

Absences Policy: Pre-clinical

Effective September 19, 2012

An essential element of a medical student's professional development is the consistent demonstration of a mature sense of dependability and accountability. Therefore, students are expected to be present and on time for all scheduled examinations, clinical assignments, and mandatory academic activities (e.g. Ethics Small Groups, Standardized Patient interactions, Genetics Patient Interviews, etc.) or required student assemblies and orientations unless the responsible faculty/staff grants an excused absence. The “responsible faculty/staff” are the leaders of that course or activity, ie the course director, Block Exam Chairs, or Standardized Patient Program Director—not individual teaching faculty within a course present at a particular session. All absences affecting Block Examinations must be submitted to all of the responsible faculty as well as the Block Examination Chairs for consideration.

Excused Absences—instructions for students and absence criteria:

Requests for an excused absence must be:

1. Made in writing via email to the responsible faculty/staff and with carbon copy (cc) to the Medical Student Affairs email account (medstuaf@louisville.edu) at the time of the request
2. Anticipated absence requests related to University-sanctioned events must occur in writing at a minimum of one week prior to the event or activity. The faculty member will respond in writing (email) that approval has been granted. A university sanctioned event or activity shall be one in which a student represents the university to external constituencies in academic or extra-curricular activities.
 - Examples include an authorized presentation of scholarly work at an academic conference, serving as an official representative of the university, or participating in university-sanctioned events. <http://louisville.edu/provost/what-we-do/classroom-policies/classroom-policies.html#excusedabsences>
3. Regarding other anticipated absence requests, not related to University-sanctioned events, must occur in writing at least 30 days prior to the absence. A decision will occur within 7 working days of receiving the request, and the student will be notified via email.
 - Requests must fulfill one of the following criteria:
 - A medical illness with written documentation supporting the inability to attend required educational activities that accounts for each day missed
 - An anticipated significant family event that **requires** the student’s attendance. (NOTE: Weddings are NOT an excused absence)
 - A family crisis that **requires** the student’s presence
 - An anticipated religious ceremony or observation (see U of L website for list of work-restricted religious holidays) <http://louisville.edu/diversity/resources/Work-Restricted%20HolyDays2011-2012.doc>
 - Unforeseen documentable extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control
 - Absence for military service obligations

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4. Students requesting an absence must explain in writing the reason for the request as well cite one of the above circumstances below in the written request. All requests will be centrally tracked by the Office of Medical Student Affairs via email communications between students and responsible faculty/staff. Proof of reason for absence, ex. doctor's notes, meeting program, etc. must be turned in to Student Affairs office.

Responsible faculty/staff will judge all incurred absences or anticipated absence requests for graded learning activities. If an excused absence is granted by the course director or SPP Director, the student is required to work out terms with the course director(s) and/or SP clinic for rescheduling, making up, or waiving the missed academic assignments and credits. When flexibility in scheduling within an existing block of time exists to accommodate the student's request, eg for SP clinic activities with multiple time slots already available, the decision to reschedule the student vs. consider the missed date an absence and withhold credit is at the discretion of the affected course director, staff and related facilities.

Unanticipated Absences

Absences or tardiness for a scheduled academic assignment (examination or block exam, mandatory class/student assembly, small group session, assigned SP clinic appointment, clinical assignment, etc.) due to a personal illness or an unanticipated crisis are to be reported as soon as possible to the required responsible faculty or staff member—the course director(s), the Block Exam Chairs, and/or the SPP Director. **In case of emergency with limited time for notification, the Office of Medical Student Affairs can be notified at (502) 852-5192 and/or by sending a detailed e-mail to medstuaf@louisville.edu**. Any verbal communication must be followed up with written communication from the student to the responsible faculty and staff and the Office of Medical Student Affairs as outlined above in the instructions for students section. Students missing more than 48 hours of school must also notify the Office of Medical Student Affairs so that planning regarding possible leave of absence can occur.

Unexcused Absences

Any student who is absent from an academic assignment and has not been granted an excused absence by responsible faculty/staff will receive an **unexcused absence** and the student will receive a **ZERO** for any scheduled academic activity that is missed. The student may still be required to complete the scheduled learning activity or an alternate learning activity without receiving a grade, if deemed necessary by the course director in order to proceed through the remainder of the course. An example might include an important SP clinic interaction that is required to ensure competent future practice or completion of a presentation required to achieve the learning objectives for the course.