Schedule Conflicts, Absences, and Vacations Policy
IUSM-PO-EDU-EMR-0002

FULL POLICY CONTENTS

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| INFORM  | IUSM students                                         |

LCME Standards

3.5 Learning Environment/Professionalism
9.8 Fair and Timely Summative Assessment
11.1 Academic Advising
12.4 Student Access to Health Care Services
Scope

Any individual enrolled in the Indiana University School of Medicine.

Policy Statement

Students are required to seek written permission from the statewide course/clerkship/elective director for absences from the educational program. Any absences of two or more consecutive days or three total days from a course/clerkship/elective for any reason must be approved by the Medical Student Education deans. Once an absence is approved, the student is responsible for notifying his/her instructor or attending physician/resident of his/her team in advance of the absence.

Reason for Policy

This policy was developed to serve the best interests of the individual and the individual's colleagues, as well as the goals of the School of Medicine. It intends to ensure that patient care will not be jeopardized nor will the education of medical students be hampered by absences and vacations. The intent of all absence accommodations is to provide students the ability to respond to events outside of their control without interfering with their training.

Excused absences and schedule revisions will be accommodated for significant and appropriate reasons and will be monitored to ensure adequate exposure in all aspects of the profession.

Approval

Approved by the Curriculum Council Steering Committee 03/22/2019.

Procedures

Vacations

The Curriculum Council Steering Committee will approve curriculum schedules that include a sufficient quantity of vacation time (see Calendar and Scheduling Policy for details).

Procedure for Requesting Time Away

Students will submit either an IU School of Medicine Time Away or Professional Development Opportunity Form for all time away from the curriculum. Students should discuss foreseeable scheduling conflicts with the course site leader (Phase 1) or statewide course director & coordinator (Phases 2 and 3) as soon as possible. Timely communication is a professional expectation, and will improve the ability of faculty and staff to assist the student with completion of the curriculum in a timely fashion.
**Access to Healthcare**
Students are encouraged to seek healthcare when needed. In foreseeable circumstances, students should work with their healthcare provider and instructor/statewide course director to schedule times or accommodations that minimize impact on their education.

**Religious Observances**
The IU School of Medicine provides accommodations for observance of major religious holidays. Students who require time for religious observances will submit requests for time away in a timely fashion.

**Personal Events**
Students should work with the relevant course director in concert with their lead academic advisor in planning and prioritizing anticipated scheduling conflicts.

**Professional Development Opportunities**
The IU School of Medicine encourages students to gain research experience and to pursue opportunities to present their scholarly work at local, national and international meetings. The School also recognizes that other types of service and professional development opportunities can be equally important.

Students in good academic standing may request up to a total of 3 days (including travel time) for professional development opportunities (PDO) in Phase 1 year 1 and again in Phase 1 year 2. Phase 1 PDO requests must be made through the online IU School of Medicine PDO Request form.

In Phases 2 and 3, the core clerkship curriculum is critical to each student’s professional development. It is preferable to use unscheduled time or flexible electives to plan PDO in the clinical Phases. Students should request time away from the required clinical rotations only for PDO events that require their active participation, with reasonable considerations for travel time.

On rare occasions, a course activity may preclude attendance at the PDO and the request may be declined to prevent delays in completion of the curriculum.

**Class Participation**
Active, in person participation is required for collaborative learning activities, as each student’s participation has an impact on colleagues (this includes, but may not be limited to small group, simulation, and laboratory sessions).

Attendance at lecture sessions is not required unless the session is identified as mandatory. Missing live lectures may hamper retention of information for some students and may be correlated with poor performance. Faculty or Mentoring and Advising Program representatives may make official recommendations based on observed student performance.

Students should refer to the course syllabus for professional expectations around attendance.

**Clinical Responsibilities**
Immersive participation in the clinical curriculum is important for integration into the clinical team, training, assessment, and continuity of patient care. The availability of suitable accommodations for time away from clinical rotations cannot be guaranteed.
Students should exercise professional judgment in requests for time away from clinical rotations.

Students who experience unanticipated absences from clinical rotations must notify their preceptor as soon as possible and ensure a safe transition of patient care to an appropriate member of the clinical team.

**Residency Interviews**

Students should discuss their options for managing both anticipated and short-notice interview scheduling conflicts with their lead advisor and/or career mentor in advance of making interview plans.

For elective courses, students should plan time away in advance with the course director, and discuss the potential flexibility for unexpected interviews.

For required rotations, students should contact the statewide and site course directors, course coordinator, and lead advisor immediately upon becoming aware of a conflict between the required rotation schedule and a residency interview or visit in order to plan appropriately. Accommodation for time away for interviews is at the course director’s discretion and is based on the circumstances and availability of accommodations, with expectations to make up any time missed from the required curriculum.

For unexpected interview opportunities that arise during the rotation, the usual appeals process may not be feasible. The student may request, within 48 hours of the course director’s decision on time away accommodations, an expedited review by the curricular directors for Phase 3; the course director’s decision will be final until and unless the review results in revision.

**Professional and Timely Communication**

Generally, the earlier the discussion with course leadership and submission of the IUSM Time Away Request Form occurs (preferably months), the more likely the course leadership and registrar will be able to make accommodations. It may not be possible to provide reasonable accommodations for untimely requests.

For the Phase 1 year 1 fall semester, request forms must be submitted at least two weeks prior to time away. During the remainder of Phase 1, scheduling accommodations require no less than two weeks notice prior to the start of the course (for absences in FCP 1 or 2, the submission deadline is related to the start of the concurrent course in which the time away will occur).

