

Policy Title: Participation and Attendance Policy

Approved By: WR2 Curriculum Committee

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Responsible Office or Committee: Curricular Affairs

LCME Affiliated Elements: 9.9

Policy Statement:

The participation and Attendance Policy at the CWRU SOM aims to uphold the principles of professionalism, active learning, and commitment to the education experience for all medical students. This policy sets forth guidelines for student attendance and active participation in various educational activities, clinical experiences, and patient-based interactions. It is designed to ensure that students not only excel academically but also demonstrate professionalism and responsibility in their medical training.

Purpose of Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to emphasize the importance of attendance and active participation in various educational activities and clinical experiences within the CWRU SOM. The policy is designed to promote professionalism, ensure students commitment to their educational responsibilities, and enhance the learning experience of both individual students and the group.

Scope of Policy:

The policy applies to all enrolled students within the CWRU SOM. It applies to students participating in the medical curriculum, including pre-clerkship and clerkship phases of their medical education.

Policy:

At the CWRU School of Medicine, students are considered junior colleagues. Here, student professionalism is valued equally as highly as mastery of the basic sciences and clinical skills; therefore, participation and attendance in WR2 are fundamental to meeting these professional and curricular responsibilities.

When the SOM confers the MD degree, the faculty is attesting not only that the student has achieved a level of competency as measured by performance on tests, but that the student has shown a commitment to professional responsibility and has also participated in the entire educational experience that is defined by the curriculum, the LCME and the state of Ohio.

Attendance is required in all instances where students collaborate, or patients are involved. When students collaborate in the process of learning, the quality of what goes on depends on the contributions and interactions among the participants. Failure to attend and collaborate harms the knowledge exchange for the individual student and the group. Because the group setting involves putting one's thoughts into words to teach others, students can advance their learning in a group setting in ways that are not possible when studying independently.

Attendance at patient-based activities is required out of respect for the individuals that allow us to learn from their lives. In all instances, students should be on time and well-prepared.

Foundations of Medicine and Health (Pre-Clerkship Curriculum)

On time attendance is required at:

- Classes and venues that require student collaboration:
IQ groups; Foundations of Clinical Medicine (Block 8) Tuesday Seminars; Team Based Learning (TBL) sessions/Medium Sized Groups/Active Learning in Teams (ALT); Anatomy Sessions with cadavers and GARLA sessions; IPE activities; Procedures workshops; Physical Diagnosis; other activities as indicated in the learning management system.
- Classes and other venues involving patient participation:
Inpatient and outpatient sessions; Physical Diagnosis; Communication Workshops; Skill Development sessions; Clinical Reasoning sessions; Medical Interviewing Sessions; Clinical Skills Exams; Clinical Immersion - Attendance is required at all sessions during the week.

Consequences of failure to adhere to the Participation and Attendance Policy: Failure to attend or repeated tardiness is a failure of professionalism. The Office of Curricular Affairs tracks attendance and tardiness for required learning experiences.

Attendance:

- Students who have any unapproved absences will receive a designation of **“Does Not Meet”** for that activity of the Block. A student who receives a **“Does Not Meet”** designation in any activity of a block will receive an overall Block decision of **“Does Not Meet Expectations”**.
- A student who **“Does Not Meet Expectations”** in any block due to a professionalism lapse, including unapproved absences, meets with their Society Dean and with a coach from the Professionalism Working Group who will work with the student to develop a remediation



plan that may include subsequent meetings around professionalism, required research, writing, and reflection on professionalism and development of an educational contract. Upon successful completion of the remediation plan, the student's grade will convert to **“Meets Expectations.”**

A pattern of professionalism lapses can result in referral to the Committee on Medical Students.

Tardiness:

- Repeated instances of tardiness are considered a professionalism lapse and may result in assignment of **“Does Not Meet Expectations”** for a block and referral to the Professionalism Working Group for coaching.

Student Managed Flex Days

The attendance and participation policy respects individual student needs for some flexibility in scheduling academic and personal responsibilities. All students therefore have flex days that they may request at their discretion. If there is a need for flexibility beyond the flex days, students can work with their Society Deans to find solutions that address their individual circumstances.

Students have the opportunity for up to **3 flex days** in year 1 [Blocks 1-4] and **2 flex days** in year 2 [Blocks 5-6]. Examples of flex day absences include weddings, family occasions, social obligations, family illness, child's school conference, etc. Students need not provide a reason for requesting a flex day. Flex days do not carry over from year 1 to year 2.

Flex days may not coincide with the final IQ week of a block, clinical immersion, examination days, or be utilized immediately preceding or following vacations (“bookending”).



Special Considerations for Requesting Flex Days and Other Absences for Block 8

There are important limitations to requesting flex days: The curriculum contains several categories of unique small group sessions that are part of Block 8 and not feasible to recreate (clinical preceptorships, simulation sessions, communications workshops, physical diagnosis sessions, procedures workshops, etc.). Because these required sessions are so difficult to recreate, it is likely that students will not be able to miss these sessions. Where possible, student requests to reschedule may be supported, with advance communication initiated by the student that includes all parties. Otherwise, such sessions are not eligible for "excused" or "flex day" absences.

Procedure for Submitting a Request for Flex Days

Requests for **flex days** can be made by completing an Absence Request Form in Easel and submitting it for approval **at least three working days in advance**. In the event that a student unexpectedly would like to request a flex day, they should submit the request immediately and email som-attendance@case.edu to ask to be considered for a rapid approval.

Approval of Excused Absences (non-Flex day absences)

Absences other than flex days must be approved by the Society Deans to be considered excused. Some examples of other approved absences include personal illness, personal or family emergency, religious observance, or presenting at a conference. These absences will generally not be approved during clinical immersion week, on examination days, during the final week of IQ of a block, or to “bookend” any official school vacations or holidays.

