



**Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science**  
*"A Private University with a Public Mission"*  
**College of Medicine – MD Program**

<b>PRE-CLERKSHIP &amp; CLERKSHIP ABSENCE POLICY</b>
<b>CDU Policy 322.4</b>
<b>Issuing Officer:</b> Dean of College of Medicine
<b>Responsible Office:</b> College of Medicine
<b>Date Reviewed by the Pre-Clerkship Phase Subcommittee:</b> 8/16/2022
<b>Date Reviewed by the Clerkship Phase Subcommittee:</b> 12/7/2022
<b>Date Approved by the Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee:</b> 6/22/21
<b>Revised Date/Review Date (at least 3 years from Effective Date):</b> 10/24/2025
<b>Supersedes (if necessary):</b> N/A

**POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy outlines the attendance policy for the Pre-Clerkship and Clerkship Phase as well as the procedure for students to obtain an excused absence.

The professional standards and expectations in medical school are similar to residency and beyond. Attendance to clinical assignments and required course activities is a full-time commitment and measure of professionalism. Students are expected to be present at all required-attendance sessions and all assessments. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the attendance expectations for each course and clerkship. For students with disabilities who have registered with the university Disability Services Coordinator, the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions will work with the course leadership (e.g., course/clerkship director), at the beginning of courses to ensure students receive accommodation. For a student in need of an assessment for accommodation, the student must meet with the Senior Director of Learning Skills in the Office of Student Affairs.

Excused absences are not guaranteed except for health care reasons. Reasons for excused absences include:

- **Health:** All medical students have the right to be excused from coursework and clinical work to attend their own health care appointments. Students with an illness of three or more days require the submission of a note from a healthcare provider. Students have a right to privacy when seeking health care and do not need to disclose the specific type of health care that is being sought.
- **Personal/Family Emergency:** Students must provide a brief explanation when requesting an excused absence. Examples include but are not limited to funerals and medical emergencies of family members.
- **Jury Duty:** Students must provide a copy of the summons to the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions, via the online Absence Notification Form.
- **Religious Holidays:** Medical students have the right to be excused from coursework and clinical work due to religious observances.

**PROCEDURES**

- Unanticipated absences due to emergencies such as sickness; death in the family;

serious personal illness; or illness of spouse, domestic partner or dependent child must be communicated to the course or clerkship director/coordinator as soon as possible.

- Any absence (unless emergent) must be approved in advance (at least 30 days) of intended absence. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the course or clerkship director/coordinator in writing. All students submitting an absence request must complete the online Absence Notification Form. Documentation confirming necessity of excuse may be requested and provided by the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions. The course or clerkship director/coordinator will notify the student within 10 days of receiving the request if the absence is approved.
- If an absence is not approved, it is expected that the student will make the necessary arrangements to change their schedule to be present.
- No student will be penalized if unable to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement because of his or her attendance at a health care appointment, religious obligations and practices, personal/family emergency or required jury duty.
- A student who is absent will be given an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements which the student may have missed because of the absence.
- Time off for studying is not a valid reason for an excused absence.
- Excused and Unexcused Tardy:
  - Arriving 10 minutes tardy to a course/clerkship is an unexcused tardy.
    - The first (2) unexcused tardy arrivals to a course/clerkship, the medical student will receive a verbal warning from the course/clerkship director and the Office of Student Affairs will be notified.
    - The third unexcused tardy arrival to a course/clerkship, the medical student will receive both a verbal warning and formal written warning from the course/clerkship director and the Office of Student Affairs will be notified.
  - The fourth unexcused tardy arrival to a course/clerkship, the medical student will receive a score of two (lowest score possible based on the grading rubric) for student accountability, which is a loss of 8% of the overall grade. The clerkship phase will utilize a different grading rubric and score for student accountability. If a student is more than 15 minutes tardy to a course/clerkship it is an unexcused absence. It will be the student's responsibility to work with their course/clerkship director to make up any assignments missed.
  - In the event of an excused tardy, please be sure to contact the Office of Student Affairs immediately (examples of excused tardy may include car trouble, accident, family emergency, etc.)
- The following are considered professionalism issues, that will be monitored by the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions and may result in a referral to Committee on Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion (MSEP):
  - Absence from a required session without obtaining advance approval. In cases of emergency, it is the student's responsibility to contact the course/clerkship director as soon as possible.
  - Failure to communicate with the course/clerkship director.
  - Failure to complete the online absence notification form.
  - Trend in number of unexcused absences across courses/clerkships; once a student has received three unexcused absences the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and

Admissions will submit a report to the MSEP committee.

**DEFINITIONS**

There are no definitions associated with this policy.

**RELATED INFORMATION**

- CDU Academic [Catalog](#)
- LCME Standards, Publications, & Notification Forms <https://lcme.org/publications>

Review History:	Change Description:
5/3/2023	Updated with new university policy number and upcoming review date which is two years from approved date
5/30/2023	Created suggested policy language updates for review by the EPCC
6/27/2023	EPCC voted to accept suggested updated policy language; next review date will be in two years
8/25/2023	Student Affairs included additional information related to unexcused tardy and number of infractions
10/24/2023	EPCC voted to approve updates to the Absence Policy

