

I. POLICY

Attendance of Academic Responsibilities

II. PURPOSE

This policy details the Attendance of Academic Responsibilities requirements and procedures for the Pre-clerkship Phase, Clerkship Phase, and Elective Phase of the Doctor of Medicine (MD) curriculum, as well as the procedures for students to utilize personal leave. The policy also states the procedures for addressing tardiness, missed examinations, and incidents of unapproved leave.

III. RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE

Student Affairs and Medical Education Phase leaders will review this document annually. The Medical Education Committee shall review this document as recommended by Student Affairs and Medical Education, with input from the Curriculum Policy Subcommittee, the Pre-clerkship Education Subcommittee, and the Clerkship Education Subcommittee.

IV. ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

LCME 3.5	Learning Environment/Professionalism
LCME 12.3	Personal Counseling/Well-Being Programs
LCME 12.4	Student Access to Healthcare Services
SACSCOC 12.3	Student Rights

V. DEFINITION(S)

Institutional Holidays

EVMS has a number of institutionally-recognized holidays, including the following: New Year's Day (observed); Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Memorial Day; Juneteenth; Fourth of July; Labor Day; Thanksgiving and the day after Thanksgiving; and Christmas Day (observed).

- *During the Pre-clerkship Phase*, all holidays are included on the Academic Calendar. Students are expected to attend scheduled academic events, as appropriate, on holidays not included on the Academic Calendar unless leave is taken.
- *During the Clerkship Phase*, all EVMS institutional holidays are observed from 5 p.m. the day before to 5 p.m. the day of the holiday to accommodate clinical call schedules. Students may be expected to report to clinical duties at 5 p.m. on the day of the institutional holidays.
- *During the Elective Phase*, students are expected to follow the procedures of their site.

Inclement Weather

Periodically EVMS is closed or has alternate work hours related to inclement weather.

- Pre-clerkship and Clerkship Phase students follow the EVMS institutional decision regarding reporting to work. Elective Phase students follow the decision of the clinical site to which they are assigned.

- If EVMS' Liberal Leave Policy is in effect for faculty or staff, students should not endanger themselves trying to attend academic events if road conditions in their home area are unsafe. In such instances, all MD students can use personal leave using the below procedures.

Required academic session (Pre-clerkship Phase): A session for which students must attend or obtain approved leave. These sessions include Medical Knowledge exams, Clinical Evaluation sessions (Clinical Skills and Ultrasound), and all sessions that are identified as required.

Required academic session (Clerkship or Elective Phase): A session for which students must attend or obtain approved leave. These sessions include Medical Knowledge exams, Clinical Evaluation and Applied Learning sessions, and all sessions that are identified as required.

VI. DESCRIPTION

Attendance of Academic Responsibilities Across All Phases of the MD Curriculum

In keeping with the AAMC's Core Entrustable Professional Activities for Entering Residency, attendance of academic responsibilities is considered an important component of professional development toward knowledge acquisition, as well effective interpersonal and team skills. Students are expected to meet the same standards of professional behavior that are expected of basic science and clinical faculty and residents.

In the Pre-clerkship Phase, students engage multiple modalities of learning to develop their professional knowledge and skills. Formative learning experiences are used to facilitate students' ability to reflect on their learning strategies and to encourage self-directed learning practices. Small group modalities are used to facilitate students' comfort and ability to peer teach and to prepare them for their future professional responsibilities in clinical teamwork. In this role, students are expected to be active members of their small groups. Accordingly, students are expected to be present for all required academic activities.

In the Clerkship and Elective Phases, students engage in intensive education in the practice of clinical medicine. In this role, students are expected to be active members of the medical teams caring for patients in hospitals, offices, and clinics. Accordingly, students are expected to be present for all scheduled clinical activities, teaching conferences, lectures, examinations, etc. Clinical responsibilities will sometimes require that students be present on holidays, nights, and weekends. In addition, students may be required to be present at times that conflict with family events and other personal obligations and preferences.

Required Academic Events

Students are expected to arrive on time to all required academic events and responsibilities across all Phases. Tardiness for academic responsibilities is defined and addressed by the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy.

Attendance at required didactic events across all Phases may be monitored by badge swipe or other means as determined by the method of instructional delivery.

- Students are required to have their EVMS badges with them at all times.
- For in-person academic sessions, if a student forgets their badge, believes their badge did not swipe, or is informed that their badge did not swipe, it is their responsibility to report their attendance to the relevant administrator for the session in person by the end of the academic event.

NOTE: Attendance of academic responsibilities and consistent, visible wearing of EVMS badge will be monitored longitudinally by Student Affairs as a component of the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy.

Approved Personal Leave

EVMS recognizes that the academic years can be physically and personally demanding and substantial scheduled vacation is provided. Students are encouraged to utilize this time for personal healthcare, family gatherings, personal business, etc. EVMS also recognizes that circumstances might sometimes require that students be absent from their assigned duties. Necessary absences from academic responsibilities may be approved by Student Affairs as described below. Some absences, by their nature, cannot be anticipated ("emergency absences"), while others can be planned and approved in advance.