Procedure for Submitting a Request for Excused Absence (non-Flex Day)

- Requests for an **absence other than a flex day** must be approved by the student’s Society Dean. The student should complete an Absence Request Form prior to the date or up to two weeks after the absence. The student may wish to discuss the request with their Society Dean. The request will be sent electronically to the student’s Society Dean for approval.
- **Unexpected illness and other personal or family emergencies** will be handled in a different time frame, but with the same process, i.e., **requests for approval of absences due to illness and other personal or family emergencies must be made using the Absence Request form and choosing the Request for Approved Absence option on the form, even if the submission is made after the affected sessions have occurred.**

Please note that individual faculty leaders for any Foundations of Medicine and Health (Blocks 1-8)

activity are not authorized to approve absences.

Research Parts 1, 2, 3

You will receive a total of 5 flex days during research parts 1, 2, 3, combined. These flex days do not need to be entered in the attendance system.

**** Out of respect, the student should discuss his/her planned absence with all faculty and students involved once approval for a flex day or other absence is received.****

Policy for Clerkships and Clinical Electives

Attendance and punctuality during all aspects of clinical rotations are expected and considered an important part of a student's evaluation. **Unless the absence in question is entirely unanticipated (death or serious illness in the family), students should enter their requests at least 30 days before the proposed absence. This policy applies to all clinical rotations (Cores, Acting Internships, Electives).**

Students must discuss their absences with the appropriate people before submitting the form (see guidelines below). This policy applies to all clinical rotations (Core Clerkships, Acting Internships, and Electives). The **Absence Request Form for Clinical Rotations** and the **Instruction Sheet** are available in the Canvas course, "SOM Y3/Y4 Essential Information", under SOM Clerkship Policies.

Note, flex days do not apply to clinical rotations – all absences must be requested in advance.

Limited absence that can be approved by the Clerkship/Elective Director:

- Limited to 3 days per Core or 4-week elective, and 1-2 days per 2-week elective; and
- Involve clear-cut reasons such as meeting presentation, major events involving close family (weddings, etc.)
- Missed curricular content (such as case conference, simulation, etc.) would need to be made up at the discretion of the director.

- Absence that affects the Friday afternoon curriculum needs to be approved by the appropriate course directors for either the College or the University Program. *Please note that all these Friday absences must be approved separately from any conversation with the clerkship director.*

Absence that would require discussion with the Clerkship/Elective Director, Assistant Dean for Clinical Education, and Society Dean/Physician Advisor:

- Repeated absence in one Core, Acting Internship or Elective for any reason or absence greater than three days, or 1-2 days in the case of 2-week electives.
- In the event that any leave beyond 3 days is approved, both the content and time of this additional leave would need to be made up in a fashion acceptable to the rotation or elective leadership.

Sciences and Art of Medicine Integrated Attendance Policy

For University Program students rotating on any clerkship model¹, attendance at all Sciences and Art of Medicine Integrated (SAMI) sessions in their entirety is mandatory. Students will attend all SAMI sessions including those that occur during elective and research blocks. Students will make-up any missed session (see make-up work below).

Absences may be approved for the following reasons according with the following procedures:

- **Presentations at Conferences:** Students may request to be absent from SAMI to present at a regional, national, or international conference.
 - Students should describe details about the meeting and their role in the conference within the [online SAMI attendance system](#).
- **Personal or Family Emergencies:** A student who requests to be absent from SAMI to attend to a personal or family emergency will be asked to seek approval from their society dean. Students who have been granted permission to miss SAMI for an emergency are then asked to:
 - Submit the request in the [online SAMI attendance system](#).
 - Students should indicate “Personal or Family Emergency” as the indication for the absence.
- **Illness:** Students who are ill enough to miss clinical activities should not attend SAMI sessions. Absence requests must be entered into the [online SAMI attendance system](#) as soon as possible but not more than 48 hours following the missed session.

¹ Models include the traditional block clerkships, CCLC, and Metro LIC.

- **Away Rotations:** Students participating in an away rotation will not be expected to attend SAMI during the rotation.
 - Students should note the course and dates within the [online SAMI attendance system](#).

Make-Up Work:

- Students will be contacted by SAMI leadership with instructions and a deadline for all make-up work. Make-up work will reflect all components of the SAMI session.
- All make-up work must “Meet Expectations” as determined by the SAMI directors.
- Work that “Does Not Meet Expectations” or is submitted after the deadline will constitute an unapproved absence.
- Unapproved absences will result in a “Does Not Meet Expectations” for SAMI.

Life Events

The medical school acknowledges that unpredictable events affecting attendance can and do occur. When these situations (such as medical emergencies, important changes in life circumstances, parenting issues, etc.) arise, the faculty will work with the student to find a solution. As soon as a student becomes aware of a situation that might affect fulfilling course obligations and attendance requirements, or influence the course of study, it is the responsibility of the student to consult promptly with their Society Dean.

Pregnancy and Parenting:

If a student is pregnant or parenting and needs accommodations, they must review the Policy on Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations in the student handbook for guidance.

Disability services:

If a student has a condition that may require accommodations, they must apply to the [CWRU Disability Services](#) for appropriate guidance and review the Policy on Disabilities and Accommodations in the student handbook.

Religious Practices

The CWRU SOM policy on religious observations follows that of the University. The [religious accommodation request](#) procedure is managed through the Office of Equity. The school expects students to use careful discretion in judging the importance of a particular observance. It is the responsibility of the student to inform their Society Dean in advance as to whether or not they will be absent due to a particular religious observance.

Vacations

Student vacations are limited to the periods specified by the official academic calendar.