

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy Statement

All Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine students are expected to attend all mandatory sessions and clinical experiences outlined in the clerkship syllabi. In specific situations, Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine students may request an absence from a required activity.

Reason for the Policy

Participation in and contribution to the learning environment are fundamental professional behaviors that are expected of all medical students. Participation in required curricular and clinical activities enhances the learning experience for all.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all medical students.

Procedures

1. To request an absence, the student must submit an absence request form. In the request, the student must provide the date of the proposed absence as well as the reason for the request so that the course, clerkship, or elective director can determine if the request meets the criteria for an excused absence (see below). Students who do not feel comfortable requesting the absence from the course, clerkship, or elective director for confidentiality reasons may make their request through the assistant dean for student affairs.
2. Students must obtain approval for any non-emergent absences at least four weeks prior to the date that will be missed. Students are responsible for reviewing and adhering to the requirements and procedures for absences contained in each course, clerkship, and elective syllabus.
3. The course, clerkship, or elective director will approve or deny absence requests. Factors considered include but are not limited to:
 - a. The nature of the absence;
 - b. Whether granting the absence or modification will unduly burden other students, faculty, staff, or others; and,
 - c. Whether granting the absence or modification will unacceptably compromise the nature and/or rigor of the educational requirements.
4. Absence requests for the following reasons must also be approved by the Director of Curriculum Development and Support:
 - a. Absence requests for 2 or more consecutive days
 - b. Requests for absences that include missing a summative assessment
 - c. Requests for absences from simulations (e.g., PETA, OSCE)
5. Students are responsible for and must complete any missed work within the agreed upon time frame regardless of the reason for the absence.
6. Any non-approved absence is considered an unexcused absence. Students are responsible for and required to complete missed work; however, no credit for missed work will be given toward the course requirements and may have an adverse impact on the final grade.

9. Absences for any reason that lead to missing 10% of more of the hours of required sessions of the course, clerkship, or elective will typically result in a determination of failure to meet the minimum requirements for the course, clerkship, or elective.
10. Excused absences may be granted for:
 - a. Personal illness
 - b. Necessary health care services, including care for acute or chronic illness, physical therapy, counseling, or psychological services.
 - c. Religious observance (sincerely held religious beliefs)
 - d. Significant family event such as a funeral or illness of an immediate family member
 - e. Presentation at a professional conference or participation in a leadership activity that has been pre-approved
11. Excused absences are generally not granted for:
 - a. Vacation days
 - b. Social engagements
 - c. Attendance at a conference not pre-approved
12. In case of emergency, the student must contact the course, clerkship, or elective director of an absence within 24 hours, or as soon as possible if incapacitated. If the student is unable to contact the course, clerkship, or elective director, the student may have someone contact them or the assistant dean for student affairs on the student's behalf.
13. For students with accommodations for attendance, the college of medicine will utilize the attendance contract created by the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (<https://uh.edu/accessibility/>).
14. For accommodations for attendance related to pregnancy and parenting, the student must contact and follow procedures of Equal Opportunity Services (<https://www.uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/pregnant-parenting-accommodation/>).
15. If a student does not agree with the designation of a non-approved absence, the student may submit a written appeal of the decision to the associate dean for medical education, whose decision is final.

Responsible Official & Additional Contacts

| Policy owner | Approval body | Revision and approval history |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Associate Dean of Medical Education | Curriculum Committee | Approved: May 14, 2024 |
| | | Next review: May 2026 |
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Related Policies/Guidance Documents