EVMS employs a student personal leave system. Personal leave is used any time a student misses a required academic event during the week or on the weekend, exclusive of institutional holidays. This leave system allows students to choose which events are most important for them to attend, but requires students to plan accordingly on an annual basis to assure that they use their personal leave time appropriately.

Events for which personal leave are appropriate include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Scheduled medical appointments or procedures
- Unexpected illnesses or injuries
- Medical or scientific meetings
- Interviews (excluding Medical Masters' graduate school and Elective Phase residency interviews)
- Personal or family events, including weddings, reunions, and other celebrations
- Unexpected family care needs
- Mandatory court appearances
 - NOTE: Students who are called for jury duty should obtain a waiver for duty from the Registrar's Office.
- Inclement weather, if EVMS' Liberal Leave Policy is in effect
- Motor vehicle accident

Sick leave is included in personal leave. Students should refrain from attending classes or clinical duties when ill.

- If illness requires that students be absent for more than three (3) academic days, a medical note may be required at the discretion of Student Affairs.
- Students with an extended illness, who have been hospitalized, or who have undergone surgery may also require notification from a medical provider that they can return to full academic duties.
- Extended absences may require a Leave of Absence.

Student leave related to the birth or adoption of their child; recovery from surgeries, hospitalizations, or other significant medical events; attendance at funerals; graduate school/residency interviews; religious holidays or other unique circumstances (as determined by the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee) must be approved using the procedures described below but will be handled by the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee and will not result in deduction of personal leave days.

No policy can enumerate all possible reasons for which leave might be approved. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Students must request personal leave using the [EVMS MD and MM Leave Policy Reporting Form](#), located at this link and on the Student Affairs page of the EVMS website. No leave of any kind (including leave for unique circumstances) will be approved without submission of this form.

The number of personal leave days afforded students is as follows:

- *Pre-clerkship Phase:*
 - For MD2026: 5 days + 1 day for Step 1 per academic year
 - For MD2027 and beyond: 8 days + 1 day for Step 1 per Phase
 - Leave requests will be for full days only; partial or half-day requests will not be granted.
- *Clerkship Phase:* 8 days + 1 day for Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) per Phase
- *Elective Phase:* 4 days + 1 day for Step 2 CK per Phase
 - Leave requests during the Clerkship and Elective Phases will be for half or full days. Half-day requests allow students to miss fewer clinical duties.
- In most circumstances, no more than three (3) personal leave days can be used at one time or in any one course, clerkship, or elective. Again, significant medical events or other unique circumstances do not require use of personal leave and will be handled separately in coordination with the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee.
- Students with chronic health conditions that may impact their use of leave are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services (StudentDisability@EVMS.EDU).

Failure to follow procedures for leave approval or requests for leave without any remaining leave days will result in unexcused absence(s), except with formal approval by the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee.

Approved Leave During the Pre-Clerkship Phase

Students are required to request leave as soon as known, including as soon as possible in emergency situations.

The steps for requesting any form of leave are as follows:

- Via email, inform the following individuals before the start of the required academic event or as soon as possible:
 - Course director or relevant faculty member
 - Curriculum coordinator
 - Clinical Skills and Ultrasound Director(s) and Coordinator(s) (if applicable)
- In the above email, initiate arrangements for eligible make-up academic activities with the appropriate faculty or staff member. Students are responsible for initiating contact for make-up activities. Failure to do so may result in loss of all points for that activity.
- Submit the [EVMS MD and MM Leave Policy Reporting Form](#).

During the Pre-clerkship Phase, the following days should be avoided for leave:

- Orientation to the course (i.e., first day of the course)
 - Attendance on the first day of a course is essential for understanding the structure and expectations for the course.
 - No personal leave will be approved except for unique circumstances.
- Required academic events in the Medical Knowledge and Clinical Evaluation domains, including all exams. Eligible missed academic events may be made up when personal leave is approved by Student Affairs.

For approved absences during Clinical Skills sessions, students are required to email the Director of Clinical Skills to arrange make-up or reschedule experiences. Specific to Clinical Skills activities, the following procedures are in place:

- Facilitator-led small group sessions cannot be made up by attending another facilitator group.
- Students will be allowed to make up physical examination teaching sessions held at the EVMS Simulation Center on a case-by-case basis and only when feasible.

For approved absences during Ultrasound sessions, make-up or rescheduling will occur as follows:

- Students who miss an Ultrasound event, including missing their assigned time slot, or do not meet assignment competency standards will make up the session at a predetermined date and time in the Ultrasound skills center.
- Students are responsible for contacting the Director of Ultrasound and the Ultrasound Coordinator to ensure they are scheduled at the appropriate make-up sessions.

Approved Leave During the Clerkship and Elective Phases

Students are required to request leave as soon as the need for leave is known, including as soon as possible in emergency situations, in order to adequately prepare the clinical team and clinical assignments.