During Phase 2 and Phase 3, schedule accommodations require at least 30 days notice prior to the beginning of each rotation.

For unforeseeable circumstances, students should notify stakeholders of the event as soon as possible. In Phase 1, this will include site leaders and clinical preceptors. On clinical rotations, this will include the clinical team as well as the statewide director and coordinator.

**Completion of the Curriculum**

Students are responsible for completion of the curriculum. Students will discuss plans to make up missed content, preceptor visits, or examinations with the course site leader (Phase 1) or statewide course director (Phases 2 and 3) as soon as possible after an unexpected
event or prior to planning time away for foreseeable events.

All makeup activities should be completed within 14 days of end of course to allow timely assessment of a grade. These activities may need to be completed during unscheduled time (e.g. independent learning time, campus connection days, nights, weekends, or holidays) to avoid interference with other educational activities. All schedule adjustments will comply with IUSM duty hour policies. The student, site leader or statewide course director, and course coordinator will agree in advance upon the timing of the student’s make up requirements. In exceptional circumstances, the statewide course director may assign a placeholder grade of Incomplete until all course requirements are met (see the Grade Policy for Phase 1 Courses and the Grade Policy for Courses, Clerkship, and Electives in Phases 2 and 3).

Certain experiences cannot be readily duplicated; these cases will involve discussion with the appropriate Medical Student Education Phase deans or directors:

- A need for prolonged or repeated absences may best be handled with a leave of absence.
- Students who miss a clinical orientation, small group clinical training, or similar mandatory rotation activities may need to reschedule the clinical rotation.
- Students who miss a significant amount of a course or clerkship may need to repeat the course or discuss a study and completion plan prior to any examination(s).
- Students who miss 3 or more days of clinical responsibilities in a rotation may need to make up time in a continuous fashion to allow sufficient opportunity for integration into a clinical team, observation, feedback and assessment of performance.

Exam Postponement
Occasionally, a student may not be able to complete an examination at the scheduled time. Students may request an extension or delay when a) exceptional circumstances would preclude effective performance on an examination, or b) students become unable to complete an exam due to illness during the exam, or c) the absence has been approved in advance through the above mechanisms or through Medical Student Education. Students are required to talk with the course site leader (Phase 1) or statewide course director (Phases 2 and 3) if they believe circumstances justify a postponement. The course director will have discretion to reschedule the examination or to deny the student's request.

If the student’s justification of an exam postponement does not warrant excusing the absence, the student will receive a score of "zero" for any missed examinations. In addition, if the student did not receive approval from the course director for exam postponement, the student will receive a score of "zero" for the missed examination.

Appeals
Students may appeal in writing a decision made by the course director to the appropriate Medical Student Education Phase deans or directors, or his/her designee, within seven days of the course director’s decision. Notification of the outcome of the appeal will be made in writing within seven days to the student and the course director. If the student’s appeal is approved, the appeal ends.

If the appeal is not approved, the student may file an appeal with the senior associate dean for medical student education within seven days of the previous decision. Notification will be made within seven days to the student and the course director. The
decision of the senior associate dean is final.

**Professionalism and Honor Code**
Absences or requests for schedule adjustments should not be a regular occurrence. Use of this policy is bound by the IU School of Medicine Honor Code. The appearance of abusing this policy creates concerns in professionalism and may result in referral to the Student Promotions Committee through the appropriate mechanisms.

**Definitions**

**Courses:** Includes traditional courses as well as clinical rotations such as clerkships, selectives and electives.

**Additional Contacts**

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<th>Subject</th>
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<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>Abigail Klemsz</td>
<td>317-274-1963</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aklemsz@iu.edu">aklemsz@iu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Marti Reeser</td>
<td>317-274-2208</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Dreeser@iu.edu">Dreeser@iu.edu</a></td>
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**Forms**

[IUSM Time Away Request Form](#)

[Professional Development Opportunity Request Form (Phase 1 only)](#)

**Related Information**

- Professional Conduct Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Impaired Student Program
- Area of Concern Policy
- Indiana School of Medicine Honor Code
- Grade Policy for Phase 1 Courses
- Grade Policy for Courses, Clerkships, and Electives in Phases 2 and 3

**History**

Approved by the Curriculum Council Steering Committee 3/11/2014. This policy replaces Absences and Accommodations.

Approved by the Curriculum Council Steering Committee 11/2015. Friendly amendments made and approved by the Curriculum Council Steering Committee 2/14/2017.

Phase I attendance expectations modified on 4/2/2017. Attendance expectations in small group and the outline of exam rescheduled added.


Replaces Class Attendance in Student Handbook; archived 08/03/2017.
Minor grammatical changes on 08/03/2017.
Addendum to address professional development absences on 11/29/17.
Approved by FCC on 11/28/17.
Approved by the Curriculum Council Steering Committee on 12/12/17.
Professional Development Opportunity Request Form replaced Time Away Request Form in the section describing Phase 1 PDO procedures on 12/14/2017 via CCSC friendly amendment.
Included student illness within the Phase 1 Attendance Exam Postponement section on 01/05/2018.
Approved by CCSC on 01/09/2018.
CCSC Policy Subcommittee met on 08/27/2018. To review instructional format and recommend changes to CCSC.
Approved by CCSC on 09/11/2018.
Addition of Phase 2 and Phase 3 Attendance, Professional Development Opportunities in Phase 2 / Phase 3, and Phase 3 Interview Scheduling Procedure added to “Procedures” section on 1/17/2019.
Approved by CCC on 02/05/2019.
Approved by CCSC on 03/22/2019.