



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE POLICY ON STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

Dated: June 17, 2021

Supersedes: Policy on Student Attendance and Absence of the NYMC SOM dated July 1, 2004

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to specify the guidelines governing student attendance and absence from the New York Medical College School of Medicine (“NYMC-SOM”).

II. POLICY

The curriculum has been carefully designed to ensure that students attain the educational objectives of the NYMC-SOM. Students’ direct engagement in the learning process is required to fulfill these objectives and for completion of the requirements for the M.D. degree. To best ensure the educational objectives are met, the NYMC-SOM has established procedures to permit students to be excused from learning experiences to seek needed care or for other approved absences.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all NYMC-SOM students and faculty.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. MS 1 and MS 2 Years of Attendance and Absence

1. Required Attendance

- a. During the first two pre-clinical years in the NYMC SOM, students are required to attend ALL small group conferences, laboratories, clinical preceptor sessions, and other teaching exercises specified as mandatory (whether in person or online) by the course director. In addition, students are expected to attend any required educational activities and programs sponsored and directed by the offices of medical education and/or student affairs. When participating in mandatory virtual educational activities and programs, students are expected to have their cameras open unless advised by the course director.
- b. As a general guideline, students are expected to be present for all classes Monday through Friday as shown on the academic calendar and are responsible for identifying all mandatory educational activities at the start of each course, trimester, or semester. Specific activities listed in the academic calendar are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, not limited to inclement weather. At times, it may become necessary to schedule make-up activities, including examinations, during unscheduled time or immediately prior to vacation periods. Students are expected to schedule off-campus travel only during vacation periods so as not to conflict with the class schedule as shown on the academic calendar.

2. Procedures

- a. All absences (approved and/or unapproved) from required academic or educational activities will be recorded by the course director(s) on the student's record, along with the reason for such absences, which will be forwarded to the Office of Student Affairs.
 - b. Students with repeated absences (approved and/or unapproved) will be required to make up the time missed and may be subject to review by the Professionalism Integrity Subcommittee of the Student Academic Performance Review Committee (SAPRC) for professional misconduct and/or by the appropriate Promotions Committee.
 - c. Anticipated absences: Students must seek prior approval and provide acceptable reasons for any anticipated absences with the appropriate course director(s) or educational /student affairs deans where applicable at the beginning of an academic block. Travel plans should not be made until the approval has been received from the appropriate course director (s) or the educational/ student affairs dean(s).
 - d. Lack of attendance for any reason does not relieve the student of responsibility for the material covered during his/her absence. In addition, it is in the purview of each course director to determine if mandatory educational exercises carry weight in the overall final course grading calculation and whether make-ups for some (or all) of their required sessions are available or permissible.
3. In general, and subject to the student's make-up responsibility as stated above, approved absences will be allowed for the following reasons. Confirming documentation may be required.
- a. Personal illness as documented by a physician. The physician's note must be submitted on professional stationery.
 - i. Absence from an exam due to an illness requires documentation by a physician.
 - ii. Prolonged absence due to illness or multiple absences due to illness will also require physician documentation submitted on professional stationary to the Office of Student Affairs.
 - iii. Under certain circumstances, such as prolonged illnesses or unapproved absences, a student may be required to receive clearance from a dean for Student Affairs, Student Health Service, or Student Mental Health Service, prior to returning to the academic environment.
 - b. Death or critical illness of an immediate family member.
 - c. Presentation of scholarly work (poster or oral presentation as first author) at a local or national academic meeting with the prior approval from the course director(s) and Office of Student Affairs. Approved absence is ordinarily limited to the day of the presentation plus one day for travel.
 - d. Observance of a religious obligation with prior approval from the course director(s) at the beginning of an academic block.
 - e. Permission to attend medical or dental care appointments.
 - i. If appointments cannot be scheduled outside of scheduled class hours, students should inform supervising faculty and the course director(s) of scheduled care appointments and request prior approval at the beginning of an academic block.
 - ii. Course directors may require make up work if student absence interferes with required learning experiences/objectives of the course

It is understood that, on occasion, legitimate reasons for absence may occur that are not included in the foregoing list. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the student to discuss,

in advance, with the course director(s) the reasons for an anticipated absence. However, it is in the purview of course director(s) to approve or disapprove such an absence.

In the event of an emergency, the student should contact a Student Affairs Dean during normal business hours (914-594-4498) or at MSADeans911@nymc.edu during nights and weekends. Student affairs will disseminate information to the appropriate course director(s) and assist students with other necessary arrangements for missed work or exams. In any case, it is the responsibility of the student to contact their course director(s) as soon as possible to arrange for make-up of missed work.

