

Attendance Policy

As future professionals, medical students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately in all curricular activities, including classroom work, laboratory work, and clinical experiences. The professionalism of a medical student includes arriving to educational activities on time, staying for and participating in the entire activity, using laptop computers only for coursework during the educational activity, and minimizing disruptions to the educational exercise. Certain activities in medical school are experiential and require attendance. Students are personally responsible for attending all required educational activities as specified by the block, course, or clerkship director, which will generally include large group interactive sessions such as Team Based Learning (TBL), labs, small group discussions, clinical experiences, and examinations. Required attendance at didactic lectures varies with the block, course, or clerkship. **Students are expected to attend required scheduled activities on time and ready to begin.** Specific attendance and punctuality requirements for blocks, courses, and clerkships that vary from this policy will be included in the syllabus or may be communicated by alternate written means, such as email or notice on block, course, or clerkship websites.

Excused Absences

During the educational program (including both pre-clerkship and clerkship portions of the curriculum), time off is given at the discretion of the Office of Student Affairs in consultation with the block, course or clerkship director and may or may not be granted. Students engaged in the pre-clerkship curriculum have scheduled activities during approximately half of the week and generally have the weekends free of scheduled activities. It is expected that pre-clerkship students will make every effort to minimize or eliminate the need for absences during required scheduled activities. Students engaged in the clinical curriculum (clerkships and electives during the second-, third-, and fourth-years) have a more rigorous schedule, may be required to spend up to 80 hours a week in clerkship activities, and may be required to work evenings, weekends, and holidays.

Students are allotted breaks as noted on the NSU MD academic calendar <https://md.nova.edu/academics/curriculum.html>. Students in the clinical curriculum (clerkships and electives during the second-, third-, and fourth-years) are NOT automatically off on official holidays listed on the academic calendar. Clerkship directors, at their discretion, may permit students a holiday (example: on Labor Day, outpatient clinics are closed, and a clerkship director may give the students assigned there the day off).

Pre-clerkship Unexpected Absences

If a pre-clerkship (first- or second- year) student has an emergency or illness that prevents him or her from attending a scheduled activity, the student is expected to notify the Office of Student Affairs by telephone—(954) 262-0515 (8am to 5pm) or (954) 279-7575 (after 5pm, before 8am)—and request that OSA inform the faculty member in charge of that activity. If possible, the student should also notify the faculty member responsible for teaching the specific session, the block/course director, and other students in his or her small group, when applicable. It is important that students realize that their absence or tardiness negatively impacts many other people. Unexcused absences demonstrate unprofessional behavior by the student. Attendance, including tardiness, is part of the evaluation for professionalism, and poor evaluations may result in decreased grades and, in severe cases, referral to SPAC.

Clerkship Unexpected Absences

If a clerkship (second-, third- or fourth-year) student has an emergency or unexpected absence due to illness, the student MUST notify the responsible faculty member or senior resident and the clerkship administrator. The student must also notify the staff in the Office of Student Affairs by telephone—(954) 262-0515 (8am to 5pm) or (954) 279-7575 (after 5pm, before 8am).

Planned Absences

In the case of planned absences to attend meetings or family events such as a wedding or funeral, the

student must contact the responsible person (OSA or clerkship director/clerkship site director) as far in advance as possible to discuss the request and possibly obtain permission to be absent from assigned responsibilities. Students should make every effort to not have a planned absence conflicting with mandatory educational experiences and recognize that many requests will be denied. In the case of clinical clerkship absences, if the clerkship director has granted permission for the planned absence, the student must notify the Office of Student Affairs of the approved dates for the absence.

Absences for Health Services

Students who require an absence from required educational activities because they need health care must inform the responsible faculty member (e.g., block/course/clerkship director) as far in advance as possible to discuss the request and obtain permission to be absent from assigned educational activities. A request may be denied if it can be scheduled at a time when it does not interfere with required educational activities. Once the absence is approved, the student must notify the block/course/clerkship administrator. The block/course director or clerkship director will notify the student of makeup requirements. Students will not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity for medical reasons.

Fourth-Year Interview Absences

Students are expected to schedule residency interviews during the designated interview period and vacation. However, due to the inherent unpredictability of the residency interview process, it may be necessary for students to schedule interviews during an elective. Students should not schedule interviews during electives without prior approval of the elective director. The approval process may include discussion and provision of documentation that the interview was impossible to schedule at another time. The make-up may include additional clinical assignments and/or extension of the elective into another time period. Students should not schedule interviews during required clerkships.

Absences for Religious Holidays

NSU MD recognizes that there are other holidays, both religious and secular, which are of importance to some individuals and groups. ***Students who wish to observe these holidays must inform the director before the block, course or clerkship begins, if applicable.*** The director may provide the student with an alternative arrangement to make up the day(s) missed, on-call assignments, and examinations and other projects. The timing of make-up work is at the discretion of the block/course/clerkship director and may fall during vacation periods. Missed days which cannot be completed before the block/course/clerkship end date will result in a grade of In Process. Students will not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances.

If a faculty member is informed of, or is aware that, a significant number of students are likely to be absent from class because of a religious observance, a major examination should not be scheduled at that time.

A student who is to be excused from class for a religious holy day is not required to provide a second party certification of the reasons for the absence. A student who believes that he or she has been unreasonably denied an education benefit due to religious beliefs or practices may seek redress through the procedures detailed in the College's Student Mistreatment policy.