



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

**Elson S. Floyd  
College of Medicine**

Policy Title: Medical Student Attendance Policy

Policy Number: CU.06.04.170815

Applies to: Medical Students

Date: 7/12/2021

### **1.0 Policy Statement**

It is the WSU Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine policy that all enrolled medical students are held to professional conduct and responsibilities outlined in the Student Handbook. In accordance with these standards, students must attend and participate in the five types of required curricular activities:

- Involving guests, guest speakers or patients
- Involving interacting with peers, small group learning sessions (example: case-based learning sessions)
- Involving peers outside the college (example: interprofessional learning)
- Clinical activities
- Assessment activities

### **2.0 Categories of Absences:**

1. Approved Absence: Absence requests that meet the criteria listed below must be submitted by following procedures listed in this policy in order to be considered for approval. Needs that extend beyond the maximum designated days may require accommodations or a leave of absence. Note that specific instances that fall within the listed categories may not be approved due to related educational considerations.
  - a. Unplanned illness or urgent emergency. May be up to a total of 8 days.
  - b. Planned Emergency: Attending to a loved one in urgent need of support (such as a funeral, visiting an ill relative or close friend, or surgery for self or loved one). May be up to a total of 3 days to account for travel to and from.
  - c. Planned Life Events: Supporting a loved one (such as a graduation ceremony or wedding festivity of a relative or close friend). May be up to a total of 3 days to account for travel to and from the life event.
  - d. College Sponsored Event: Attending a college sponsored event or volunteer activity in which a student was specifically asked by an Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine faculty member to attend. Student must be in good academic standing. May be up to a total of 3 days.
  - e. Professional Development: Attending an academic or leadership activity that aligns with the College of Medicine mission that supports a student's development of becoming a physician. Student must be in good academic standing. May be up to a total of 3 days to account for travel to and from the activity.
  - f. Personal Day: Years 1 and 2 only, one personal day per academic year. Cannot be requested for an assessment day or during a clinical campus week. Generally, personal days are not approved for the day before/following a holiday weekend unless the student explains the nature of extenuating circumstances.
2. Unexcused Absence: An absence that is not listed in the approved category and/or was not properly submitted for approval. Unexcused absences will result in an Incident Card.

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**3.0 Responsibility:**  
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

**4.0 Procedures:**

Students requesting reasonable accommodations for religious observations should complete the [request form](https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/student-handbook/request-for-reasonable-accommodations-for-religious-observances/) in the student handbook. (<https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/student-handbook/request-for-reasonable-accommodations-for-religious-observances/>)

Students exploring an extended personal leave for opportunities such as research or parental/family leave should contact the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs to begin the conversation of what approved absences and or other leave of absence options may be available. Collaboration with the Access Office may be needed for absences where reasonable accommodations apply.

## **MS1 and MS2 Absence Request Procedures**

If a MS1/MS2 student is ill or has an emergency and is unable to attend a required curricular activity, they should contact the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs by calling 509-368-6827, by emailing [medicine.studentaffairs@wsu.edu](mailto:medicine.studentaffairs@wsu.edu) or by filling out the required [request for approved absence form](https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/request-for-approved-absence/): <https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/request-for-approved-absence/>. Students should reference the [Communicable Disease Policy](#) for absences related to contagious illnesses.

Otherwise, all other planned absence requests should be made in a timely manner and students should expect a response within 48 business hours. Students are to check the E.FloMD calendar to ensure the request does not overlap with an assessment activity and then submit their [request for approved absence form](https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/request-for-approved-absence/), indicating the category of absence, at <https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/request-for-approved-absence/>. Confirmation of approved absence will be communicated by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs via email to Course Directors, CBL/APM/EBM Component Directors and to the Offices of Curriculum and Assessment and Evaluation. Students are responsible for educational content missed and assignments due during their absence.

If absences occur during a Clinical Campus Week, the student should follow the same reporting mechanisms as listed above while also including their Associate Dean for Clinical Education (ADCE). The ADCE will be responsible for scheduling any clinical learning activities that may need to take place because of the absence.

