



Attendance Policy for DMD Students

Overview

The policy of the School of Dentistry is that attendance for all students enrolled in the DMD Program is mandatory at *all* scheduled classes, pre-clinic, and clinic sessions unless stated otherwise by the course director(s) and/or course syllabus.

Absence is defined as the failure of a student to attend any scheduled class or clinic activity.

Absences may be classified as either “Excused” or “Unexcused”. All absences are considered Unexcused until approved by the Office of Academic Systems.

An “Extended Excused Absence” refers to absences extending for five (5) consecutive days or longer.

Purpose

This policy establishes the expectations for student attendance while enrolled in the School of Dentistry at OHSU and sets forth notification requirements in the event of absence.

Attendance Expectations

Student attendance at scheduled classes, small group sessions, seminars, presentations, intramural clinics and rotations, extramural clinics and rotations, and official School or University required functions is *mandatory*. Students are expected to challenge all assessments given as part of the DMD program of study at the times scheduled by the course director. A score of NP will be recorded for assessments that have been missed. At the discretion of Course Directors, attendance may be part of the course grading rubric and in general, there is no make-up for quizzes or assessments that require laboratories, or simulation activities.

Acceptable reasons a student may be allowed to reschedule an assessment are defined by [OHSU Policy No. 02-70-045, Change in Scheduled Examination and Other Assessments](#), and include the following:

- Serious illness
- Hospitalization
- Death in the immediate family
- Approved religious observance
- Approved accommodations for disabilities
- Unique academic or professional opportunities (pre-approved by the Office of Academic Systems)
- SOD approved Events (pre-approved by the Office of Academic Systems [Student Services])

- Jury Duty
- Other compelling reason (pre-approved by the Office of Academic Systems)

Students who seek to reschedule an examination for medical reasons may be required to provide appropriate documentation.

Students anticipating an absence that conflicts with a scheduled assessment must inform the Office of Academic Systems in writing, OHSU email (sodacademic@ohsu.edu) preferred, at least **two weeks** before the anticipated absence. For absences due to illness or unexpected emergencies, students must notify the Office of Academic Systems via phone or email before the scheduled exam. Students who miss an assessment for medical reasons will be required to provide appropriate documentation.

Students who will miss a scheduled assessment due to attendance at a SOD-approved event must notify the Director of Student Services no later than **30 days** before the SOD-approved event in which they would like to participate. Student Services will provide the Office of Academic Systems with a list of students approved to participate in each SOD-approved event **two weeks** before the scheduled event. Only pre-approved students will be allowed to reschedule any missed assessments.

The Senior Associate Dean for Academic Systems, in consultation with the course director, has the authority to reschedule assessments for students who have missed a scheduled assessment due to a reasonably excused absence.

Attendance during Final Exam Week

Students should refrain from making any travel plans prior until no sooner than 5:00 pm on Friday of Final Exam Week. While the exam schedule may not show scheduled exams, remediation exams may be offered on Friday afternoon. Missing a scheduled exam due to travel without an excused absence will result in a No-Pass (NP) course grade.

Attendance during Extramural Patient Care Sessions

The student shall notify the Division of Dental Public Health before the scheduled session that will be missed due to the absence. The Division of Dental Public Health will notify the appropriate community site(s) and the Office of Academic Systems. Depending on the length of the absence, students may be required to make up missed community rotation absences.

Special Conditions

From time-to-time special situations will arise that need individualized planning and considerations. Among these situations are personal health issues, family obligations, post-graduate interviews, externships, and National Board Dental Examinations.

Personal Health Issues and Family Obligations

The student is advised to meet with the Director of Student Services and/or the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Systems preferably **two weeks** before the expected absence. OHSU and the School of Dentistry have resources available to help address personal

health issues. School bylaws permit the granting of leaves of absence to facilitate this process. Accommodating remedial work will be determined by the Student Performance Committee (SPC). The plan will be communicated to the student and the appropriate Course Directors, Group Leader, Division of Dental Public Health, and Student Services.

