



## ATTENDANCE – MEDICAL STUDENTS

### Departmental Policy

<b>Authorizing Unit</b> Undergraduate Medical Education Committee (UMEC)	<b>Table of Contents:</b> Purpose 1 Scope 2 Responsibilities 3 Appendices 4 Process 5 Instructions/Forms 6 Standards 7 Consequences 8 Approval 9
<b>Classification</b> Operations	
<b>Approval Authority</b> Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education (UME)	
<b>Implementation Authority</b> Manager, UME	
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- Purpose** 1 Create a policy regarding the student attendance.
- Scope** 2 This policy applies to all students attending MD Program.
- Responsibilities** 3 Many UME education sessions in the pre-clerkship are not considered mandatory for attendance. We encourage students to attend all scheduled academic sessions.

**Attendance is mandatory at the following:**

- a. **Certifying and formative evaluations**
- b. **Clerkship (Year 3)**
- c. **Learning experiences at which patients will be present (including clinical correlations)**
- d. **Small group learning experiences in all courses**
- e. **All sessions within certain courses:**
  - **Medical Skills (Communications, Ethics, Global Health, Well Physician, Physical Exam, Procedural Skills, Well Man, Women’s Health)**
  - **Integrative**

- **Introduction to Clinical Practice**
- **Family Medicine Clinical Experience (Med330/430)**
- **Flipped classroom style sessions**
- **Anatomy Lab Sessions**
- **Career Exploration Program**
- **Service Learning**

**Other sessions that are noted as mandatory on Osler (i.e. some labs)**

**Appendices**      **4**      The University of Calgary policy regarding examination deferrals can be found in the University Calendar.

Guidelines for attendance in clerkship are described in the Policies and Procedures Clinical Clerkship Document.

**Process**      **5**      Attendance will be recorded at these sessions via the use of sign-in sheets. The sheets will be collected by UME staff no later than 30 minutes (and may be earlier than this) after the start of the session. Students arriving after the sign-in sheet has been collected may remain at the session but may not sign in on the attendance sheet and will be considered absent from the session. The sign-in sheets are the primary record of student attendance and it is incumbent upon all students to sign in individually to the mandatory session.

It is inappropriate for students to sign in for other students at mandatory sessions and it is equally important that it is inappropriate for students to ask or threaten another student to sign in for them. Any such action would be considered dishonest and unprofessional as per the Student Code of Conduct. The offending student would require a meeting with the Assistant or Associate Dean of UME with a note to the student file documenting the behavior. Students would be reminded of the serious nature of their actions. A second incident would result the student attending at the Student Academic Review Committee (SARC) with the potential for required remediation or removal from the UME program.

**Instructions/Forms**      **6**      Students may request excused absences from mandatory sessions. These requests may or may not be granted and students should not make any plans requiring an approved absence until the approval has been granted by UME. UME will not take any responsibility for problems resulting from an absence that is not approved (e.g. having to change previously booked flights).

There are many reasons that may justify a student absence at a mandatory educational event. Each circumstance will be judged on its individual merits. In general, considerations include equitable treatment of students, recognition of professional and academic responsibility, student well-being and respect for the UME program, teachers and students.

Information used on whether to grant the request may include:

- the specifics of the educational event to be missed (content in the session and educational process),
- the number of sessions to be missed, the student's previous academic and professional performance and,
- reason for the requested absence.

Examples of typically ***allowed as excused absences include:***

- holidays in a student's faith  
a list of recognized holidays is published in the University of Calgary Calendar
- medical appointments  
where possible, appointments should be scheduled outside of class time, but, this may not be possible
- major life events (weddings, funerals, family celebrations)  
student will need to indicate the date and location of the event and their relationship to the person
- academic conferences  
student will usually be allowed to attend if he/she is presenting academic work or if the student is representing the Cumming School of Medicine in a capacity recognized by the UME office.
- attendance at a recognized committee meeting as part of work done as a student representative for the UME program  
where possible, meetings should be scheduled outside of class time; meetings of external organizations may schedule meetings that conflict with the UME schedule

Other requests for excused attendances will be considered on a case-by-case basis with the guiding principles as described above. An event included on the list above is not guaranteed to be allowed as an excused absence. The UME program is not seeking to limit student activities but recognizes that a balance between the academic program and student activities must be found.

In addition to the excused absences described above, students may miss up to 10% of small group sessions within Courses I-VII. Students are not required to pre-arrange these absences and documentation is not required. Students may not miss other mandatory sessions (including patient presentations, flipped classroom workshops and sessions within the Medical Skills Course). Students may use Flex Days (see the Flex Days policy) to miss these other sessions as outlined in the Flex Days policy. Students are strongly encouraged, in the spirit of collegiality, to inform their group members of any absences.

**Standards**

- 7** It is recognized that unplanned absences may occur. Students may have situations arise that legitimately prevent them from attending a scheduled learning session. Such situations may include but are not limited to personal

health issues or family members' health issues, travel delays, child-care problems, etc. Should a situation occur where a mandatory session is missed, a similar process should occur to that described above; the student must complete the online form in OSLER explain the absence. The Program Supervisor will discuss the situation with the Assistant or Associate Dean who will make a decision regarding the approval of the absence. Documentation to support the reason for the absence may be required.

All requests for an approved absence must be handled as above whereby the online form in OSLER must be completed with an explanation. The Program Supervisor will communicate with the appropriate Assistant Dean or the Associate Dean as required. Individual Course Chairs, Instructors or Program Coordinators should not be approached for requests for excused absences. While the Assistant or Associate Dean may discuss the feasibility of an absence request with course leaders, the final decision regarding the approval rests with the Assistant or Associate Dean. The student requesting an excused absence will provide documentation to support the reason for the request if required.

A balance will be struck between the need for documentation and awareness that accessing that documentation may create more problems than it is worth. A common situation that will arise is the student who misses a mandatory session due to acute, short-term illness. Recognizing that our students are student professionals, it is unnecessary for students to procure a physician's note for a simple viral illness. Students will need to complete the form on OSLER to document the absence but do not need to obtain a 'sick note' for absences up to one day. A student that is found to have misrepresented his/her reason for missing an educational session will be considered to have committed a breach of professional responsibilities.

**Consequences**

- 8** Students are responsible for all material that is missed due to absence at a mandatory session. In some instances, there may be a requirement for a student to undertake a replacement learning process or complete an assignment to replace the missed session. The need for such a replacement and the type of make-up event or assignment will be decided by the Course or Unit Chair in conjunction with the Assistant or Associate Dean.

Students who are not in attendance at mandatory events will be tracked by UME. On occasion, students have been identified as having significant health or personal issues through attendance tracking.

**FIRST ABSENCE:** A student with an unexcused absence in one course, beyond the allowances outlined above, will be contacted by email to alert him/her to the concern. A copy of the email will be added to the student file. There are no adverse consequences to this; no record of the attendance issue will be transferred and no mention of this will be made in the students' MSPR (Medical Student Performance Letter – Dean's Letter) that is forwarded to CaRMS.

