



CLERKSHIP ABSENCE POLICY

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| EFFECTIVE DATE: | 6/26/24 | NEXT REVIEW: | 5/1/2025 |
| APPROVED BY: | Academic Programs | | |
| CATEGORY: | Academic Programs | | |
| APPLIES TO: | Students in the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) Program | | |

REFERENCES AND RELATED POLICIES:

- Clerkship COVID-19 Policy
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PURPOSE

MSUCOM requires student participation in clerkship rotations and clinical activities with consistent attendance to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for successful program completion. This policy will define the policy and procedures regarding absences for clerkship activities.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. MSUCOM courses/rotations may have additional absence requirements from this general clerkship policy. Additional requirements will be found in the course syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to know any specific absence requirements for the course.
2. **Excused Absences**
 - a. Students must obtain documented approval via the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* for any full- or partial-day absence from a rotation.
 - i. Exception-students do not need to complete a *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* for the COMAT exam, COMAT study absence, or the MSUCOM Clinical Performance Competency Assessment (CPCA).
 - b. An excused absence is required for all absences from MSUCOM courses/rotations and is obtained by the student upon correct completion of the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* and upload of the form to Medtrics.
 - i. The student needs to obtain the appropriate signatures on the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* at least 30 days prior to the date of the absence.

1. An absence due to a sudden emergency or short notice interview invitations (year 4 students) is the exception to the 30-day advance notice.
 2. Appropriate signatures include:
 - a. The signature of the supervising attending physician and
 - b. The student coordinator at the rotation site
 - i. This will be the student's base hospital student coordinator for cores and electives at or scheduled by the base site student coordinator.
 - ii. For elective rotations scheduled outside of the student's base hospital, the rotation site coordinator who organized the rotation will be the signatory.
 - c. Additional MSUCOM signatures may also be required as described in the policy.
 3. Once completed, the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* is to be uploaded into the 'Excused Absences' folder (within the 'My Personal Documents' section) of a student's Medtrics profile. It is recommended students also maintain a copy for their records.
3. **Unexcused Absences** are any absences taken in the clerkship without proper completion of the *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form*.
- a. Unexcused absences are considered unprofessional and will result in a report to the Common Grounds Professionalism Committee and/or the MSUCOM Committee on Student Evaluation (COSE)
 - b. Unexcused absences may result in-
 - i. An N-grade on the rotation and/or poor evaluation.
 - ii. Additional time scheduled to complete rotation requirements.
4. **Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Forms**
- a. *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Forms* must be completed for all absences.
 - i. Exception-COMAT exams and COMAT study time and MSUCOM Clerkship and Career Advising Visits
5. **First Day of Rotation**-Students are not allowed to be absent from the first day of any rotation due to onboarding and orientation plans at most rotation sites. Students must plan accordingly for any personal days, interview days, COMLEX, etc. to ensure no absences occur on the first day of rotations.
6. **Maximum time off any rotation**
- a. The maximum number of absences from any one 4-week rotation is 2 days. The maximum number of excused absences from any one 2-week rotation is 0 days.
 - i. Exception:
 1. A fourth-year student may be absent 4 days on any 4-week rotation or 2 days on any 2-week rotation during October-January for interview purposes only.
 - a. It is expected that time off for virtual interviews is appropriate to the length of the interview. Example-if the virtual interview is half day or less, the student should only be requesting to be absent the time of the virtual interview vs a full day absence.

2. COMAT study time and COMAT exam absences do not count toward the maximum number of absences off any one rotation.
- b. Students may request additional time off from any one rotation by contacting the Associate Dean for Clerkship Education via email (com.clerkship@msu.edu) prior to the absence. The *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form* completed by the attending and student coordinator must accompany the request. Additional documentation may be requested. The Associate Dean for Clerkship Education will communicate approval or denial of additional time off to the student within one week of the initial request.
7. **Specific clerkship absence details**
- a. Personal day absences
 - i. Students may use 5 total personal days per academic year (August-July) at their discretion, provided the maximum number of total excused absences meets the 'Maximum time off any rotation' above. Personal day absences do not carry over from year 3 to year 4. Personal day absences include vacation day(s) during any one rotation, sick time, conference time, etc.
 - b. COMAT study time
 - i. COMAT study time absence will be provided to any student enrolled in a COMAT examination occurring the last Friday of the rotation. Students opting to use a COMAT study time absence can leave the rotation at noon on the Thursday before the exam and are expected to return to rotation upon the completion of the COMAT. COMAT exams requiring rescheduling due to emergency will not be provided COMAT study time.
 1. Students do not need to complete a *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form*, however, do need to notify the rotation team (attending and residents) of the absence.
 - c. COMAT examination
 - i. Absence for the COMAT examination includes time to take the exam only. Students not opting for the COMAT study time are expected to be active in rotations prior to and after the COMAT exam.
 1. Students do not need to complete a *Clerkship Program Excused Absence Request Form*, however, do need to notify the rotation team (attending and residents) of the absence.
 - d. Prolonged illness, bereavement, maternity/paternity leave
 - i. Students should contact the Associate Dean for Clerkship Education for further direction. Time missed may require make up. Documentation may be required.
 - e. Jury duty
 - i. Students should contact the Associate Dean for Clerkship Education upon jury duty notice for further directions. Time missed may require make up.
 - f. COMLEX/USMLE examination
 - i. Absence for the COMLEX/USMLE includes time to take the examination only (1 day or 2 days with accommodations).