Post-graduate, GPR, AEGD, and Private Practice Interviews

Interviews should be conducted outside of regularly scheduled school hours whenever possible. If students are unable to arrange interviews outside of school hours and the interview falls on an examination or test date, prior approval must be obtained from the course director and the Office of Academic Systems at least **two weeks** in advance. Course instructors are not obligated to provide make-up exams for absences due to interviews.

Externships

Externships should be scheduled during break weeks between terms whenever possible. All externships must be pre-approved by the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Systems in conjunction with the Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Systems. If the externship will be scheduled for five (5) days or more, students will need to follow the *Extended Absence Policy and Procedure*.

National Board Dental Examinations

Students are expected to schedule National Board examinations during term breaks whenever possible. It is understood that limitations related to testing sites and dates occur. In these circumstances, students must request an excused absence from the Office of Academic Systems at least **two weeks** in advance of challenging the exam.

Faculty Responsibility

There is no intent in this policy to mandate monitoring of student attendance by faculty. However, Course Directors may choose to include attendance in their course assessment measures and to document the expectation in the course syllabus. In addition, if a faculty is aware of student attendance issues, the faculty may submit a Professional Monitoring Form to the Office of Academic Systems.

Absence Request Policy for DMD Students

Submission of an Absence Request

Whenever any class, clinic, or other required activity is missed, students must submit an online DMD Absence Request (accessed via https://ohsu.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7NzHXQIL4RPcLoa). Timely notification of the absence is imperative so that the school administration can notify relevant class and/or clinic administrators, as appropriate.

Absence requests for planned absences must be submitted at least **two weeks** in advance. For unplanned absences (e.g., illness, emergency), the student must submit the absence request on the day of or as soon as reasonably possible. A student who cannot access the online system must contact the

Office of Academic Systems during regular business hours. Delays in submitting an absence request may require the submission of further documentation and/or result in an Excused Absence being denied (i.e., the student will receive an Unexcused Absence).

For students requiring absences extending five (5) consecutive days or longer, an Extended Absence is needed. Refer to the *Extended Absence Policy and Procedure* section for more details.

Review/Approval Process

All absences are considered unexcused until classified as excused by the Office of Academic Systems.

DMD students requesting an excused absence must follow the absence request procedure outlined in the absence request flow chart. **Reference Appendix 2.**

Excused Absences (i.e. the use of Discretionary Days)

Definitions

An excused absence occurs when the following conditions are met:

1. If missing an assessment, the absence request is for an approved situation or activity (see [OHSU Policy No. 02-70-045, Change in Scheduled Examination and Other Assessments](#), for details);
2. For the use of planned Discretionary Day absences, the student submits the absence request at least **two weeks** in advance;
3. For the use of unplanned Discretionary Day absences (e.g., illness, emergency), the student submits the absence request the day of, or as soon as reasonably possible; and,
4. The absence request is approved by the Office of Academic Systems.

Discretionary Days

The School of Dentistry allows each student a set number of discretionary days for use during an academic year. Students are expected to use discretionary days judiciously for such events as medical appointments or illness, legal obligations, national board examinations, postgraduate or employment interviews, or other school-sponsored trips or events. The use of Discretionary Days will be considered Excused Absences.

Discretionary Days for each class are as follows:

- DS1 year – five (5) full days with no carry-over to the DS2 year.
- DS2 year – five (5) full days with no carry-over to the DS3 year.
- DS3 year – eight (8) full days with no carry-over to the DS4 year.
- DS4 year – eight (8) full days.

Decisions on any absence requests beyond the allotted number of Discretionary Days will be at the discretion of the Office of Academic Systems.

