



**QUILLEN**  
**COLLEGE of MEDICINE**  
 EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy Name: **M4 Attendance Policy**

Policy Replaces a Previous Policy (*this includes change in policy name*):  Yes /  No

If so, list name of previous policy (*include policy number if different*): **M4 Attendance/Leave Policy**

Policy Number: **MSEC-0111-4**

Originator Name and/or Committee (*if a committee, include name of chair*): **Kenneth Olive, MD / MSEC Chair (2011); Ramsey McGowen, PhD / MSEC Chair (2016-2019); Ivy Click, EdD / MSEC Chair (2020- )**

Committees, Departments, or Individuals Responsible for Implementation: **Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, M4 Course Directors, Clerkship Coordinators, and Clinical Medical Education Director**

Original Approval Date and Who Approved by: **1/11/2011 / MSEC**

Revision Date(s) (*include a brief description*) and Who Approved by: **11/8/2016; 1/17/2017; 11/14/2017; 3/20/2018; 5/15/2018; 3/21/2023 / MSEC – addition of language for unscheduled time, religious observance, and unexcused absences and clarification of medical absence, planned absences, and unanticipated absences;**

Effective Date(s): **1/11/2011; 11/8/2016; 1/17/2017; 11/14/2017; 5/15/2018; 3/21/2023**

Revision(s) (*briefly describe*) by Administrative Staff and Date (*these revisions do not require voting/approval by a committee and/or individual*):

Exemption(s) to Policy (*date, by what committee or individual, and brief description*):

LCME Required Policy:  Yes /  No

If yes, please list the Element(s) Affiliated with this Policy (*include Element number/name/statement*):

**12.4 STUDENT ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES**

**A medical school provides its medical students with timely access to needed diagnostic, preventive, and therapeutic health services at sites in reasonable proximity to the locations of their required educational experiences and has policies and procedures in place that permit students to be excused from these experiences to seek needed care.**

*All policies will be reviewed every three years unless an earlier review is identified.*

**(A.) Policy Statement:**

Students pursuing the MD degree at Quillen College of Medicine are physicians in training who must meet standards of professional conduct and responsibility to develop into effective physicians. Institutional Educational Objective 5.0: “Demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles.” As a professional school, Quillen requires attendance and active participation in all components of the curriculum, as defined by clerkship and course directors. Active participation in the School’s activities indicates the student’s understanding and mastery of professional responsibilities.

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### (B.) Purpose of Policy:

The granting of the MD degree attests to the fact that the student has demonstrated a commitment to their professional responsibilities through participation in all aspects of the curriculum as defined by the faculty. When it is necessary for students to be absent from a required 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.

### (C.) Scope of Policy (*applies to*):

M4 Students enrolled in the Quillen College of Medicine MD program.

### (D.) Policy Activities:

The *M4 Absence Request Form* becomes part of this policy.

#### Electives

Students may be permitted to miss up to twenty-five percent of an elective rotation (five [5] days for a four [4] week rotation; two and a half days [2 ½] for a two [2] week rotation) for residency interview purposes or up to two (2) days for purposes other than residency interview for justifiable circumstances provided a request is submitted at least one (1) week in advance.

Students requesting to miss more than twenty-five (25%) percent of a rotation will be required to:

1. Make up time missed;
2. Have an alternative activity assigned by the instructor to make up for the time missed; or
3. Withdraw from the rotation; however, this must occur at least two (2) weeks in advance of the elective start date.
4. A grade of Incomplete will be assigned until the above conditions are met.

**NOTE:** This policy is not to be construed to mean that a student is entitled to take up to twenty-five (25%) percent of a rotation off for any reason.

Requests must be submitted via the *M4 Absence Request Form* at least one (1) week in advance with supporting documentation of the scheduled interview or other purpose and approved by the course director.

#### Selectives

Students who miss more than two (2) days on a selective will be required to make-up missed activities. The make-up of missed activities/experiences is at the discretion of the course director.

Requests for up to two (2) days off must be submitted at least one (1) week in advance utilizing the *M4 Absence Request Form* and approved by the course director.

