



# California Health Sciences University

## COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE (COM)

### STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE POLICY

#### **I. Attendance Requirements**

##### **A. OMS-I & OMS-II**

Except as noted in this Policy, attendance is required for all students. Enrolled students are expected to attend all didactic, laboratory, clinical sessions as well as other scheduled curricular activity. Attendance will be monitored through various means depending on the activity.

Students are also expected to complete all exams, assessments, evaluations, and assignments (together defined as “coursework”) as scheduled. Failure to maintain attendance as provided in this Policy during the first two years of the curriculum may result in corrective action through the Student Progress Committee (SPC). It is recognized that there may be isolated instances when individuals are not able to attend; however, students who miss the didactic and clinical materials are not excused from learning the missed subject material.

##### **B. OMS-III & OMS-IV**

During third and fourth year clinical rotations, daily attendance is required in order for students to complete all requisite clinical duties of the particular rotation. Any absence or other time away from the rotation must be approved through the process outlined in the clinical clerkship manual. Students on rotation are expected to be on time for all assigned activities associated with that particular rotation. Violations of this attendance policy may result in disciplinary action through the SPC Committee, including, but not limited to, removal from any leadership positions with a student club, organization of student government office.

Students who need to miss time from a clerkship are required to document the request for an excused absence with both the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Clinical Education. The form must include details of how the student will make-up time missed for the absence request to be approved.

Students are required to complete core clerkships. Time missed for core clerkships may need to be made up during future elective clerkship time, or by extending that year of enrollment, which may result in

1) students needing additional time to complete their OMS-III requirements, and therefore



having less opportunity for elective clerkship rotations in their OMS-IV year, or  
2) extension of the OMS-IV year beyond the scheduled graduation date for their class.

## II. Excused Absences

It is recognized that there may be isolated instances when students are unable to attend, however, a student who misses a didactic session, laboratory or clinical activity is still responsible for learning the subject materials or activities of that particular session. The student may be required to make-up the missed educational session(s) during off-hours. Make-up laboratories are conducted only in extreme situations and at the discretion of the Course Director and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

OMS-I and OMS-II may request approvals of pre-planned absences by submitting an “Excused Absence Student Request Form.” Online. Students should submit the Excused Absence Student Request Form at least ten days prior to the anticipated absence. Students in third- and fourth-year rotations must also comply with any additional requirements identified in the CHSU-COM Clinical Clerkship Manual and reach out to the Clinical Education department for final approval.

For an absence to be considered excused, student must complete the “Excused Absence Request Form” online. The Office of Student Affairs will determine if the excused absence is approved or denied, and the student will be notified accordingly.

Excused Absences may be approved for the following circumstances:

- **Medical necessity:** illness of the student or a member of the student’s immediate family. For an absence to be considered excused for pre-planned medical reasons, notice must be received by the Office of Student Affairs prior to the missed class or activity, In order for an absence of three days or greater to be considered excused for medical reasons, a note must be submitted from the treating healthcare provider upon the student’s return to class. Minor illnesses/conditions less than three days, such as upper respiratory infections, gastroenteritis, minor accidents, may not need to be documented by a physician’s note; however, notification of absence to the Office of Student Affairs is still required.
- **Death in family:** death of immediate family member, significant other, or close relative. Notification of the absence should be reported to the Office of Student Affairs. Students may be required to provide documentation. The specific length of an excused absence will be determined when the request is received. **Special circumstances/other:** circumstances outside of the above situations (e.g., vehicle accidents, etc.) The student must submit a description and explanation for the absence along with appropriate proof or documentation.
- Student may request an excused absence for religious holidays not included in the list of the University holidays.

- Students may receive excused absences to attend CHSU-COM-related activities or national meetings of student clubs and organizations. Any request for an excused absence must be submitted, in writing, to the Office of Student Affairs at least 10 business days prior to the anticipated absence.  
Students must be in good standing with a grade point average of  $\geq 3.0$  in order to be granted an excused absence for CHSU-COM-related activities.

Absences will be not excused without the approval from the Course Director or Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

While excused absences are not approved for any examinations, tests and/or quizzes, CHSU recognizes that there may be times where a student is not able to attend. If the student misses an exam, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Director of Academic Affairs and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs via phone and/or email when it is first noted that an absence will be necessary. On return to CHSU-COM the student must complete the "Excused Absence Request Form"

In the event of any absence from an examination or quiz, it is the responsibility of the student to seek approval from both the Office of Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. It is essential each student make every effort not to miss any examination or quiz. Requests for make-up examinations or quizzes must be made in a timely manner. An unexcused absence from an examination or quiz may result in a grade of zero (0) for that assessment.

Travel arrangements should not be made prior to approval being granted.

### **III. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

*Unexcused Absence* is an absence from one (1) to three (3) consecutive days during which an examination, OSCE, or lab session occurs that is not approved by the Office of Student Affairs or, their designee.

If the absence is determined to be unexcused by the Office of Student Affairs, the student will receive a zero for the missed coursework and may be referred to the Students at Academic Risk Committee ("StARC") or to the Student Progress Committee for review.