Guidelines for the use of Discretionary Days

1. Use your allotted Discretionary Days wisely!
2. Your Discretionary Days may only be used for approved situations or activities (see *Examples of Absences* for details).
3. Half-days can be used for events lasting less than a full day (e.g., medical appointments). However, students who report an illness for a morning session will be excused for the entire day.
4. For any absence of more than **two (2) consecutive days**, documentation supporting the absence must be submitted promptly to the Office of Academic Systems.
 - a. “Bunching” of unused days at the end of an academic year is prohibited by this policy.
5. Discretionary days are not to be used when an examination, quiz, or practical is scheduled. However, [OHSU Policy No. 02-70-045, Change in Scheduled Examination and Other Assessments](#) defines acceptable reasons a student may be allowed to reschedule an assessment.
6. Discretionary days may not be used retroactively.
7. A discretionary day is forfeited whenever an unreported absence is discovered or otherwise reported to the Office of Academic Systems; this absence is considered unexcused.
8. **Absences over the number of allotted Discretionary Days and/or the failure to make up missed clinic/course activities may be referred to the Student Performance Committee and could impact decisions regarding program advancement and/or graduation.**

Unexcused Absences

Definition

An Unexcused Absence occurs when the student fails to meet any of the conditions of an Excused Absence.

Didactic Courses

Instructors are not required to offer make-up work to students who do not attend didactic courses and do not have excused absences.

Clinical Courses

Students who are not present in the clinic and do not have an excused absence will be charged a Discretionary Day and reported to the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Systems and the Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Systems. Students will remain enrolled in the School of Dentistry if they have a negative Discretionary Day balance at the time of graduation until their balance is zero unless there is an approved exemption from the Student Performance Committee (SPC).

Important Considerations

If more than one (1) Unexcused Absence is recorded in any given term, students will be required to meet with the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Systems and/or the Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Systems, or their designee(s) to review the reason(s) for the Unexcused Absences.

A remediation plan may be developed for the student to address the Unexcused Absence(s) and any missed class and/or clinic activities.

Multiple Unexcused Absences and/or the failure to make up missed clinic/course activities may be referred to the Student Performance Committee and could impact decisions regarding program advancement and/or graduation.

Extended Absences

An Extended Absence refers to any absence extending **five (5) consecutive days or longer** and is covered by a different policy. For more information, see the *Extended Absence Policy and Procedure*.

Examples of Absences

The online Absence Request Form provides space for you to describe/explain the circumstances behind your absence request. Documentation, including doctor's note, jury duty notice, exam date confirmations, interview confirmations, etc., should be submitted with your absence request.

Some examples of commonly approved situations/activities include:

Illness/Emergency:

Illness or hospitalization

Death in the family

Personal/family emergency (e.g., car troubles, sick child, hospitalization/serious illness of immediate family members, etc.)

Allowed under university policy:

Maternity, paternity, or adoption leave

Approved religious observances

Allowed under governmental requirements:

Jury duty

Military obligation

Allowed for professional reasons (with prior approval)

Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INDBE)

Dental licensure examinations

Attendance at professional meetings

Residency and/or job interviews

Externships

Allowed for personal reasons (with prior approval)

Personal or family obligations
Wellness (physical and/or mental)
Weddings

Extended Absence Policy and Procedure

Overview

Students must notify the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Systems of any illness or other unusual circumstances that may necessitate an extended absence, five (5) or more consecutive days, from classes, laboratory work, clinic sessions, or other required activities. Students must also notify and consult with affected course or clinic directors, who will determine the indication and nature of any make-up work. It is the student's responsibility to consult with each course or clinic director and plan for the prescribed make-up work or sessions.

Submission of Request for an Extended Absence

A request for an extended absence must be presented in writing and addressed to the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Systems. The written notification must state the start date of the requested absence, the intended return date to the program, and the justification for the extended absence. Extended absence application may include but is not limited to the below circumstances:

- Extended Absence to Resolve Personal or Health Problems
 - When health is at issue, the request should contain documentation and a recommendation from the student's physician or other health care provider. All submitted materials will be kept in confidence to the extent provided by law.
- Extended Absence to Participate in an Educational Program, Research, or Service Engagement
 - The student must submit a petition specifying the goals and scope of the educational program, research, or service engagement opportunity to the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Systems.