#### Unscheduled Time

- Unscheduled time is built into the M4 schedule.
  - Off-cycle students will have less unscheduled time.
- Examples of unscheduled time include: Step 2 study time, interviews, flextime for away rotations that do not align with the QCOM calendar, research.
- Students are still enrolled during unscheduled time and can be scheduled for activities throughout the M4 year where attendance is required and expected by the College of Medicine.

#### Medical Absence

Students are expected to seek necessary health care to maintain their physical and mental well-being. Examples of necessary health care include preventive health services, visits for acute illness, ongoing care for chronic illnesses,

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physical therapy, and counseling and psychological services. Consistent with their rights under ETSU's policies and the law, students have a right to privacy when seeking care. Documentation of medical necessity may be required. A medical absence is included in the number of days a student is permitted to miss during an elective or selective.

### **Planned Absences**

For planned absences related to healthcare, students must contact the course director or course coordinator and preceptors or patient care team leader in advance to coordinate time away from the course. Students need not disclose the specific type of healthcare that is being sought. A student's decision to seek healthcare during a course should have no impact on their performance evaluation. Students should attempt to schedule routine visits so that they do not conflict with required curricular activities.

Other planned absences including but not limited to meetings and/or educational sessions must be approved by the course director in advance and an *M4 Absence Request Form* completed. No release from clinical duties will occur without prior approval.

The *M4 Absence Request Form* must be completed for all planned absences. A planned absence is included in the number of days a student is permitted to miss during an elective or selective.

### **Unanticipated Absences**

Unanticipated absences for an illness or emergency, including emergencies involving immediate family, must be communicated to the course director or senior clerkship coordinator, preceptor, and patient care team leader as promptly as possible. Absences of greater than two (2) consecutive days (personal or family member's) requires a note from the student's personal healthcare provider. The *M4 Absence Request Form* must be completed for all unanticipated absences. An unanticipated absence is included in the number of days a student is permitted to miss during an elective or selective.

The make-up of missed activities/experiences is at the discretion of the course director. Absences requiring making up a required skill/proficiency may require a note from the student's healthcare provider.

### **Religious Observance**

Clerkship directors must accept a student's assertion of the need to be absent from rotations for major recognized religious observances. A completed request form must be submitted and approved at least four (4) weeks prior to the absence.

### **Educational Absence/Quillen Activity (Official QCOM Committee or Integrated Grand Rounds/Other Teaching Activity):**

- Time off from a required selective of up to three (3) days (inclusive of travel time) MAY be granted by the course director for a student to:
  - Attend a conference if the student is presenting research at a conference and a completed *M4 Absence Request Form* is submitted and approved at least four (4) weeks prior to the conference. The conference agenda, the conference flyer or letter of invitation documenting presentation must be submitted with the completed request.
  - Attend a conference representing QCOM as an elected institutional representative for a regional or national organization. A completed *M4 Absence Request Form* must be submitted and approved at least four (4) weeks prior to the conference.
- Students may request time off to participate in an official QCOM committee or Integrated Grand Rounds / Other Teaching Activity. A completed *M4 Absence Request Form* must be submitted and approved at least one (1) week in advance. Approved time for such activities does count toward the total number of days which can be missed as defined above for an elective or selective.

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**Makeup of Missed Activities/Experiences**

The make-up of missed activities/experiences is at the discretion of the course director. Absences that entail making up a required skill/proficiency may necessitate a note from the student’s health care provider.

**Rotation Expectations**

All rotations begin on Monday morning (occasionally Tuesday morning, if Monday is a recognized East Tennessee State University’s Board of Trustees holiday) and continues until 4:30 PM the last Friday of the rotation, including weekends. A leave request must also be submitted for weekend days, unless the course specifies there are no expectations of student participation in required educational activities, such as, but not limited to call or hospital rounds on weekends.

Students are expected to follow the work schedule of the ambulatory or inpatient site they are assigned. East Tennessee State University’s Board of Trustees recognized holidays do not apply to these sites.

