

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 M4 Elective Phase of the 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

The Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs will review this document annually. The Medical Education Committee shall review this document as recommended by the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs, with input from the Assistant Vice Deans for Pre-Clinical Education and for Clinical Education, the Curriculum Policy Committee, the Pre-clerkship Curriculum Committee, the Clerkship Education Committee, and Curriculum Policy 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.
- *During the Clerkship and M4 Elective Phases*, all EVMS institutional holidays are observed from 5 pm the day before to 5 pm the day of the holiday to accommodate clinical call schedules in the M3 year. Students may be expected to report to clinical duties at 5 pm on the day of the institutional holidays. M4 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.

- All EVMS medical students, from the M1 through M4 years, follow the EVMS institutional decision regarding reporting to work.

- 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, students can use personal leave and follow the procedures of an unplanned emergency absence, detailed below.

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 & Ultrasound), Longitudinal Generalist Mentoring sessions, Human Structure labs, Formative sessions and all sessions that are identified as mandatory.

Required academic session (Clerkship or M4 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 mandatory.

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 faculty, house staff, and attending physicians.

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 mandatory academic activities.

In the Clerkship and M4 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.

Mandatory Academic Events

Students are expected to arrive on time to all mandatory academic events and responsibilities across all phases. Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late will not be able to participate and will not receive credit for attendance.

Attendance at mandatory 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 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.

In order to allow flexibility with absences, EVMS employs a student personal leave system. 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
- Religious holidays
- Interviews (excluding Medical Masters' graduate school and M4 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

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.

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. Sick leave is included in personal leave. Maternity or paternity leave; recovery from surgeries, hospitalizations, or other significant medical events; attendance at funerals; graduate school/residency interviews; or other unique circumstances (at the discretion of the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee) do not require use of personal leave and will be handled separately in coordination with the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee.

Personal leave should be used for unexpected illnesses. Students should refrain from attending classes or clinical duties when ill.

- If illness requires that students be absent for more than three 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.

No policy can enumerate all possible reasons for which leave might be approved. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Failure to follow procedures for leave approval will result in an unexcused absence, except with formal approval by the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee.

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

- *Pre-clerkship Phase*: 5 personal leave days per academic year + 1 day for Step 1 (Leave requests will be for full days only; partial or half-day requests will not be granted.)
- *Clerkship Phase and M4 Elective Phase*: 4 days + 1 day for Step 1 or Step 2 CK only per academic year
 - Leave requests will be for half or full days. Half-day requests allow students to miss fewer clinical duties.
 - Leave requests apply to Monday-Friday, exclusive of holidays.
 - Students who are scheduled to work over a weekend and would like to be off on a scheduled weekend day must arrange coverage with a classmate and communicate the change to the clerkship coordinator for record keeping. Weekend requests are not considered part of the leave system and the covering student should not submit the leave form for them.

- No more than 3 personal leave days can be used at one time or in any one module, clerkship, or course. 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.

Planned Leave during the Pre-clerkship Phase

Planned leave will only be approved when requests are made at least 4 weeks prior to the start date of the module OR as soon as known, if less than 4 weeks. Exceptions to these time frames will only be considered in extraordinary circumstances.

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

- Orientation to the module (i.e., first day of the module)
 - Attendance on the first day of a module is essential for understanding the structure and expectations for the module.
 - No personal leave will be approved except for unique circumstances.
- Required academic events in the Medical Knowledge, Clinical Evaluation, and Applied Learning domains, including all exams
 - Clinical Evaluation and Applied Learning domain sessions incorporate interactive and interpersonal learning and clinical application of material not easily learned through recorded or print resources. The important learning components of these sessions are not easily reproduced outside the session.
 - Points for missed academic events may be made up when personal leave is approved by Student Affairs. It is students' responsibility to reach out to the module director as soon as approved leave is known.

For approved absences during Clinical Skills sessions, make-up or rescheduling is determined by the type of event, as follows:

- Facilitator-led small group sessions: Small group sessions cannot be made up by attending another facilitator group. Instead the student will complete a make-up assignment, which must be completed by the due date indicated. Students are required to email the Director of Clinical Skills to obtain the instructions for the make-up assignment as soon as leave is approved by Student Affairs.
- In-person workshops and other required didactic sessions: Students are required to email the Director of Clinical Skills to obtain the instructions for the make-up assignment as soon as leave is approved by Student Affairs.
- Physical examination teaching sessions held at the EVMS Simulation Center (SCSIL): Students will be allowed to make up these activities on a case-by-case basis and only when feasible.
- Some individual or group Clinical Skills activities will be scheduled with pre-assigned time slots or by student sign-up. Please note the following as it relates to rescheduling:

- Pre-assigned time slots: Once the time-slot schedule has been released, students have 48 hours (unless otherwise specified by the Director of Clinical Skills) to review and trade time slots with a classmate. Once the 48-hour review period has been completed, rescheduling can only occur as is feasible and with approval by the Director of Clinical Skills.
- If physical distancing restrictions are in place, pre-assigned time slots cannot be changed and must be made up during the make-up date/session indicated by the Director of Clinical Skills.
- Student sign-up sessions: Once a student has signed up for time slots, they have 48 hours (unless otherwise specified by the Director of Clinical Skills) to reschedule the session. Once the 48-hour review period has been completed, rescheduling can only occur as is feasible and with approval by the Director of Clinical Skills.
- Clinical Skills Assessments will be rescheduled by the Director of Clinical Skills Director, in cooperation with the module director and SCSIL.

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 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.

Unplanned Emergency Leave during the Pre-clerkship Phase

In the event of an emergency absence on the date of a mandatory academic event, Pre-clerkship Phase students should inform Student Affairs of their absence as soon as possible, using the [EVMS MD and MM Leave Policy Reporting Form](#).

