Attendance Policy for the Clerkships

Welcome to the 3rd year clerkships. This is an exciting time when you begin to pull together your clinical skills and the knowledge you have acquired as you learn to take care of patients. It is a very different type of learning; you become a member of an inpatient or outpatient team and have direct patient care responsibilities. As a result, you also have increased accountability for attendance. In order to ensure your success, the following rules outlining attendance requirements for all clerkships have been developed.

1. Attendance is required, as outlined for each clerkship. This includes attendance at the orientation through the last delineated clinical experience. Orientation attendance is especially important as goals, student expectations, and grading policies are all discussed. Please ensure that any travel plans you make, particularly around the holidays, allow a margin of error for potential travel delays (i.e., don’t plan to drive back to town or take a red eye flight that will get you back just in time to make it to orientation). Before making any travel plans at the end of a rotation, you must make sure you know when the rotation is completely finished. Accommodations at the beginning or end of the clerkship cannot be made because of travel plans.

2. We appreciate that certain circumstances might necessitate an absence: for example, your own illness or the illness of a loved one. In these ‘emergency’ situations, please contact directly the clerkship director or student coordinator, your site director and/or Drs. Harvey or Ryan immediately (or within 24 hours) so that we know where you are; if more than a day or two is missed, makeup time may be required.

3. On occasion, there may be non-emergency reasons for absences: weddings (your own or in which you are a participant), meetings at which you are presenting, meetings you attend as a national officer. Generally, these can be anticipated and should be taken into consideration when you plan your clerkship, elective and vacation schedule; however, we recognize that at times, these events may occur during a clerkship.

   a. If an absence is anticipated from a clerkship, you must make a request in writing to the clerkship director at least four weeks in advance (generally by E-mail). You will be required to provide the date(s) of your requested absence as well as the reason for the time off. For personal issues, the expectation will be that you request the time off from 5 PM Friday through beginning of the workday Monday (and miss as few days as possible).

   b. The clerkship director must then approve the time away in writing, with a copy forwarded to the Office of Student Affairs. PLEASE NOTE, that if the director does not feel that the reason behind the absence is enough to warrant lost time, he or she may decline the absence. Therefore, it is required that you notify the clerkship director AND get approval in writing for the absence prior to making any definitive arrangements (e.g. flights, etc.)

   c. It is then your responsibility to also notify your attending and ward team, or your outpatient faculty.

   d. With few exceptions, you are required to make up any time lost on the clerkship. The clerkship director will assist you with scheduling make up hours. However, please be aware that, in some cases, these hours may not be able to be accommodated rapidly. Student grades will remain incomplete until his/her required responsibilities are fulfilled. Thereafter, a final grade will be submitted as quickly as possible.

   e. Any non-emergency absences which are taken without permission of the course director are considered unprofessional behavior and may affect your clerkship grade and/or written evaluations, which are part of your academic file and included in the Dean’s letter.

Late Policy
Preceptors and residents are all instructed to report any unexplained student absence or tardiness. This report is made through the clerkship director and is passed on to the Office of Student Affairs. Recurrent tardiness or unexplained absences are considered unprofessional behavior and will affect your clerkship grade and/or written evaluations, which are part of your academic file and are included in the Dean’s letter.
Policy approved and distributed to Class of 2009 – May 2007