**Unexcused Absences and Consequences of Unexcused Absences**

Any non-emergency absence that is taken without prior notification or permission of the course director is considered an unexcused absence and will be treated as an act of unprofessional behavior. A professionalism form will be submitted and it could impact the grade for the course.

| <b>Administrative Approvals</b>  | <b>Date Approved</b>   |
|--|--|
| University Compliance <i>(if applicable)</i>   |  |
| Policy Advisory Committee  | 3/9/2023   |
| Associate Dean for Accreditation Compliance <i>(if applicable)</i>                     |  |
| Vice Dean for Academic Affairs   | 3/9/2023   |
|  |  |
| <b>Policy Review and/or Revision Completed By<br/><i>(if applicable)</i></b>           | <b>Date Policy<br/>Reviewed and Approved<br/><i>(if applies to that department, committee, or group)</i></b> |
| Office of the Dean   | January 2011   |
| Academic Affairs <i>(this includes the three-year reviews by administrative staff)</i> | December 2016; 9/19/2017; February 2018; May 2018; 4/11/2023   |
| Student Affairs  | January 2017; 10/19/2017   |
| Department of Medical Education  |  |
| Medical Student Education Committee  | January 2011; January 2017; November 2017; 5/15/2018; 3/21/2018  |
| Student Promotions Committee   |  |
| Faculty Advisory Council   |  |
| Administrative Council   |  |
| M1/M2 Course Directors   |  |

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|--|---|--|
|  | M4 Course Directors                               | November 2011; January 2017; 10/18/2017; February 2018 |
|  | Student Groups/Organizations ( <i>describe</i> ): |  |
|  | Other ( <i>describe</i> ):                        |  |

| <b>Notifications of New or Revised Policy (<i>if applicable</i>)</b> |  | <b>Date and Method of Notifications</b> |
|--|--|---|
|  | Posted to Website Under Educational Policies | 4/13/2023                               |
|  | Medical Students                             |   |
|  | Administrative Council                       |   |
|  | Faculty Advisory Council                     |   |
|  | All QCOM Faculty                             |   |
|  | All QCOM Staff                               |   |
|  | Admissions Office for Catalog                |   |
|  | Medical Student Education Committee          |   |
|  | Other ( <i>specify</i> ):                    |   |

### M4 Request for Permission to be Absent Form

**It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all required signature(s) are secured in advance as per MSEC Policy 0111-4 M4 Attendance Policy**

This form is required for ALL absences from a Senior Selective or Elective Course. If you have any questions, please contact the Senior Elective/Selective Course Coordinator of the department from which you are requesting the absence.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Selective/Elective Course Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of requested leave \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate the type of leave requested:

**Medical Leave:** Planned absences are limited to two (2) total days. #of hours if less than a full day \_\_\_\_\_

**Residency Interview: Electives** - planned absences are limited to five (5) days for a four-week (4) rotation and two and a half days (2 ½) for a two-week (2) rotation. Total absences are not to exceed more than twenty-five percent (25%) of a rotation. **Selectives** – planned absences are limited to two (2) days for justifiable circumstances. Supporting documentation is required with the request to be absent.

**Religious Observance** – Supporting documentation is required with the request to be absent.

**Quillen Activity:** Official QCOM committee or Integrated Grand Rounds / other teaching activity.

Activity Name \_\_\_\_\_ # of hours if less than a full day \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:** Electives and Selectives - planned absences are limited to two (2) days for justifiable circumstances. Supporting documentation is required with the request to be absent.

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**Approved**

**Disapproved**

Selective/Elective Course Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For M4 Elective:** Does this request, in addition to any other approved absences, exceed 25% of the rotation time?

NO  YES

If yes, the individual signing above must attach a plan for making up the missed time.

**Return the completed form to the appropriate Senior Course Coordinator:**

Family Medicine: Caitlin McBride  
Internal Medicine: Yvette Font  
OB/GYN: Brandi Nave/ Michael Freeman  
Pediatrics: Gina Williams  
Rural Track: Sarah Orick  
Surgery: Brenda Holt  
Psychiatry: Nicole Fisher  
All Others: Kortni Dolinger/Academic Affairs