The steps for requesting any form of leave are as follows:

- Via email or other approved form of communication, inform the following individuals as soon as possible before the start of clinical duties or the required academic event:
 - The supervising attending, resident, or other primary individual to whom the student will report for that shift; and
 - The clerkship coordinator
- Initiate arrangements for eligible make-up academic activities with the clerkship/ elective director(s) or Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education. Students are responsible for initiating contact for make-up activities. Failure to do so may result in loss of activities that contribute to students' grades.
- Submit the [EVMS MD and MM Leave Policy Reporting Form](#).

During the Clerkship and Elective Phases, the following days should be avoided for planned absences:

- Orientation to the clerkship or elective
 - Attendance on the first day of a clerkship or elective is essential for understanding the structure and expectations for the rotation.
 - No personal leave will be approved except for emergency situations.
- Subject exam(s) or clinical exam(s)

Negotiating and requesting schedule changes directly with the preceptor or site is prohibited. Students should route these requests through the clerkship coordinator and clerkship director.

In the Elective Phase, EVMS recognizes that students will miss clinical duties for residency interviews. Interview absences do not need to be approved by Student Affairs. Instead, Elective Phase students should communicate their interview dates as soon as possible to the elective director and the supervising attending, resident, or other primary individual to whom the student will report for that shift.

During the Clerkship and Elective Phases, students may be required to make up clinical days, even with approved leave, in order to fulfill unique clerkship requirements or to meet the required number of clinical evaluations for the domain-based grading system. In the unique circumstances of more than three (3) missed clinical days, the student will work with the Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education to develop a make-up plan, if deemed appropriate.

Absences or Tardiness for Scheduled Examinations Across All Phases

Examination schedules are published on the official EVMS academic calendars. Examinations may include written, practical, laboratory evaluations, or quizzes.

Absences from Exams

Students are expected to take examinations on the scheduled day and time unless approved for leave by Student Affairs via the leave request procedures outlined above. Students excused from exams on the originally scheduled date will be expected to take the exam on the make-up exam day, unless an alternative date is approved by the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee. Students with unexcused absences on exam make-up or retest dates only will be required to make up the exam at a date determined by the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs. Two or more unexcused absences on an exam date will be referred to the Student Review and Advisory Committee for review.

Late Arrival to Exams

To facilitate a calm educational environment, students are required to badge at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled exam start time (i.e., badge in by 7:45 a.m. for an 8:00 a.m. exam). Students are required to be seated and have screens ready for exam passwords five minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Time is determined by the main testing center computer in the examination room. For remotely proctored exams, students are required to be logged in and ready to begin the pre-exam process (e.g., showing the proctor a 360-degree view of the testing area) at least 15 minutes before the exam begins.

For Testing Center exams: If a student arrives after the 15-minute preparatory time begins but at least five (5) minutes before the start of the exam, the student will be directed to their assigned seat and given the password to begin the examination, despite their tardiness. The student will be expected to complete their exam within the remaining allotted time and with no time extension. The tardiness will be documented by exam administrators via incident reports and will be addressed by Student Affairs via the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy.

Students who arrive to an exam less than five (5) minutes prior to the beginning of the exam will not be permitted to start their exam. The absence will be documented by exam administrators via incident reports and will be addressed by Student Affairs via the

Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy. The student will be expected to take the exam on the make-up day indicated on the academic calendar.

For Remotely Proctored Exams: To ensure that technical problems can be addressed and as a general courtesy to other students, students are expected to log in at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the exam. Incident reports will be submitted to Student Affairs for students who miss the 15-minute cut-off. Students who arrive for remotely proctored exams less than five (5) minutes before the start of the exam will not be permitted to start their exam and incident reports will be submitted to Student Affairs. The student will be expected to take the exam on the make-up day indicated on the academic calendar.

Unexcused Absences

For all Phases of the MD Program, the following incidents will be considered an unexcused absence:

- Any absence not explicitly approved as outlined above; or
- Tardiness exceeding limits established in the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy

Students with an unexcused absence will lose a personal leave day for the absence and may be subject to intervention as outlined in the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy. Students with unexcused absences may be required to complete the missed academic activities.

Unexcused absences of more than three academic days within a course, clerkship, or elective will result in an automatic failing grade for the course, clerkship, or elective per the Professionalism and Expectations for Student's Professional Behaviors Policy.

VII. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Compliance Reporting/Anti-Retaliation Policy
Pre-clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy
Clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy
Elective Phase Assessment and Grading Policy
Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy
Student Progress Committee Structure and Function Policy

VIII. HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES

The following list documents policy approvals and updates by oversight authority, date, and summary of changes. This policy is housed on the MD Student Handbook webpage.

- On June 17, 2020, the Medical Education Committee approved the update to separate the policy from the MD Student Handbook and to reflect curricular changes.

- On June 9, 2021, the Medical Education Committee approved the update to incorporate changes made to the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy and the Phase assessment and grading policies.
- On May 11, 2022, the Medical Education Committee approved updates to streamline the language and specify that unexcused absences result in the loss of personal leave days.
- On May 10, 2023, the Medical Education Committee approved updates to clarify the process for students with chronic health conditions and to adjust leave for Pre-clerkship Phase curriculum revision.