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I. PURPOSE

The Genes to Society curriculum models the teamwork and peer-to-peer teaching of modern medical practice. Small group activities require the presence and participation of the group members, both for their own learning and for their contribution to the learning of others. It is an expectation of professionals, and of students of our profession, to participate in these activities, and to contact the relevant parties as far in advance as possible (see details below), to request an excused absence or to use an unexcused absence.

The purpose of this policy is to establish the expectations for attendance, for notification of unavoidable absences, and the reasons for which an absence may be excused. It is intended to provide consistency among students and faculty. The policy applies to the non-clerkship phases of the four-year curriculum. See the Clerkship Attendance Policy for information relevant to the required core and advanced clerkships.

II. POLICY

A. Excused Absences Common to All Courses

Regardless whether absences are excused or unexcused, course and clerkship directors may require additional remediation to assure that students have mastered the course content. All course absences will be reported to the Office of Medical Student Curriculum (OMSC), which will track attendance for each student.

1. School Holidays
   a. The School of Medicine publishes a calendar of official holidays for students ([http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/som/students/academics/calendar.html](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/som/students/academics/calendar.html)).
   b. These holidays currently include the following:
      i. Labor Day (Quarter 1, 1 day)
      ii. Thanksgiving (Quarter 2, 4 days; Thursday-Sunday)
      iii. Christmas and New Year (Winter Break)
      iv. Martin Luther King Day (Quarter 3, 1 day)
      v. Spring vacation (Spring Break)
      vi. Memorial Day (Quarter 4, 1 day)
      vii. Independence Day (Summer Quarter, 1 day)
   c. No classes are held on the official school holidays.

2. Weather Cancellations or Delays
   a. Within the Baltimore Area
      i. Students should not attempt to come to school when the University is closed due to weather emergencies.
      ii. Johns Hopkins University weather-related policies may be found at: [http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/administration/emergency_weather_security_information/](http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/administration/emergency_weather_security_information/)
iii. Weather emergency information is available at the numbers and website below, as well as on radio and TV broadcasts:
   - Baltimore 410-516-7781
   - Outside Baltimore 800-548-9004
   - URL: http://webapps.jhu.edu/emergencynotices

b. Outside the Baltimore Area
   i. Students who travel immediately before or on weekends during a required course may find their return delayed by weather, flight cancellations, or other events beyond their control. In such circumstances, they should immediately notify those people related to the course; this always includes the course director, section director, and course coordinator. Repeated travel-related absences may result in grade reductions, failure, or disciplinary action.

3. Religious Holidays
   a. University policy regarding religious holidays states, “Religious holidays are valid reasons to be excused from class. Students who must miss a class or an examination because of a religious holiday must inform the instructor as early as possible in order to be excused from class or to make up any work that is missed.”

4. Illness or Injury (Personal or Family) and Health Care Appointments
   a. Health Care appointments should be scheduled to not conflict with required course 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 section or course, 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 a section or course. Students should notify the course director and coordinator of any schedule conflicts due to pre-scheduled doctor’s appointments; students must send this notification prior to the day of the schedule conflict.

   b. Illnesses or injuries are excused. Such events cannot be predicted in advance. As soon as it is safe and feasible, the student should notify people related to the course (this includes the course and section directors and the course coordinator). If an illness causes a student to miss additional required sessions, the student should provide this update to the course director and coordinator, as soon as it is safe and feasible. There is no need to communicate any details of the medical illness. 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 course or section director.

5. Urgent childcare needs
   a. Attendance is excused to care for an ill child or when childcare is cancelled on short notice, until other care can be arranged.

6. Personal Events
   a. Major family milestones such as weddings and graduations are excused. However, such events are excused only when the director has been notified at least two weeks prior to the start of the course or section. Attendance is generally but not automatically excused for other major family and personal events, and must be discussed in advance with the course director and course coordinator. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course director, they may appeal to the Assistant or Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education (UME), whose decision is final.

   b. Attending JHU School of Medicine Convocation is excused only if the student, a family member, or spouse is graduating.