## **IV. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### **A. Leave of Absence Policy**

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is defined as a temporary interruption in a student's program of study for a period greater than seven (7) calendar days, but less than 180 days. Reasons for a leave include, but not limited to, academic, personal, medical, maternity, parental, and military service. If a leave of absence exceeds 180 calendar days, it will become a withdrawal.

A LOA requires pre-approval, and the student must follow CHSU's LOA application process. All LOAs are granted by the Dean.

Requests for approval of an LOA should be submitted in writing, addressed to the Dean but delivered to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs who will then provide it to the Dean. The LOA request must also include the proposed start date and anticipated date of return. The Dean will make the final determination of the LOA request and, if approved, forward the signed LOA form to the Registrar. Except in cases of extenuating circumstances, the LOA will not become effective until it is received by the Registrar.

For financial aid purposes the date of the Dean's approval will determine the date of the LOA.

At least thirty(30) days prior to the end of the leave period, the student is required to submit written notification to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs of their intention to return. The student doctor will need to request and complete the readmission form. CHSU reserves the right to impose any additional conditions upon a student doctor seeking readmission after a leave of absence, and/or to refuse consideration based on the relevant time limit on Matriculation to graduation. The - final decision on readmission will be made by the Dean

Due to the nature of the clinical curriculum students seeking to take LOA during

any rotation are required to consult with the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Clinical Education, prior to taking the leave.

A student seeking to take a LOA will first meet with the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. During this meeting students should discuss their ability to graduate within the requirements outlined in the COM Graduation Policy. The LOA Request Form is available on the CHSU website or from the University Registrar. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from

providing a prior written request, the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs with the approval of the Dean, has discretionary authority to make exceptions to this process. Whenever practical and possible, a student should submit their written request for a LOA at least thirty (30)

calendar days in advance of the start of the upcoming semester or thirty (30) calendar days before the end of the current semester. Students must affirmatively request an LOA; **non-attendance in classes does not constitute notification of intent to apply for a leave of absence.**

Students who take a LOA that, at a minimum, extends through the end of the semester will be considered withdrawn for the purposes of grading and tuition refund only, but not officially withdrawn from the University. The student's final grades will be processed as outlined in the Student Withdrawal Policy. As an LOAs has a significant impact on student loans and scholarships, as well as the total cost of the student's attendance at the COM, students should contact the Financial Aid Office about the implications related to their LOA. Student should also refer to the CHSU Tuition Refund Policy regarding the student's potential eligibility for a tuition refund.

Students will receive a letter via email and mail once a decision has been made regarding the LOA. Letters are typically sent within five (5) business days of the decision. CHSU reserves the right to impose conditions upon the student's return that will be communicated either in the initial letter to the student approving the leave or in subsequent correspondence to the student. For example, students granted a LOA for health-related purposes may be required to have a health care professional certify in writing that they are approved to return to the University prior to the student's anticipated return date.

The completed LOA form must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs before the leave of absence is granted.

Students who wish to take a leave longer than the initial LOA granted by the Dean must re- apply for an additional new LOA following the same LOA process.



## **B. Unapproved Leave of Absence**

Any student on an Unapproved Leave of Absence is in violation of this policy and subject to possible disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University.

## **C. Returning from a Leave of Absence**

- 1) Students approved for a leave of absence may return to the COM and to classes without reapplying to the College of Osteopathic Medicine if the return is within the approved time frame as recorded in the Leave of Absence Approval letter and any relevant University approved extensions of such leave. Prior to returning to the College of Osteopathic Medicine, students are required to comply with all conditions for the student's return as stated in correspondence to the student by the University. A student granted a LOA with conditions may be required to meet with the Office of Student Affairs before returning to the College of Osteopathic Medicine. For LOA, students must submit their intent to return in writing to the University Registrar within thirty (30) calendar days of the anticipated return to the pre-clinical portion of the curriculum and thirty (30) calendar days for the clinical curriculum, for leaves that are longer than thirty (30) days in length. It is the student's ultimate responsibility to duly inform the administration of any delays to their return or needs for further extensions.
- 2) Students failing to return to the College of Osteopathic Medicine following the approved timeframe for the LOA will be considered to be on an Unapproved Leave of Absence and may be dismissed from the College of Osteopathic Medicine.
- 3) Abuse of the absence or leave request process is unprofessional and violates the University's Student Conduct and Professionalism policy. Abuse of such process includes but is not limited to: (1) dishonesty regarding the need for or use of leave and (2) submission of fraudulent documentation supporting the need for leave. Abuse of this policy may be reviewed by the Student Progress Committee and could ultimately result in dismissal from the University.
- 4) Students returning from a LOA are still required to complete all the required elements for graduation, in order to graduate and be granted the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine.

R: Assistant Dean of Student Affairs,  
Enrollment and Accreditation  
A: Director of Student Affairs  
C: All COM Deans  
I: All Deans and Course Directors

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- Policy Owner: Dean of COM
- Effective Date: 4/03/2020
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