

DEPARTMENT: Office of Student Affairs
NAME: Attendance
POLICY NUMBER:
OWNER: Office of Student Affairs
EFFECTIVE DATE: 06.30.2025

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled at the Meritus School of Osteopathic Medicine (MSOM).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistent and equitable standards for student attendance, recognizing the critical role that participation in required educational activities plays in medical education. The policy provides clear guidelines for managing absences, protecting the integrity of the curriculum, and supporting professional accountability. The policy governs expectations for attendance, defines excused and unexcused absences, and outlines the procedures for requesting, documenting, and addressing absences in required educational activities.

POLICY

I. Pre-Clerkship Absences

- A. Students are required to attend and participate in all learning sessions, subject to excused absences. An excused absence is an absence from a single class or a single day that is approved by the Office of Student Affairs. Excused absences are only granted for high-stakes circumstances such as examinations, objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), lab sessions, TBL sessions, clinical skills didactics, hospital clinical hours, and other curricular course requirements as identified by the course director.
- B. An unexcused absence is an absence from one (1) to three (3) consecutive days during which an examination, OSCE, TBL, clinical skills didactics, or lab session occurs that is not approved by the Office of Student Affairs. Students with an unexcused absence will not be allowed to make up any missed coursework or activities during this time.
- C. Students may be excused from examinations, OSCEs, TBL, clinical skills didactics, and lab sessions in the event of a medical illness (self or immediate family), jury leave, military leave, an unforeseen emergency event that was not predictable, or bereavement of a parent, spouse/spouse's parent, or child. The student must be able to provide documentation verifying the medical illness or emergency situation in order to be excused. Students are required to provide advance notice, if possible, and complete the following process to submit an excused absence:

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1. A student must submit the excused absence request form to the Office of Student Affairs with documentation explaining the need for an absence.
2. The Office of Student Affairs will review the form for approval of the request.
3. Upon approving or denying the request, the Office of Student Affairs will communicate the decision to the student, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the course director(s) of the missed course(s).
4. Students are responsible for contacting their team(s) for arranging reviews of missed materials or coursework. If the absence is determined to be unexcused by the Office of Student Affairs, the student will receive a zero for the missed coursework and may be referred to the Student Progress Committee for review.

II. Clerkship Absences

- A. Attendance at all clerkships and assigned activities during clerkships is mandatory. Students may not be absent more than four (4) days from any rotation, irrespective of cause, without the need to repeat the rotation. More than four (4) days of absence may result in failure of the clerkship or corrective action. Planned absences must be approved by the Office of Clinical Education. The request should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the requested day. Absences due to illness or other unexpected emergencies may be excused at the discretion of the Office of Clinical Education. Any unexcused absences will be considered unprofessional conduct and may subject the student to disciplinary action, including clerkship failure.