

Clerkship Absentee, Weather and Holiday Policy 4/2013

The Required Clerkship Curriculum Committee, which is composed of clerkship directors, students, and members of the Dean's Office, developed the following policy related to absences from clinical coursework. These guidelines are also on the Web, will be provided to you as part of the Clerkship Track Scheduling material in the fall of the second year, and are included as part of each clerkship's syllabus.

General Absentee Policy

1. It is in the student's best interest to be present for all days during clerkships. Please try to anticipate personal events and fit them into breaks or elective time off.
2. Time is too short during two-week clerkships to allow any anticipated time off.
3. Absences should not be planned during orientation, final examination, or other required elements of the clerkship.
4. Students needing any time off should consult with the appropriate Clerkship Director at least six weeks prior to the beginning of the clerkship to make sure there are no conflicts with #3 above and to limit the negative impact on the clerkship experience.
5. Students absent without permission may receive a Fail grade and may be required to repeat the clerkship. In addition, students may also receive an Unacceptable professionalism grade.

Anticipated Absences

1. Personal Events

Personal events include weddings, graduations, presenting papers at conferences and receiving awards. If more than two days off are needed during a four to twelve-week clerkship, the clerkship should be rescheduled.

2. Vacations

There are no vacation days during clerkships except for Match Day and possibly holidays, as discussed below. Please schedule vacation days during school breaks or time off.

3. National or Religious Holidays

As a member of a health care team during clerkships, there is no guaranteed time off for University of Washington holidays, traditional observances, or major days of religious significance, just as there won't be when you are a practicing physician. Students are expected to follow the holiday practice of the clinic/hospital/site at which they are rotating. Meaning, if it is a holiday at your site, you may get the day off. If it is a working day for your site, you must show up. Clinical responsibilities such as night call and rounding take precedence over holiday schedules. To plan ahead for national holidays, you may wish to call the practice site in advance and inquire.

The UW SOM clerkship committee encourages faculty and students to work together to accommodate students' scheduling constraints in observing their central religious and cultural practices. Similar to when you are in practice, you must take responsibility and plan ahead. If you have religious holidays that require you to miss or modify work, consult with the clerkship director well in advance to see what accommodations can and can't be made.

4. Residency Interviews

Students should schedule time off for residency interviews. If interviews are offered when students are already scheduled for clerkships in the fourth year, students should work directly with the Clerkship Director right away regarding absences for residency interviews.

5. Match Day

All graduating students will be allowed to attend the Match Day celebration with no clerkship responsibility starting at 8AM on Match Day until the next morning (variable start time depending on the clerkship). For students doing WWAMI clerkships, additional travel time the day prior to the celebration may also be needed.

Unanticipated Absences

1. Unanticipated Illness or Personal Emergency

Students missing ANY number of days must speak with the site director as well as the attending or resident in charge prior to the start of the shift. It is not acceptable to leave only a phone or email message or to contact only administrative staff. Students should receive confirmation (direct conversation, return email or phone call) from the site director and/or the attending/resident in charge indicating that the team is aware of the student's absence. The specific person and his/her contact information are available on the individual clerkship websites.

Students missing THREE OR MORE days must also contact the Clerkship Director who will determine if make-up time is needed for unanticipated absences or if the entire clerkship needs to be rescheduled. Grades may be delayed until the time is made up.

If a clerkship exam must be postponed, the student should contact the Clerkship Director to determine if the exam should be rescheduled as soon as possible or delayed until the next time the exam is given. Progress in other clerkships may be interrupted until the examination is taken depending on the situation surrounding the delay.

2. Inclement Weather

The inclement weather policy for clerkships matches the policy for holidays. If your team is working in the hospital or the clinic is open, you are expected to show up. If you are unable to access the hospital/clinic due to hazardous travel, you must notify your team as described above.