7. Professional Meetings
   a. Students requesting an excused absence for a professional meeting must contact the course director and coordinator at least two weeks prior to the start of the course or section. Attendance at a national professional
meeting is excused 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, etc., plus the minimum necessary travel time. Students who are funded by the Office of Medical Student Affairs (OMSA) or Office for Medical Student Diversity (OMSD) to attend national student association meetings should follow the multi-step process outlined by the OMSA and OMSD to determine eligibility to attend. Students must complete this process before requesting permission from the course/clerkship director to attend. Attendance to meetings for networking or professional development, or to accompany a family member, during a required course or clerkship, is not excused.

b. The following information should be included in email communication to the course director and course coordinator when a student requests an excused absence for a professional meeting:
   i. The name of the meeting and the student’s role at the meeting; examples of roles include poster presentation of scholarly work, podium presentation of scholarly work, chairing a committee, etc.
   ii. Information about when this work is scheduled to be presented
   iii. The location of the meeting/conference
   iv. The dates and times of curricular sessions for which the student is requesting an excused absence

8. Civic Duties
   a. Students are excused from classes and clerkships for jury duty. Work on the Johns Hopkins M.D. Admissions Committee should not be scheduled during required class time in the non-clerkship courses. Students on Student Assessment and Program Evaluation (SAPE) committee juries are excused for the 60-90 minutes when their attendance is required, and Medical Student Senate (MSS) members are excused when they must meet with faculty members on MSS business and no other time can be arranged.

B. Specific Courses
      a. Attendance at faculty-led lectures is usually optional, but is strongly encouraged. This provides opportunity for questions to be answered and for the speaker to gauge audience understanding.
      b. Attendance is required at lectures where patients are present (clinical correlations). Attendance at some other events in the auditorium may also be required, such as when there is a special guest lecturer; such events will be indicated required in Oasis.
      c. Attendance at student-led lectures (for example, GTS workshops) is required.
      d. Attendance at small group sessions is required. These include virtual microscopy sessions, small group discussions, labs, TBLs, journal clubs, and other sessions in which peer-to-peer learning occurs.
      e. Attendance at required sessions will be taken via the ActivTracker app. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure their sign-in was successful. Detailed instructions are provided by the course coordinator on use of ActivTracker and support plans in case of technical difficulties. Students should check their online ActivTracker account to confirm proper function of their account. If there is a technical difficulty, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the course coordinator promptly. Failure to do so will constitute an unexcused absence.
      f. Absences from required sessions are excused for reasons listed under Excused Absences Common to All Courses.
      g. In addition to these excused absences, students may use up to seven unexcused absences for required sessions/year for any other reason, subject to the following:
         i. One absence = one session
         ii. Advance notice is given as per point “j”.

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iii. No more than two such absences may be taken in any one course section. Any unexcused absence(s) in excess of two during a course section will result in the student’s grade for that section being reduced by 2% per unexcused absence.

iv. Unused absences in year one do not roll over into Year 2.

v. Seven accumulated unexcused absences will result in the student being discussed by the Pre-Clerkship Assessment and Formational Committee.

h. Once a student has accumulated seven unexcused absences, the student may request an additional excused absence from required sessions in excess of these seven for other reasons. Students must discuss these situations with the course director and course coordinator in advance (for professional meetings and personal/family milestone events, two weeks prior to course or section starting), and excusing them is at the discretion of the course director. Shadowing or other optional clinical experiences will not be excused.

i. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course director, they may appeal to the Assistant or Associate Dean for UME, whose decision is final.

j. The following people must be contacted by the student to request an excused absence, as far in advance as possible, but at least two weeks prior to the start of a course or section for professional meetings and personal/family milestone events, as in above sections:

i. Course coordinator for Year 1 or Year 2

ii. Course director and section director

k. The course coordinators will keep attendance logs of all absences.

l. Regardless whether the absences are excused or unexcused, course leaders may assign additional work if necessary to assure that the students have learned material missed in the required sessions.

m. Absences without advance notification will be unexcused, except in the case of personal illness or emergency.

2. TIME Courses

a. Because of the brief nature of TIME courses, attendance at lectures is required.

i. Any exceptions to that rule are at the discretion of the TIME leader and will be noted in the course syllabus.

b. Excused absences apply as above.

c. Due to their brevity, only a single small group session may be missed during a TIME course (other than for any of the excused reasons).

d. When requesting excused absences, students must contact the course director and course coordinator prior to the first day of the course (or earlier if possible) to discuss any expected absence, and notify them as soon as feasible in the case of emergencies.

3. Clinical Foundations of Medicine, Transition to the Wards, TRIPLE, Scholarly Concentrations, Integrative Medicine, Interprofessional Education Events

a. Attendance at all sessions is required. Students must contact the course director prior to the first day of the course (or earlier if possible) to discuss any expected absence, and notify them as soon as feasible in the case of emergencies.