Year 1 and 2 Excused Absence Policy

Attendance is mandatory at all small group sessions, laboratories, ASM sessions, Frontiers in Science lectures, COMPASS I, and any sessions or classes designated as "patient encounters" where patients or families are present. Please note that occasionally the schedule may be changed without advance notice and students should refer to the Academic Calendar when planning any travel. If plans are made for time away based on a day having only lectures scheduled, the student could be in jeopardy of missing a required activity if the schedule is changed. If the course schedule changes within two (2) weeks of the planned absence, the student will be excused from the required activity. Unexcused absences are considered unprofessional behavior, will be noted, and may have an adverse effect on a grade including failure of a component of a course or an entire course. The following will be considered excused absences:

- Illness
- Urgent medical evaluation
- Religious observance
- Jury duty
- Significant family event (e.g. graduation, family reunion, religious ceremony, wedding, illness)
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Attending a wedding in which student is a member of the wedding party
- Present work at a regional or national conference
- Student is a member of a national committee (e.g. AMSA, AMA, AAMC) with a leadership role and is asked to attend a meeting
- One conference (medical or scientific) per academic year as an attendee, if student receives funding from a department, or a scholarship or grant
- Attending an Executive Curriculum Committee (ECC), Promotions Committee or Mistreatment Committee meeting as a student member

Reporting your absence for Years 1 and 2

Excused absences need to be requested two (2) weeks in advance (this does not pertain to illness or death in the family). To secure an excused absence, the following must take place at the student’s initiative:

The student must send an email to Student Affairs at medstudentabsence@mssm.edu and copy the course director and small group preceptor to request an excused absence. Requests made after the class begins will not be considered excused. Requests for excused absences are reviewed by Student Affairs and students will be notified of approval or non-approval within three (3) days of sending a request. The following should be indicated in the email:

- Student Name:
- Date of Absence:
- Current Course:
- Name of Course Director:
- Name of Small Group Leader:
Reason for the absence request from the approved list of excused absences:

For illness, students must email medstudentabsence@mssm.edu and copy the course director. Absences longer than two (2) days for illness require a doctor’s note be submitted to Student Affairs.

Although the absence is excused, there may be make-up work required and the course director will decide on appropriate make-up and inform the student.

It is the student’s responsibility, and not the course/clerkship director’s, to make sure that the make-up is completed in a timely manner.

Consequences of Unexcused Absences for Years 1 and 2

Students must attend all mandatory sessions (i.e., mandatory lecture hall sessions, small group discussions, laboratories) or submit an absence request prior to the session. Students arriving more than 10 minutes after the session start time are considered absent. Unexcused absences will have the following consequences:

- First absence: 2 points off final grade
- Second absence: 2 more points off final grade and an Incident Report
- Third absence: Course failure

LCE Absences

A student who wishes to be excused from a mandatory course session must contact the ASM course directors, the relevant course director and medstudentabsence@mssm.edu. The ASM course directors, the relevant course director and Student Affairs will jointly decide whether the event is of significant magnitude to justify the Year 1-2 session absence. The LCE coordinator should also be copied on all email correspondence.