

Absence from clerkship

Absence from clerkship (Policy # CC-07)

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Background

Medical students are an integral part of the healthcare team. Therefore, consistent with the principles of professionalism, student absence from clerkship duties and responsibilities for reasons other than illness requires pre-arranged approval. The Undergraduate Office Clerkship Curricular Coordinator must be notified of all student absences. Students who require an excessive amount of leave (i.e. personal days + conference leave OR significant commitment as student representatives) during a given rotation may have their requests denied or modified, and/or be required to make the time up in order to satisfy the educational requirements of the rotation.

Holidays and Personal Days

During Clerkship, students are scheduled for one week of holiday (Sun-Sun). In addition, students are permitted to take 5 additional personal leave days in a flexible manner throughout the clerkship program. Recognizing that medical students are adult learners who are juggling a variety of different needs, the personal day option introduces flexibility into the existing holiday time without encroaching on core rotations.

Time off must be requested in writing at least 6 weeks in advance of the start of the rotation in which the absence will occur. Approval for personal days will be automatic as long as the following conditions are fulfilled:

1. The student has available personal days remaining.
2. The time off does not fall during a scheduled orientation session or examination period.
3. No more than three days may be requested off in any core rotation (or 2 days in any 3-week sub-rotation.)
4. The absence does not overlap with another student's personal day request on the same service.

If students request personal days that do not fit these conditions, the request will be directed to the relevant Course Director who will decide whether to grant the request.

Conference and Committee Leave

Students will be allowed time off to present research that they have been involved with at an academic conference or to participate as a student member of a recognized medical organization. An **approval form** must be completed by the student and signed by the appropriate Course Director prior to committing to the conference presentation. Time off will be limited to the day of presentation and reasonable travel time as determined by the director of the course from which the student is applying to be absent.

Absences Secondary to Illness

If a student must be absent because of illness, it is their responsibility to notify both the Undergraduate Office Curricular Clerkship Coordinator as well as their supervising resident or faculty of the absence. Daily updates are required. If the absence extends longer than 48 hours, the student must provide the Undergraduate Office with a physician's note approving the absence. Occasionally, students may be asked to provide a note for a 24 hour absence.

Sanctioned Leave

If a student experiences an exceptional circumstance requiring them to be away from Clerkship, they may apply for a sanctioned leave. All requests will be reviewed by the Clerkship Director and the Director of Student Affairs and must be approved by the Progress and Promotions Committee. Students must exhibit an excellent academic record in order to qualify and may be granted a leave up to a maximum of 12 weeks in duration at the discretion of the Committee.

A leave of absence can only be approved if the student's clerkship schedule can be revised such that there is neither significant disruption in the overall clerkship curriculum requirements nor significant disruption in any specific CORE clerkship rotations. Approval of a leave of absence is contingent on acceptance of a revised clerkship schedule. In general, approval of a leave of absence should avoid reduction in the time spent on any CORE clerkship rotation.

Reduction of CORE clerkship rotation time should only be considered in exceptional circumstances. In these circumstances, reduction in CORE clerkship rotation time will be limited to a maximum of 4 weeks in total (consisting of a 2 week reduction in EITHER Internal Medicine OR Family Medicine, in addition to 'opting out' of a 2 week rotation in EITHER Anaesthesiology OR Emergency Medicine).

In general, a student who is granted a leave of absence of 12 weeks or less, upon successful completion of the curriculum, will likely be allowed to graduate with their original academic year and class. However, a student who requires a leave of absence longer than 12 weeks duration may be required to repeat all or part of the clerkship curriculum and academic year. In such a case, the student would no longer be expected to graduate with their original academic year and class.