

POLICY TITLE: *Core Clerkship Flex Time Policy*

APPROVAL DATE: *July 2, 2020*
Amended November 20, 2020

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: *Office of Medical Education*
and Office of Student Affairs

APPLIES TO: *M3 students*

Core Clerkship Flex Time Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the flex time policy is to provide students with flexibility in their clerkship year to address personal or professional needs at their discretion (e.g. any personal event or issue that does not fall under the list of excused absences). As students learn to transition to the clinical environment, it is important that they learn the importance of time management and managing days off while still completing all of the requirements of a core rotation. Students also need to learn how to balance these other needs with their professional responsibility to their team and caring for patients.

Definitions

Flex time is defined as a day during a required core clerkship in the third year when a medical student will be excused from the rotation and is not required to state their reason for taking the day.

Procedure

Students are allowed FOUR days of flex time throughout the duration of their third year. No more than 2 days of flex time can be taken per semester, and no more than one day of flex time can be taken on any individual clerkship. Flex time must be requested a minimum of 2 weeks before the requested date although ideally is requested 4 to 6 weeks prior in order to provide sufficient notice to your team of your absence as well as the clerkship director to reschedule any missed activities. Requests made after that time will most likely be denied.

Flex time will NOT be permitted on specific blackout or restricted dates that will be clearly outlined on MedOneStop Quick Links. Note: Clerkship Blackout days will be reviewed and approved by the M3/4 Curriculum Committee and EPC on an annual basis.

Instances where flex time is NOT PERMITTED:

- Clerkship Orientation Day
- End of Clerkship Exam, OSCE, or any other required clerkship assessment or activity.
- Assignment in which a student has responsibilities that would impact the clerkship, e.g. overnight or weekend call. (Unless the student can make arrangements for coverage, not always possible for all clerkships).
- Student has already exhausted one day of flex time allowance on a rotation.
- Limit of two days of flex time in the Fall term and two days of flex time in the Spring term.
- No half days or hourly counts will be permitted.
- The day before or after a scheduled holiday.
- Students may not take flex time during a Specialty Clerkship.

Steps that must be completed before a flex time is granted:

- Student completes the on-line MSSF form requesting Core Clerkship Flex Time, and indicate the clerkship and dates requested.
- The student attests that the flex time request does not fall on a day which the clerkship has defined as a blackout day.
- An email is automatically generated via MedOneStop to the clerkship director and/or coordinator if the student has not exceeded the number of absences or flex time allotted in a required rotation. The clerkship coordinator is responsible for confirming that the requested date does not fall in a restricted period and notifies the student that the request is approved and notifies the service attending or preceptor that the student's absence is approved.
- If the student has exceeded the number of absences or flex time for a required rotation or term, MedOneStop will generate an automatic email which explains the reason for denial to the student.

Responsibility

- Clerkship directors will not penalize students or make assumptions regarding interest when students take flex time.
- Students understand that they are still expected to meet all requirements of the core rotation and, at the discretion of the clerkship director, may be required to make up any missed work.
- All absences, whether pre-approved or unexpected, count toward the maximum allowed. If a student exceeds the allowed time, he/she will need to make up the additional time at the discretion of the clerkship director.
- If there are concerns with multiple absences, the clerkship director will notify the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
- Students may not exceed a TOTAL number of absences, including flex time, as follows:
 - 2 absences in a 4 week third-year clerkship
 - 3 absences in a 6 week third-year clerkship, or
 - 3 absences in an 8 week third-year clerkship
 - In a 6-week or 8-week rotation, the student may not take flex time in the same 4-week period as 2 other absences

Approval and Effective Date

The policy is effective starting July 6, 2020 and will be reviewed in Spring of 2021 to determine whether it continues and whether any revisions to the policy need to be made.