## **MS3 Absence Request Procedures**

Due to the nature of clinical learning (required and involving patient care), MS3 students are allowed up to 5 planned or unplanned absences without make-up, during the Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC). Additional absences require make-up via comparable clinical experiences for those missed. Clinical campus staff will keep records of make-up activities.

If a MS3 student is ill or has an urgent emergency, they should contact the Clerkship Coordinator for their campus and clinical preceptor(s) they were assigned with that day. Students may contact the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs for absences related to wellness needs or any other medical related absences in which privacy is requested.

Otherwise, all other planned absence requests that are more than one day should be made three months in advance by submitting a [request for approved absence form](#), indicating the category of

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absence, at <https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/request-for-approved-absence/>. The request is sent to the LIC Director or their designee for approval and students should expect a response in 48 business hours.

## MS4 Absence Request Procedures

Due to the nature of clinical learning (required and involving patient care), a MS4 student's schedule of clinical and education workdays and times will vary, referencing a maximum of 80 hours per week. MS4 students are encouraged to plan any personal absences around their clinical schedule.

If a MS4 student is ill or has an urgent emergency, they should contact their clinical supervisor as well as the Clerkship Coordinator from their campus. Students may contact the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs for absences related to wellness needs or any other medical related absences in which privacy is requested.

Otherwise, all other planned absences should be requested by submitting a "[request for approved absence](https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/request-for-approved-absence/)" form, indicating the category of absence, at <https://medicine.wsu.edu/md-program/student-affairs/request-for-approved-absence/>. The request is sent to the Year 4 Director and the course director (e.g. Clinical Education Director-CED) and students should expect a response in 48 business hours.

MS4 students are allowed up to 2. days of approved absence during a 4-week rotation (one day during a 2-week rotation). Whenever possible, absences should be made up (evenings/weekends) in consultation with the course director and supervisor at their assigned location at that time. Allotted absence days do not carry over from one rotation to the next, meaning if you do not take 2 days off on a previous required rotation, you would not get 4 days off on the next required rotation). Students should note that completion of at least 75% clinical time in any clinical rotation is required in order to receive "clinical" credit/grading for that rotation, in addition to meeting the attendance requirements specified above.

Residency interviews typically occur from October through early February. As a general rule, MS4 students should plan to participate in interviews during the time allocated for them in the curriculum and should not schedule *required* Year 4 rotations during interview season. However, programs do have interview cancellations and other circumstances arise in which a program may offer an interview opportunity on relatively short notice. Submission of an approved absence request (process listed above) is a requirement for residency interviews in which an absence will be needed.

## Faculty Process for Reporting a Student Absence

1. The Course Director, Clerkship Coordinator, and/or ADCE will notify the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs that a student missed a required curricular event.
2. The Office of Admissions and Student Affairs will verify if the absence is excused or unexcused and inform the reporter, the Offices of Curriculum and Assessment, and the Course, Clerkship, and/or Clinical Education Director.
3. An unexcused absence will result in an Incident Card that is tracked in the Office of Assessment. Students with recurrent unexcused absences will be referred to the Student Evaluation, Promotion, and Awards Committee (SEPAC)

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## 5.0 Urgent Emergency due to Wellness Crisis

If a student is having a wellness crisis, this is considered an emergency and students should follow the steps in reporting an unplanned illness or urgent emergency. If students are in wellness and/or mental health crisis, they should contact either their campus counseling services and/or a local agency for assistance.

Wellness resources include:

- [Campus Counseling Services](#)
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255
- Spokane Mental Health Crisis Line at 509-838-4428, or toll-free 1-877-678-4428.
- [Student Care Network](#) in which individuals can share concern about a student's emotional, psychological well-being and physical health that goes to an Student Care team to assess the situation and support the student.

## 6.0 Related Policies

Medical Student Leave, Withdrawal and Readmission Policy  
Student Promotion, Dismissal and Graduation Policy  
Communicable Disease Policy

## 7.0 Key Search Words

Attendance, scheduled activity
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## 8.0 Revision History

Original Approval	Policy number	Revision Date Approval
8/15/2017	CU.06.04.170815	12/20/2019
		07/12/2021

**Responsible Office:** Office of Admissions and Student Affairs

**Policy Contact:** Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

**Supersedes:** CU.06.04.170815 approved 12/20/2019