In addition to submitting the EVMS MD and MM Leave Policy Reporting Form, students are responsible for emailing the following individuals as soon as possible before the start of the required academic event:

- Module director
- Curriculum coordinator
- Clinical Skills and Ultrasound Director(s) and Coordinator(s) (if applicable)

When communicating the absence, the following information must be conveyed:

- The nature of the absence; and
- The expected date of return.

Failure to follow the procedures for an unplanned emergency absence will result in an unexcused absence.

Planned Leave during the Clerkship and M4 Elective Phases

In the M3 year, students' schedules are planned in advance for the entire year. Students are expected to request planned absences in advance in order to adequately prepare the clinical team.

- Leave requests must be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the start of clerkship OR as soon as known. Travel should not be arranged until the absence has been approved. Exceptions to these time frames will only be considered in emergency circumstances.
- *During the M3 year*, students receive an average 1 day off per week. These days off are in addition to any planned absences.
 - These scheduled days off cannot be "saved" or taken all at once.
 - Schedule requests for days off do not follow the Personal Leave Policy. Instead, they should be made at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the clerkship directly to the clerkship coordinator.
 - Requests for weekends off associated with a leave day (e.g., personal leave on Friday or Monday) should be made directly to the clerkship coordinator, in addition to submission of the Personal Leave form for the leave day.
 - These requests will be considered but cannot be guaranteed.

In the M4 year, EVMS recognizes that students will miss clinical duties for residency interviews. Interview absences do not need to be approved by Student Affairs. Instead, M4 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.

- No academic days can be missed during a 2-week rotation.
- Students can be excused for residency interviews for 3 academic days during a 4-week rotation. Missed academic days include both days of interviews and travel days.
- For more than 3 missed academic days during a 4-week rotation, leave may be approved but students may be required to make up the missed days at the discretion of the elective director and the Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education.
- If students miss more than 3 academic days during a 4-week rotation and are unable to make up the additional missed days, they will work with the Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education to develop an alternate make-up plan.

During the Clerkship and M4 Elective Phases, the following days should be avoided for planned absences:

- Orientation to the clerkship or course
 - Attendance on the first day of a clerkship or course 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)

Failure to follow procedures for leave approval will result in an unexcused absence.

Unplanned Emergency Leave on Days of Required Academic Events during the Clerkship and M4 Elective Phases

In the event of an emergency absence, Clerkship and M4 Elective Phase students should inform Student Affairs of their absence as soon as possible, using the [EVMS MD and MM Leave Policy Reporting Form](#).

In addition to submitting the EVMS MD and MM Leave Policy Reporting Form to Student Affairs, students are responsible for emailing the following individuals as soon as possible before the start of clinical duties or required academic event via email, telephone, or text, as appropriate:

- The supervising attending, resident, or other primary individual to whom the student will report for that shift; and
- The clerkship coordinator.

When communicating the absence, the following information must be conveyed:

- The nature of the absence; and
- The expected date of return.

Personal leave should be used for unexpected illnesses. Students should refrain from attending classes or clinical duties when ill.

- In the event of 4-5 missed academic days due to illness, students will be required to make up 1-2 academic days of the rotation, respectively. In addition, the clerkship or elective director will review the student's performance to determine whether learning goals can be met by the end of the clerkship or elective.
- In the event of more than 5 missed academic days due to illness, the student will work with the Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education to develop an alternate make-up plan.

Failure to follow the procedures for an unplanned emergency absence will result in an unexcused absence.

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

All students are expected to take examinations on the scheduled day and time unless approved by Student Affairs per the procedures for planned or emergency absences described above. Students requesting absences on exam dates must complete the [EVMS MD and MM Leave Policy Reporting Form](#) via the 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.

Make-Up and Retest Examinations

Eligible Pre-clerkship Phase students will sit for make-up or retest examinations on the predetermined dates and times included on the official academic calendars, unless an alternative date is approved by the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs or designee. Eligible Clerkship and M4 Elective Phase students will work with MD program administration to arrange make-up or retest examinations. 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 unexcused absences for the same exam will result in a 0 (zero) on that exam. Two or more unexcused absences on an exam date will be referred to the Student Review and Advisory Committee (SRAC) 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 5 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 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 minutes prior to the beginning of the exam will not be permitted to start their exam. The student will be considered to have an unexcused absence. 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: The same basic principles apply to 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. Similar to Testing Center exams, students who arrive for remotely proctored exams less than five 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 unexcused absences may be subject to intervention as outlined in the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy. The following procedures will also apply:

- *During the Pre-clerkship Phase*, students with unexcused absences for assessments in the Medical Knowledge and Clinical Evaluation domains will be required to complete the academic activities missed. Students with unexcused absences for activities in the Applied Learning domain will not be eligible to make up points but are still responsible for the material covered in the assignment.
- *During the Clerkship Phase*, students with unexcused absences for assessments in the Medical Knowledge and Clinical Evaluation domains will be required to complete the academic activities missed.
- *During the Clerkship and M4 Elective Phases*, unexcused absences of 1-3 academic days may be made up at the discretion of the clerkship or elective director(s) and the Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education. Students will make up the same number of academic days as the number of days of unexcused absence(s). Unexcused absences of more than 3 academic days cannot be made up.

- Unexcused absences of more than 3 academic days within a module, clerkship, or elective will result in an automatic failing grade for the module, clerkship, or course and in referral to the Student Progress Committee.

VII. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Compliance Reporting/Anti-Retaliation Policy

Pre-clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy

Clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy

M4 Elective Phase Assessment and Grading Policy

Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy

Student Progress Committee Structure and Function

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.