Students who find it necessary to be absent from the academic environment for extended periods of time for any reason **must** discuss the matter in advance with a dean for Student Affairs. For the purposes of this policy, an “extended period” typically refers to a period of two or more weeks during any trimester of Year One or three or more weeks during any semester of Year Two of the medical curriculum. When extended absences are anticipated, the student is required to apply for a leave of absence. In the case of extended absence (for any reason) that is not anticipated, the student may be placed on an administrative leave of absence from the SOM. Any student placed on a leave of absence, must follow the appropriate policies and procedures and petition for re-admission to the Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The Senior Associate Dean will review the student’s appeal with the members of the Leave of Absence and Readmission Committee and/or the Professionalism and Integrity Committee of the SAPRC, as appropriate.

B. Clinical Years Student Attendance and Absence

1. During the clinical years, students are required to attend all clerkship functions, including all rounds, lectures, clinic duty, and night and weekend duty, as specified by the clerkship director, as well as any scheduled educational activities and programs sponsored and directed by the offices of Medical Education and/or Student Affairs. Lack of attendance for any reason does not relieve the student of responsibility for the material covered during his/her absence.
2. It is understood that on occasion, legitimate reasons for absence may occur. In these situations, the student must discuss the potential absence with the appropriate clerkship director and provide a clear explanation for the anticipated absence as soon as the student is aware and whenever possible, at least four weeks prior to the beginning of the clerkship. **Travel plans should not be made until the discussion has occurred with the appropriate clerkship director.**
3. All absences will be documented in the student’s final evaluation, along with the reason(s) for such absence(s) and the nature of make-up activities. Students with repeated absences or failure to abide by the procedures indicated in this policy may be subject to review by the Professionalism and Integrity Committee of the SAPRC for professional misconduct and/or by the appropriate Promotions Committee.
4. Absence procedure for illness during clinical years: Should an absence occur due to illness, the clerkship director, clerkship coordinator, site director and the clinical team must all be notified as soon as possible. Under certain circumstances (*e.g.*, prolonged illnesses) a student may be required to receive clearance from a dean from the Office of Student Affairs, Student Health Services or Student Mental Health Services, prior to returning to the clerkship.
5. Absence procedure for interviews in the Fourth Year: Apart from the general rules governing absences listed above, it is understood that fourth year students will require time to participate in residency placement interviews. However, students should not schedule their interviews during their required track rotations (*e.g.*, sub-internships, critical care, emergency medicine, and radiology and diagnostic

medicine). To avoid a conflict of commitment, students are encouraged to schedule electives which do not involve direct clinical care during the peak interview times for their specialty.

6. Third year clerkship absence procedure for religious observance
 - a. To ensure that all students fulfill the competency and experiential requirements of each third-year clerkship the following procedure will be followed in accordance with the college's absenteeism policy. Please note that each clerkship is unique, therefore the specific make-up for each clerkship and number of makeup days will vary.
 - b. For absences for religious observance that cannot be made up within the timeframe of the clerkship the student will be required to complete a five-day high-value clinical experience within the same clerkship during Winter Break or after Transition to Fourth Year, whichever comes first. This makeup is for the purpose of fulfilling the experiential requirements of each clerkship. The makeup can consist either of practical experience and/or another educational modality.
 - c. The requirements of the high-value clinical experience will be determined by the relevant clerkship director(s) and will be assessed by the same clerkship director(s). Student will receive a grade of Incomplete until they have successfully completed the high-value clinical experience.
 - d. Oversight for this procedure is the responsibility of the Assistant Dean for Clinical Sciences.

V. REFERENCES

LCME Standard 12.4: Student Access to Health Care Services: A medical school provides its medical students with timely access to needed diagnostic, preventive, and therapeutic health services at sites in reasonable proximity to the locations of their required educational experiences and has policies and procedures in place that permit students to be excused from these experiences to seek needed care.

VI. TYPE OF POLICY

Student Affairs, Education and Curriculum

VII. APPROVALS

- A. First and Second Year Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee
- B. Third- and Fourth-Year Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee
- C. Education and Curriculum Committee

VIII. POLICY AUTHOR(S)

- A. Office of Student Affairs
- B. Office of Undergraduate Medical Education

IX. RELATED POLICIES

- A. Student Code of Academic Integrity and Professionalism dated December 15, 2010.
- B. Compact Between the Teacher and Learner for the NYMC-SOM dated July 1, 2015.

X. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective immediately.

XI. POLICY MANAGEMENT

Responsible Executive: Dean of the School of Medicine

Responsible Officer: Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs

Responsible Department: Office of Student Affairs