding number of excused absences allowed
V9	6/21/2024	Update excused absences to align M1/M2 with M3/M4 policy

**9.0 References:**

N/A

**Responsible Office:** Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs, Associate Dean for Students**Policy Contact:** Assistant Deans of Medical Education, Director of Student Academic Support Services

**Supersedes:** Attendance Policy for Clerkships and Required and Elective Rotations  
 Attendance Policy for M-1/M-2  
 Religious Observance Policy



**APPENDIX A**  
**Third and Fourth Year Attendance Agreement Form**

*University of Central Florida*  
*College of Medicine*

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***3rd and 4th Year Attendance Agreement***

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Class of: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the policy on 3rd and 4th Year Attendance. I understand that absence from the clerkship may require me to make up time, which could include additional call or a weekend shift. I also understand that failure to adhere to the Attendance Policy may affect my final grade.

Medical Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clerkship Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B**  
**Religious Observance Form for M-1 and M-2**



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA  
**College of Medicine**

**Religious Observance Request Form**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ PID: \_\_\_\_\_

Request that I be excused from the following educational requirement due to religious observance.

Mandatory Module Requirement \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify date(s):

Date(s)	Specific Time Frame (e.g., all day, every Monday 3-4)

By my signature below, I hereby acknowledge that this information is complete and accurate. False or fraudulent statements may result in disciplinary actions.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Module Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

SASS Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Associate or Assistant Dean for Students** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C**  
**Religious Observance Form for M-3**



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA  
*College of Medicine*

**Religious Observance Request Form**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ PID: \_\_\_\_\_

Request that I be excused from the following educational requirement due to religious observance.

Mandatory Clerkship Requirement \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify date(s):

Date(s)	Specific Time Frame (e.g., all day, every Monday 3-4)

By my signature below, I hereby acknowledge that this information is complete and accurate. False or fraudulent statements may result in disciplinary actions.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Clerkship Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

SASS Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Associate or Assistant Dean for Students** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_