Title: Short-Term Absence Policy			
Origination Date: 04/02/2023	*Revision History:* 06/04/2026; 06/28/2024	*Last amended/reaffirmed:* 06/04/2026	*Review frequency: 1 year*
Purpose:	The UTHSA MD degree program is committed to providing students with flexibility and agency to take short-term absences while ensuring the successful completion of the program's requirements. This policy establishes criteria and outlines the processes and timelines for short-term absences throughout all phases of the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree curriculum.		
Definitions:	**Academic year:** For purposes of this policy, the academic year is considered July 1 to June 30. **Anatomy Lab sessions:** Any required laboratory activity within the Language of Medicine module to include dissection and demonstration laboratory sessions. **Clinical curriculum:** The clinical phase of the curriculum. **Clinical Skills sessions:** Any activity within the clinical skills module is a clinical skills session. Examples of these sessions are basic and advanced laboratories, ultrasound laboratories, venipuncture laboratories, cases, workshops. **Examination:** An examination is a summative assessment in the preclinical curriculum including midterm examinations and final examinations. In the clinical curriculum, this includes midterm examinations and NBME examinations. **Inclement Weather:** Periodically the University of Texas Health at San Antonio (UTHSA) is closed or has alternate work hours related to inclement weather. Preclinical students follow the preclinical decision regarding reporting to campus. Clinical students follow the decisions of the clinical site to which they are assigned. If conditions are not safe in their home area, students can use unplanned leave. **Institutional holidays:** UTHSA has several institutionally recognized holidays. During the preclinical curriculum, all holidays are included on the institutional calendar. Students are expected to attend scheduled academic events on holidays not included on the institutional calendar. During the clinical curriculum, students are expected to follow the procedures of their clerkship, elective/selective, and/or clinical site. **Leave of Absence:** See the university policy on criteria and process for a leave of absence. **Medical Note:** Health-related documentation must include the provider's name, address, telephone number, appointment and return date. All documentation is subject to review and may require additional information. **National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) Subject Exam:** Provides subject examinations in the basic and clinical sciences for the purpose of assessing the educational achievement of individuals in specific subject areas. Subject examinations are primarily designed for use as final examinations after courses, clerkships, or other units of instruction. **Preclinical curriculum:** The foundational first 20 months of the curriculum emphasizing acquisition of formal knowledge and clinical skills prior to the start or clerkships. **Required mandatory academic session:** As noted in the grading policy for each module in the preclinical curriculum, including examinations, quizzes, RATs, TBLs, Synthesis, Clinical Skills sessions, histopathology laboratories, anatomy laboratories, neurology laboratories, graded activities or otherwise noted as required in the course grading policy. In the clinical curriculum, this includes NBME examinations, assigned time in the clinical learning environment, and other activities noted as required in the course grading policy.		

Short-term Absence: Time away from the preclinical or clinical curriculum that is not a leave of absence.

Policy:

Students pursuing the MD degree at UTHSA are physicians in training who must meet standards of professional conduct and responsibility to develop into effective physicians. Active participation in the preclinical and clinical curriculum indicates the student's understanding and mastery of professional responsibilities. If it is necessary for students to be absent from a required mandatory MD program activity, students must approach such absences with the same standard of professional responsibility required of practicing physicians; professional responsibility extends to one's patients and members of one's team. Students remain responsible for obtaining all learning objectives despite absences and assume the responsibility for absences from the preclinical and clinical curriculum.

The Short-Term Absence Policy distinguishes between health-related absences (Sick Day/Healthcare Appointment), planned absences (Flex Absences, Personal Absences) and Unplanned Absences.

Absences may be processed on an individual basis by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or designee in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), and the Texas Education Code, Section 51.982, if applicable.

Students who fail to maintain standards of conduct suitable and acceptable to the University will result in disciplinary action to include failure of a course, a professionalism memorandum added to the student's record, up to and including dismissal from the medical school program at the Long School of Medicine.

All absence requests may be subject to requests for clarification, additional documentation, and/or review. Any absence not explicitly approved as outlined in this policy is considered unexcused.

Students will be allocated the following number of full days per category for excused absences. Any remaining days cannot be carried over to the next academic year. Students with an unexcused absence will lose a personal day for the absence, be required to complete make-up activities, and be reported to the Student Progression and Promotions Committee.

