Time Off from Clerkship Rotations

Read this prior to submitting a time off request

DO NOT ENTER TIME OFF REQUESTS UNTIL AFTER NOVEMBER 1
HTTPS://WEBAPPS1.HEALTHCARE.UIOWA.EDU/TIMEOFF

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS AND ABSENCES

At its core, student responsibility to attend and complete scheduled instruction is a vital element of professional behavior. Students are expected to attend all scheduled instruction in both preclinical and clinical courses.

Situations will inevitably arise in which a student will need to be, or desire to be, absent from scheduled instruction. These situations encompass two broad categories: unanticipated or anticipated absences (see below). By definition, anticipated absences are identified in advance. Successful resolution involves planning in advance and, whenever possible, requesting a schedule change through OSAC such that a rotation can be rescheduled rather than asking a course or clerkship director to provide special arrangements in instruction to accommodate the student’s request. When this is not possible, the course or clerkship director has the authority to act on the student’s request.

Neither scheduled or excused absences obviate the student from completing the required course or clerkship educational activities.

Unanticipated Absence. Students must notify the course or clerkship director of absences resulting from illness or other unanticipated issues. A course or clerkship director may require details regarding the absence, but not medical documentation.

Unanticipated Absence Due to Exposure. Students exposed to an infectious disease (e.g., mumps), should contact the course or clerkship director and let them know. A student who develops symptoms should not report to class or clerkships, but should call Student Health to be evaluated. A student exposed to a blood-borne pathogen should follow the instructions under Health Policies.

Anticipated Absence. Students must request permission in advance when an issue arises that will necessitate an absence from courses or clerkships. Any unexcused absence from a course or clerkship or from an examination may result, at the discretion of the course or clerkship director, in a failing grade.

Examples of Requests and Likely Responses

Examples of requests that should be granted:

- Personal health appointments - student or immediate family
- Death in the immediate family

Examples of requests that are reasonable but which may or may not be granted depending on the duration of the request and educational activities:

- Presentation at a regional or national meeting
- Attendance at an established CCOM meeting for which the student is member of the committee
- Attendance at a wedding as a member of the wedding party. Most of these events are known well in advance and students are encouraged to work first with OSAC to secure a schedule change. Request by the student to move an examination from the last day of the clerkship to accommodate wedding events are discouraged but the final decision rests with the course or clerkship director.

Examples of requests that are generally unreasonable and are likely to be denied:

- Car repair
- Haircuts
- Pet related issues
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STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ARRANGE ALL NON-CLERKSHIP ACTIVITIES DURING UNSCHEDULED TIME AND DURING SCHEDULED BREAKS.

Time off is **not** guaranteed.

If you have no other option but to ask for time off, here are some Do’s and Don’ts

**Do:**

- attend all days of a rotation (i.e., students are not “given” one day off per week).
- request as far in advance as possible any time off that is needed from a clerkship.
- call in on the day of an illness and report the absence to the clerkship contact and the supervising resident or staff physician.
- make a time off request, after the fact, for any absence that occurs due to illness or other unforeseen event.

**Do Not:**

- request the first day (orientation) off.
- request the exam day off.
- request the OSCE exam day off.
- request time off from a 2 week clerkship during the block that includes a University holiday.
- request time off by asking a resident or attending.
- request more than 1 half day per week for a group facilitation/teaching for CBL/PCL during a four week clerkship or more than 1 half day during a two week clerkship.
- For COC: request more than 1 half day per 2 weeks from selectives and Sub-Internships
- For COC: request more than 1 half day per week from advanced electives (2 and 4 weeks in length)
- ask off after Match Day for activities related to your residency (e.g., house hunting).

**Other points:**

- It is the clerkship director’s prerogative to require that time off is made up.
- Time off may not be taken from one clerkship in order to make up time from another clerkship.
- Details and/or documentation may be required when making a request.
- Students are allowed to register for a COC and be a group facilitator for CAPS, MAS, or MOHD, but they cannot ask off for both their COC and group facilitation **in the same week**. All other COC requirements must be met or continued facilitation will not be possible.