



**Excused Absence/Tardiness  
For First and Second Year Medical Students**

Section: 4  
Policy number: 4.17  
Responsible Office: Student Affairs and Admissions  
Issued: 06.02.17  
Latest Review: 2020-2021

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**POLICY STATEMENT**

Students in the first and second years of medical school must notify the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions if they are absent or plan to be absent from, or late for, mandatory portions of the curriculum. Granting of an excused absence will be at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions based on various student characteristics and curricular elements. Failure to obtain an excused absence through appropriate procedures will result in a letter of unprofessional behavior in the student file, more than one letter during the student tenure shall lead to a hearing of the MSAPC.

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**REASON for POLICY**

The success of students in medical school largely depends on active and consistent participation. One must be present, and immediately prepared to engage, in order to take full advantage of each learning opportunity. This is especially true of those activities that depend on group process. Absence from, or tardiness to these and other activities can significantly negatively influence the academic success of both the student and the other group members. As a result, and consistent with the Grading and Academic Performance for SMHS Medical Students policy as well as the Teacher-Learner Statement, students are highly encouraged to attend and participate in all medical school curricular activities. Some curricular events are mandatory and the student is expected to attend, absence from these portions of the curriculum are addressed in this policy.

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**SCOPE of POLICY**

This policy applies to:

- √Deans, Directors, and Department Heads
- √Managers and supervisors
- √Students
- Others:

- √Faculty
- √Staff

**WEB SITE REFERENCES**

- Policy Office: <http://www.med.und.edu/policies/index.cfm>  
Responsible Office: <http://www.med.und.edu/student-affairs-admissions/index.cfm>
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DEFINITIONS	
Planned absence	A situation where a student is aware that they are likely to be requesting an excused absence the proposed future date.
Required and/or mandatory element	An element of the curriculum, which may be lecture, lab, or other experience that the student is required to attend.
Tardiness	Arriving late to the specific venue of any required curricular activity.
Unplanned absence	A situation when a student had not planned to be absent but circumstances beyond their control made it impossible to attend to course work.
Mandatory	Labelled as “mandatory” on the student schedule.

RELATED INFORMATION	
Grading and Academic Performance for SMHS Medical Students	<a href="http://www.med.und.edu/policies/_files/docs/grading-academic-performance.pdf">http://www.med.und.edu/policies/_files/docs/grading-academic-performance.pdf</a>
Teacher-Learner Relationship for all Faculty and SMHS Students	<a href="http://www.med.und.edu/policies/_files/docs/teacher-learner.pdf">http://www.med.und.edu/policies/_files/docs/teacher-learner.pdf</a>

## CONTACTS

General questions about this policy can be answered by your department’s administrative office. Specific questions should be directed to the following:

Subject	Contact	Telephone/FAX	Email contact
Policy clarification	Student Affairs	777.4221/777.4942	
Policy format	Dean’s Office	777.2514/777.3527	judy.solberg@med.und.edu

## PRINCIPLES

- I) Students in the first and second year of medical school must notify the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions if they are absent or plan to be absent from or late to mandatory portions of the curriculum. Granting of an excused absence will be at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions based on various student characteristics and curricular elements. Failure to obtain an excused absence through appropriate procedures will result in a letter of unprofessional behavior in the student file, more than one letter during the student tenure shall lead to a hearing of the Medical Student Academic Performance Committee (MSAPC).
- II) Students must sign an attestation that they understand the following procedure and the consequences of failure to comply with the policy. This attestation will be sent out with the original notice of excused absence, absence from these portions of the curriculum are addressed in this policy.

III) The Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions shall consider the following:

- A) The student academic performance up to the point of the request
- B) The point in the block that the student requests an absence
- C) The material being presented during the requested absence
- D) The ability of the student to make up the material that is missed
- E) The number of absences already taken, requested, and/or granted
- F) The reason for the absence

This list is not exhaustive but is presented here to provide a guide for students in their requests for excused absences from required elements of the curriculum.

IV) When granting an excused absence, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions may consult with all or some of the following as appropriate:

- A) Assistant Dean for Medical Curriculum
- B) Director of the Simulation Center
- C) Director of Assessment
- D) Instructors

V) The success of students in medical school largely depends on active and consistent participation. One must be present in order to take full advantage of each learning opportunity. This is especially true of those activities that depend on group process. Absence from, or tardiness to these and other activities can significantly negatively influence the academic success of the student. As a result, and consistent with the Grading and Academic Performance for SMHS Medical Students policy as well as the Teacher-Learner Statement, students are highly encouraged to attend and participate in all medical school curricular activities. Some curricular events are mandatory and the student is expected to attend.

VI) Students are advised to begin planning for an absence as soon as possible and contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions to make arrangements as soon as the absence is anticipated. Failure to plan may lead to a situation where the excused absence is

impossible to accommodate.