Category	Number of allotted days per academic year
Health-related (Sick and Healthcare Appointment)	10
Flex	2
Personal	8
Unplanned	2

Excused absences will be considered for the following reasons:

Health-related Absences (10 days available)			
Used for	**Request Deadline**	**Justification Requirements**	**Additional Information**
Sick Day/Healthcare Appointment Examples: acute illness, exacerbation of chronic illness including mental health illnesses Applicable for self or immediate family member.	If day of an exam: Prior to the start time of the exam. Otherwise: No later than 24 hours from the day of the absence.	Medical note* required for: • Day of examination • Clinical Skills session • Anatomy Lab session • Student has already used five health-related days in the academic year	A student with multiple health-related absences who has already used their allotted absences for the academic year may be required to meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or designee to discuss. For parental leave, any time required beyond allotted

		*Medical Notes must include provider's name, address, telephone number, appointment and return date.	health-related absences must be discussed with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or designee. A student with a chronic illness who may require more healthcare appointment days than allotted should contact the Academic, Faculty and Student Ombudsperson & ADA Compliance Office regarding accommodations.
Flex Absences (2 days available)			
Used for	**Request Deadline**	**Justification Requirements**	**Additional Information**
Professional and/or personal events Examples: Weddings, holy days, funerals, veritas responsibilities, student organization activities, volunteer opportunities.	14 calendar days in advance or within 72 hours of receiving initial event notification of schedule change (reminder notification will not be accepted).	Absence request must include an explanation and documentation of event at time of submission.	
Personal Absences (8 days available)			
Used For	**Request Deadline**	**Justification Requirements**	**Additional Information**
Anything a student values as personal and/or professional importance and does not meet criteria for health-related or flex absence categories.	30 calendar days in advance	N/A	Students may use up to two Personal Days in a course or rotation. Students may not take a Personal Day that would make a course incomplete or include any of the following: • Examination or points generating assessment (includes but is not limited to quizzes, RATs, OSCEs) • Clinical Skills session • Anatomy Lab session • New student orientation or clerkship orientation • Third year OSCE/ Exploring Clinical Medicine
Unplanned Absences (2 days available)			
Used For	**Request Deadline**	**Justification Requirements**	**Additional Information**
Absences due to unplanned situations or issues Examples: Flat tire, family death, inclement weather, etc.	If day of an exam: Prior to the start time of the exam. Otherwise: No later than 24 hours from the	An explanation will be required at time of submission.	

	day of the absence.		

MD Program Requirement Absences (not deducted from leave bank). *Students should make every attempt to schedule school-required activities outside of classroom/clinic hours or return to classroom/clinical duties upon completion of program requirements. The student will select "MD Program Required Absence" on the submission.*

Used For	Request Deadline	Justification Requirements	Additional Information
Examples: Residency Interviews, BAMC or VA credentialing appointments	No later than 24 hours from the day of the absence.	Absence request must include an explanation and documentation of event at time of submission.	Other "required" activities outside of the MD Program curriculum are not considered program-required absences and should be submitted as flex day requests. For example: Veritas, BLS/ALS certification, student leadership requirements.

Process:

Health-related and Planned Absences:

1. The student submits an Absence Request Form accessible online via the LSOM Class Canvas Page.
2. OUME receives the Absence Request and responds via email notification to the student with an approval or denial of request (may take up to 48 hours).
3. If the request is approved as an excused absence, the student notifies the course/clerkship director(s) to arrange make-up activities, if applicable.
4. Students with an excused absence during an examination must take the examination on the designated make up examination date.

Unplanned Absences:

1. The student submits an Absence Request Form accessible online via the LSOM Class Canvas Page.
2. The student sends an email, as soon as possible, ideally on the day of the absence, to the student's course/clerkship director(s) detailing the situation and the course/clerkship activity being missed.
3. OUME receives the Absence Request and responds via email notification to the student with an approval or denial of request. The course/clerkship director(s) have access to the absence list for reference.
4. If the request is approved as an excused absence, the student may contact the course/clerkship director(s) to arrange make-up activities, if applicable.

Approval Body: Long School of Medicine Office for Undergraduate Medical Education

CERTIFIED BY:

Joshua Hanson

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Date: 2026.06.10 10:16:17 -05'00'

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Policy Custodian ***Date***

Name: Joshua Hanson, MD
Title: Associate Dean for Student Affairs

Deborah Conway

Digitally signed by Deborah Conway
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Responsible Officer

Name: Deborah Conway, MD
Title: Vice Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education

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Date

ACCEPTED AND AGREED TO:

Robert Hromas, MD

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Date: 2026.07.03 07:40:26 -05'00'

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Responsible Executive ***Date***

Name: Robert Hromas, MD, FACP

Title: Dean, Long School of Medicine

Related policies, regulations, and accreditation elements:

- LCME Element 3.5 Learning Environment/Professionalism
- LCME Element 12.3 Personal Counseling/Mental Health/Well-Being Programs
- LCME Element 12.4 Student Access To Health Care Services
- SACSCOC 12.3 Student Rights
- Clerkship Grade Composition Policy
- Preclinical Grade Composition Policy
- Medical Student Duty Hours Policy
- UTHSA University Catalog