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I. PURPOSE

A. Attendance is required in all clinical clerkships and clinical courses. This policy encompasses the following courses, hereafter referred to as clinical courses:
   1. Longitudinal Ambulatory Clerkship (LAC)
   2. Clinical Foundations of Medicine (CFM)
   3. Transition to the Wards (TTW)
   4. Core Clerkships and associated PRECEDE: Emergency Medicine, Medicine, Neurology, Women’s Health, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Surgery
   5. Advanced Clerkships:
      a. Critical Care
      b. Ambulatory
      c. Subinternships required for graduation
   6. Clinical Electives
   7. Transition to Internship and Preparation for Life (TRIPLE)

II. POLICY

Attendance rules are governed by the School of Medicine in the following ways:

A. School Holidays
   1. The School of Medicine publishes an annual calendar that identifies official SOM holidays for students ([http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/som/students/academics/calendar.html](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/som/students/academics/calendar.html)). These holidays currently include the following:
      a. Labor Day (Quarter 1, 1 day)
      b. Thanksgiving (Quarter 2, 4 days [2 weekdays, 2 weekend days])
      c. Christmas and New Year (winter break)
      d. Martin Luther King Day (Quarter 3, 1 day)
      e. Spring Vacation (spring break)
      f. Memorial Day (Quarter 4, 1 day)
      g. Juneteenth (Summer Quarter, 1 day)
      h. Independence Day (Summer Quarter, 1 day)
   2. The holidays which occur during the clinical course time generally fall on a Monday or Friday adjacent to a weekend. These weekend days adjacent to these weekday holidays are NOT considered official school holidays (with the exception of Thanksgiving) and required activities may be scheduled on those weekend days at the discretion of the course or clerkship director. University Commencement and Convocation are NOT considered holidays for clinical course students. Similarly, election days, presidential inauguration, and other public or civic events are not considered holidays for students on clinical courses and clerkships.

B. Execused Absences from Clinical Courses and Clerkships

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1. There are no given ‘personal days’ allowed or “free unexcused absences” in a clinical course or clerkship. Clarification on what qualifies as an excused absence is as follows:
   a. Residency Interviews
      i. The following policy is to address the amount of time that fourth year students can miss from their clinical courses for residency interviews. The goal is to ensure that students obtain sufficient experience in each of the core disciplines to meet the objectives of the Hopkins curriculum. Interview days should not be considered the equivalent of personal days. Students should make every effort to leave as late as possible and return as early as possible when interviewing to minimize lost time from a core clerkship.
         • On 8-week clerkships, students will be allowed to miss 3 full days of responsibilities as excused absences for interviews.
         • On 4-4.5-week courses/clerkships, students will be allowed to miss 2 full days of responsibilities as excused absences for interviews.
         • Students must submit a request for an excused absence in writing to the course/clerkship director in advance of the beginning of the clinical course/clerkship when possible. If students do not contact the course director in advance of any absences, they will be considered unexcused and may impact the student’s final grade.
         • If the course/clerkship director approves the excused absence, the student will work with the director to develop a plan for any necessary make-up assignment/time. The director will notify the student’s clinical team of the excused absence in advance.
         • All students who miss more than the allowed days above will be required to develop a plan for making up missed days with the course/clerkship director. Such make-up time is a necessary requirement for successful completion of the clinical course/clerkship and graduation from the M.D. curriculum.
   b. TTW, PRECEDE, TRIPLE
      i. Attendance at all sessions is required. Students must submit a request for an excused absence in writing to the course/clerkship director prior to the first day of the course/clerkship (or earlier if possible) and notify them as soon as feasible in the case of emergencies.
   c. Elective Coursework
      i. Under no circumstances will elective coursework supersede required clinical clerkship activities.
      ii. Students will not be excused from required clinical course/clerkship duties to attend clinical elective courses (or similar activities, such as research electives), whether such electives are internal or external to Johns Hopkins SOM. This includes elective experiences requiring complex or expensive travel arrangements, such as those conducted overseas. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that no such conflicts arise. Students should consult the SOM calendar and the Registrar’s office for official start and end dates for each required clinical course/clerkship.
   d. Personal Reasons and Observed Religious Holidays
      i. Students must submit a request for an excused absence in writing to the course/clerkship director before the start of the clinical course/clerkship regarding any request for a “scheduled” absence other than those described above and should expect that they will need to make up missed time. This includes (but is not limited to) any absence for religious observances, academic events (e.g., presentations at national and scientific meetings, including within Johns Hopkins), and civic responsibilities (e.g., election day, jury duty). Although each course/clerkship director has discretion to allow or disallow such absences (except for jury duty and religious observances, see below*) based on their potential impact on the
educational experience, the general rule is “a day for a day” (i.e., each missed day will generally result in one additional day made up at a later time).

ii. Religious observances are valid reasons to be excused from class. Students who must miss a class, clinical duties, or an examination because of a religious observance must notify the course/clerkship director as early as possible before the start of the clinical course/clerkship to be considered for an excused absence and to develop a plan to make up any work or clinical time that is missed.

