



The Medical College of Georgia

Office of Academic Affairs

Approved on: Prior to 2020

Applicable to: all students

Effective on: immediately

Approved by: COC

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Category: Preclerkship, Clerkship, Absence

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Attendance and Excused Absence Policy

Medical team members are responsible to each other to provide high quality patient care and a productive learning environment. Absences and tardiness negatively affect the team functions and productivity. Therefore, the following policy applies to all learning experiences, including both on-campus and off-campus settings for the pre-clerkship and clinical experiences of the MCG curriculum.

Medical students are encouraged to obtain health care and are excused from pre-clerkship courses and clerkship activities to seek their own health care. As professionals, they should choose appointments that interfere the least with educational responsibilities whenever possible. If such absences exceed the course or clerkship maximums, a medical excuse from a treating physician needs to be obtained. Time away from courses for excused absences will not affect student evaluations.

All absences for required coursework must be excused:

- a) Mandatory/required coursework is designated in the pre-clerkship syllabus
- b) All clinical workdays in the Clerkship and Enrichment Phases are required
- c) Excused absences are granted by the Class Dean. If the student's rotation is on a regional campus, the Site Clerkship Director (Athens) or the Clinical Campus Dean (NW, SE, or SW) may also grant the excused absence and notify the Clerkship Director.
- d) Unplanned excused absences are granted for personal illness and personal or family emergencies on the same day of the event. The student is required to contact the Class or Campus Dean AND the Clerkship or Module director prior to the missed event.
- e) Planned Excused absences may be granted for the following reasons:
 - Personal illness requiring planned appointments, treatments, or procedures
 - Funerals requiring the presence of the student
 - Health care appointments
 - Observance of religious holidays
 - Residency interviews
 - Clerkship CPA
 - Presentations of scholarly works at national or regional conferences
 - Wedding of immediate family or participation as member of a wedding party
 - Other situations reviewed and approved by Class Dean

When possible, requests for planned excused absences should be made at least 4 weeks in advance.



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- f) Requests for unplanned excused absences should be made as soon as possible and prior to the absence. Requests for planned excused absences should be made prior to the clinical clerkship, or at least 4 weeks in advance. Students should expect a timely written response from the Class or Campus Dean to their request. The absence is not approved until the student has written documentation that an excused absence has been granted.
- g) Notification of excused absence will be sent from the Class Dean to the appropriate academic leadership/director/coordinator upon approval of the absence in the pre-clerkship or clerkship settings.
- h) Students are required to notify individual clinical teams or faculty ahead of any planned absence and as soon as possible of an unexpected absence when on clinical rotations.
- i) All absences require approval from the Class Dean.
- j) Once the maximum number of missed days is exceeded, it is required that a plan for make-up of missed days be approved by the Class Dean. The maximum number of days in the Preclerkship Phase is 1 day over a two-week period, averaged over the length of the module/course. In the Clerkship and Enrichment Phases, the maximum number is 2 days in a 3 week rotation, 3 days in a 4 week rotation, or 4 days in a 6 week rotation.
 - The Clerkship Director, Site Clerkship Director (Athens) or Campus Dean (NW, SE, SW) will collaborate with the Class Dean to determine how to best facilitate the student's learning when there are absences. Effort will be made to ensure that the student has adequate clinical exposure by arranging make-up experiences for time missed.
 - Up to two additional days may be excused for interviews only and must be made up.
 - Additional days missed must be reviewed with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs or designee in collaboration with the clerkship or elective director to determine required experience.
 - Absences that are shorter in duration than the above may still require make-up work as determined by the Module, Course, or Clerkship Director.
- k) An excused absence may be granted for a student in the Enrichment Phase that needs to miss a shelf exam for a residency interview. Students who miss an exam for an interview must make up the exam by the end of the next one month block and makeup exams can only be scheduled on the dates of previously scheduled exams. Students who fail to comply with this risk receiving a zero on the exam.
- l) Absences will be centrally monitored by the Office of Academic Affairs. Any patterns of excessive absence will require a meeting with the Class Dean.



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Unexcused Absences:

- a. Absences not approved as “excused” according to the policy above is an unexcused absence.
- b. Unexcused absences will result in notation about unacceptable professionalism in the evaluation comments, referral to the Student Promotions Committee, and may result in a failing grade for the course.