## PROCEDURES

- I) Urgent or Emergent Absence and Tardiness: Students who are urgently or emergently absent from or late to a mandatory medical educational activity are required to contact the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions as soon as possible. The student must provide the reason for the absence. Below is a list of instances where an urgent/emergent absence or tardiness may be appropriate, although the final decision lies with the Associate Dean for student Affairs and Admissions:
  - A) Personal illness
  - B) Death or serious illness of a family member
  - C) Illness of a dependent family member
  - D) Certain and occasional transportation and/or weather related obstacles  
Please also see III below.
- II) Planned absences: Students who have an event that will cause an absence from school must receive prior approval from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions. Below is a list of instances where a planned absence may be appropriate, although the final decision lies with the Associate Dean for student Affairs and Admissions:
  - A) Certain unique life events (weddings, graduation etc.) involving an immediate family member
  - B) National, regional, or local meetings for which the student has official responsibility (such as elected representative of the class).
  - C) Outside educational conferences or meetings
- III) Absent students are also required to:
  - A) Notify their facilitator of their absence
  - B) Notify the members of the PCL group: Make every effort to minimize the effect of their absence on their fellow students. For example, send the presentation to the PCL group.
  - C) For a non-lecture mandatory curricular event: Contact each instructor to identify a process for making up missed assignments and when appropriate (re)schedule the missed curricular element. NOTE: this is the student's responsibility and may be limited by the availability of the instructor.

- D) For a mandatory Lecture: Provide a written (minimum of one page) outline of the lecture (with references) to the Assistant Dean for Medical Curriculum within seven calendar days of the absence.
  
  - E) Provide documentation: The absent student must provide documentation of completion of the aforementioned procedure by completing the Absence Reporting Form for First and Second Year Medical Students (see page 10) and turning it in to the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions within 14 calendar days of their absence.
- IV) Excused absence notices will be sent by email to the following individuals as appropriate:
- A) Director of the Simulation Center
  
  - B) Director for Education Resources
  
  - C) Director of Assessment/Year 2 Basic Sciences Director
  
  - D) Co-Director Year 1 Clinical Sciences Education
  
  - E) Co-Director Year 2 Clinical Sciences Education
  
  - F) Director Year 1 Basic Science Education
  
  - G) Standardized Patient Coordinator
  
  - H) Standardized Patient Program Assistant
  
  - I) Current Block Facilitator
  
  - J) Associate Dean for Student Affairs
  
  - K) Education Program Coordinator, Year 2
  
  - L) Administrative Officer in Education Resources
  
  - M) Administrative Assistant in Education Resources
  
  - N) Education Program Coordinator, Year 1
- V) Absences are tracked. Students who have missed an unusual number of days may be asked to provide additional information and/or documentation regarding the absences, including but not limited to a doctor's excuse.

VI) Consequences of violation of the excused absence procedure:

- A) The absence will be officially recorded as an unexcused absence and an incident of unprofessional behavior. A letter to that effect will be sent to the student, and a copy will go into the student’s academic file.
  
- B) The unexcused absence will affect eligibility for certain awards and eligibility to hold offices.
  
- C) The unexcused absence may affect the student’s grade in the block.
  
- D) If a student repeatedly abuses this policy or egregiously disregards the policy on a single occasion, he or she will be required to have a hearing of the Medical Student Academic Performance Committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES	
Assistant Dean for Medical Curriculum	Accept write-ups from students with excused absences. If the write-up is inadequate to request the student submit additional information.
Medical students (MSI and MSII)	Be familiar with the policy and process for requesting an excused absence (planned and unplanned) and unexcused tardy.
Office of Student Affairs and Admissions	Keep the documentation from the student attesting to understanding the excused absence policy and procedure, as well as the excused absence reporting form. The later form shall be sent out of all individuals who were originally sent the excused absence.

FORMS	
Absence Reporting Form	Attached
Attestation of understanding with regard to obtaining an excused absence	Attached

**REVISION RECORD**

- 04.19.17 – MCC Approved
- 07.17.17 – FAC Approved
- 07.17.17 – Dean Approved
- 11.25.20 - UMEC Approved

*[Replaces procedure for excused absence Section 3.16 of the student policies and procedures handbook]*

**Attestation of understanding with regard to obtaining an excused absence**

I attest that I understand the policy entitled "Excused absence/tardiness for SMHS Medical Students" and agree to abide by the procedure set forth in the aforementioned document.

Student Signature and Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*(This document may be provided to the Office of Student Affairs and Admissions in paper format or can be attached to an email from the student's official UND email with an affirmation in the body of the email that they have read and agree to the attached. An excused absence will not be issued without this signed document.)*



**Absence reporting form for first and second year medical students**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (name) was absent from \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (date), : AM/PM to \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (date), \_: AM/PM. It was a planned/unplanned absence. (circle one).

Planned remediation for missed material:

Missed mandatory curricular activity	Contacted (faculty)-please ask faculty to sign	Agreed to make up missed material in this manner

Missed mandatory lecture	Provided documentation to Dr. Carr	Signature from Dr. Carr

I \_\_\_\_\_ attest that I have contacted all instructor(s) for mandatory educational activities and have made a plan to remediate the missed material.

Student signature and date of completion: \_\_\_\_\_