iii. Clarifications for specific instances:
   - Since most family and significant life events for immediate family members are planned in advance, most of these events could be attended with minimum time lost from the clinical course/clerkship with advance planning. However, some personal events (e.g., graduations) typically occur on weekdays. Planned family events are excused only when the director has been notified at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the clinical course, and when students will not miss more than 3 days of an 8-week clerkship or 2 days of a 4-4.5-week course/clerkship, or any required activities that would be difficult to make up. Family and personal emergencies are addressed below.
   - Attending JHU School of Medicine Graduation is excused only if an immediate family member or partner is graduating.
   - Students requesting an absence for a professional meeting must contact the course/clerkship director and coordinator at least four weeks prior to the start of the clinical course or clerkship. Attendance at a national professional meeting is allowed if the student is presenting their own work or chairing a committee, or if attendance is a requirement of a medical school scholarship (not merely a travel award to attend the conference). Students should miss only the days that they are presenting, plus the minimum necessary travel time. Students who are funded by the Office of Medical Student Affairs (OMSA) to attend national student association meetings should follow the process outlined by the OMSA to determine eligibility to attend. Students must complete this process before requesting permission from the course/clerkship director to attend.
   - Attendance at a professional meeting for networking or professional development, or to accompany a family member during a clinical course/clerkship is not excused.

e. Weather and Other Related Emergencies Within the Baltimore Area
   i. Weather-related policies are stipulated by the Johns Hopkins University and may be found at the URL below:
      - http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/administration/emergency_weather_security_information/policy_on_university_closings/index.cfm
   ii. Weather emergencies are available at the phone numbers and website below, as well as on radio and TV broadcasts (http://www.insidehopkinsmedicine.org/weather.pdf):
      - Baltimore 410-516-7781
      - Outside Baltimore 800-548-9004
      - URL: http://webapps.jhu.edu/emergencynotices
   iii. Medical students are not considered “Required Attendance Employees” and are excused from attendance at normally required course/clerkship activities if affected by circumstances (e.g., weather) related to University delays or closings. As necessary, make-up plans for missed clinical course/clerkship activities (e.g., PRECEDE learning events or exams) will be made on a case-by-case basis by the clinical course/clerkship director.

f. Weather and Other Related Emergencies Outside the Baltimore Area
i. Students who travel during (e.g., on weekends) or in close temporal proximity to (e.g., just before) a clinical course/clerkship may be delayed in their return travel plans by inclement weather, flight cancellations, or other similar events outside their control. In such circumstances, safety is the first priority. Once the student’s safety is assured, they should immediately notify people related to the clinical course/clerkship, as appropriate (e.g., course or clerkship director or coordinator, clinical team or preceptor with whom they are rotating, etc.). Students will generally be required to make up any time or activities upon safe return or at a later date. Students should be advised, however, that extended or repeated travel-related absences will be considered unprofessional behavior and will likely result in grade reductions, failure, or disciplinary action.

g. Illness or Injury (Personal or Family)
   i. Illnesses, mental health crises, or injuries are handled on a case-by-case basis by clinical course/clerkship directors. In almost all cases, such events cannot be predicted in advance. When either occurs, the student’s first responsibility is to their own personal safety and the safety and well-being of those around them. Once the situation has stabilized sufficiently and it is safe to do so, a student should immediately notify people related to the clinical course/clerkship, as appropriate (e.g., course/clerkship director or coordinator, clinical team or preceptor with whom they are rotating, etc.). Family emergencies (including illness or death of a loved one) should be handled similarly. As necessary, remediation plans will be made on a case-by-case basis by the clinical course/clerkship director.

h. Health Care Appointments
   i. Health care appointments should be scheduled to not conflict with required course/clerkship activities whenever possible but are excused if non-conflicting openings are filled. Students should review the schedule in OASIS prior to the start of a clinical course/clerkship, reviewing the schedule for any conflicts with pre-scheduled doctor’s appointments, since schedules in OASIS may be updated in the weeks leading up to clinical course/clerkship. Students should notify the course/clerkship director and coordinator of any schedule conflicts due to pre-scheduled health care appointments; students must send this notification prior to the day of the schedule conflict.

C. Making up missed time
   1. Time in clinical course/clerkship activities missed due to any absences, even when excused, must be made up if the total missed days exceeds 3 days for 8-week clerkships or 2 days for 4-4.5-week course/clerkships. When it is not feasible to reproduce a clinical or simulated experience, the course/clerkship director will approve an appropriate make-up activity. It is at the discretion of the clinical course or clerkship director to establish a required make-up plan for the student, regardless of the reason for absence. Note that if a significant component of the educational experience is missed for any reason, it is at the clinical course or clerkship director’s discretion to require completion of make-up activities or reduce the student’s grade. In some cases, students may need to wait for the next available clinical course or clerkship slot to make up time, potentially delaying promotion or graduation in some circumstances.

D. Consequences of Unexcused Absences
   1. Students who fail to attend required activities (e.g., required clerkship orientation and PRECEDE) without advance notice and are unable to offer a reasonable or appropriate justification (as judged by the clerkship director) may be subject to grade reductions, failure, or disciplinary action on grounds of lack of professionalism.
   2. Unexcused absences, including failure to notify clinical course/clerkship directors about absences in a timely manner, and failure to complete make-up requirements, will impact the evaluation of students in the following ways: (1) referral of the student to the Student Assessment and Formational Committee, and (2) a statement attesting to the absence in the narrative evaluation that is forwarded to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. This may result
in grade reductions or failure of the clinical course/clerkship for failing to meet the professionalism standard. In the case of clinical clerkships, if students plan to miss more than two days of a four-week clerkship or three days of an eight-week clerkship, or any required activities that would be difficult to make up, they should attempt to reschedule the clerkship. However, due to scheduling constraints within the clerkships, this may not be possible. If it is not possible to reschedule, students must comply with the make-up plan as outlined by the clerkship director.

E. Recourse for Students Who Feel They Have Been Treated Unfairly
   1. Any student who feels unfairly treated with regard to attendance policy should discuss these issues with the clinical course/clerkship director. If a mutually agreeable decision is not reached, the student should contact the Office of Medical Student Affairs if they wish to pursue the matter further.