

Policy Area: Academic Affairs

Name of Policy: DDS Attendance Policy  
Policy #\_\_\_\_

Date Adopted: February 1, 2017

Date Amended: July 17, 2019

University of Minnesota  
**School of Dentistry Policy**

## **Doctor of Dental Surgery Attendance Policy**

### **I. Purpose:**

The School of Dentistry has the responsibility of preparing its students both academically and clinically for the practice of dentistry. Successful skill and knowledge-based development requires continuous attendance in all classes and clinical sessions as designated by curriculum and clinic schedules.

### **II. Policy:**

School of Dentistry students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior by attending classes and clinics as indicated on School of Dentistry course schedules and the School of Dentistry academic calendar.

Students may be approved for time off from class or clinic for the following reasons.

1. Excused Absences
2. Family Leave
3. Personal Sessions\*

\*Personal sessions apply only to DDS3 and DDS4 students during clinical sessions.

#### **Excused Absences**

Student absences from class or clinic may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Physical or mental illness of a student or a student's dependent, including medical conditions related to pregnancy
  - a. Students are required to submit a doctor's note to be excused from class or clinic and make-up any graded course component (exams, quizzes, practicals, etc.).
  - b. The Boynton Self-Reporting Form for Illness or Boynton confirmation of contact letter will not be accepted to excuse an absence the day of an exam or practical. Only one Boynton Self-Reporting Form will be accepted each semester to excuse absences on days exams or practicals are not scheduled.
  - c. Students experiencing challenges scheduling appointments with providers for physical or mental illness due to course and clinic scheduling should consult with the Assistant Dean of Student and Resident Affairs to make arrangements for an excused absence.
2. Subpoenas
3. Jury Duty
4. Military Service

5. Recognized Religious Observances
  - a. Recognized religious observances as determined by the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.
6. Emergency
  - a. Unavoidable or legitimate circumstances preventing attendance as determined by the Office of Student and Resident Affairs (e.g., medical emergency of a family member).
7. Bereavement, including travel for bereavement
8. National Board Dental Examinations (*DDS4 only*)<sup>1</sup>
9. Official School Business

Students who plan to be absent due to circumstances described above must submit a planned absence request at least ten days in advance or a same day absence request to the Office of Student and Resident Affairs, following procedures outlined in the *School of Dentistry Student Handbook*.

Faculty and administration reserve the right to request documentation for any student absence.

Instructors may not penalize students with excused absences and must provide reasonable and timely accommodations to make up exams or other course requirements if the student:

- Was absent due to circumstances identified as excused in the reasons above or through family leave;
- Has complied with notification requirements; and
- Has provided any requested documentation.

Details about Family Leave are further described in the *School of Dentistry Student Handbook*.

### **Unexcused Absences – Didactic & Preclinical Courses**

Students are expected to be in class as designated by School of Dentistry course schedules and the School of Dentistry academic calendar. Attendance may be included as a mandatory, graded component of a course.

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

<sup>1</sup> Reasons #8 and #9 are not considered excused when students are scheduled on outreach per the attendance statement in the Outreach syllabus.

## **Clinic Attendance**

Students must be present in clinic a minimum of 90% of available sessions each academic year to ensure competency at the time of graduation. Students who present in clinic less than 90% of available sessions must meet with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to discuss their academic status and impact on their progress toward graduation. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may approve the student's additional absences or refer the student's situation to the appropriate progression sub-committee for further discussion. The sub-committee will have the authority to suggest a remediation plan and/or a program extension.

The number of sessions required to fulfill the 90% requirement will be determined by the Offices of Academic and Clinical Affairs.

### *Clinical Personal Sessions*

Personal sessions approve students to be absent from clinic; they do not approve or excuse student absences in didactic or preclinical courses.

Students will be granted 14 clinical personal sessions each academic year. Personal sessions should be used for job interviews, doctor's appointments, daycare changes, etc. Students requesting personal sessions must follow notification procedures or be subject to denial of the absence and/or a referral to the School of Dentistry Code of Conduct Officer. Students in clinic may not earn more than ten additional personal sessions by volunteering in clinic during breaks and may not roll over more than ten personal sessions from the DDS3 to DDS4 year. Personal sessions are not allowed when scheduled on outreach.

Students who are not present in clinic and do not have an approved absence will be charged a personal session and reported to the School of Dentistry Code of Conduct Officer. Students will remain enrolled in the School of Dentistry if they have a negative personal session balance at the time of graduation until their balance is zero, unless there is an approved exemption from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

### **DDS Clinic Same Day Absences**

Students are expected to be in clinic when scheduled as absences significantly impact patient care. However, the School understands that some excused absences cannot be planned in advance such as illness, emergency and bereavement. Students may use same day absences for these situations.

Students are allowed three days (i.e., six sessions) of same day absences each academic year for the reasons listed above (e.g., illness of self or dependent, bereavement, emergency). Students need to report these absences but do not need to submit any supporting documentation.

Students will be required to make up same day absences if they exceed three total days. Same day absences can be made up by using personal days or being scheduled in clinic over break, during senior week or after graduation.

Students exceeding more than three days of same day absences may be required to meet with the Assistant Dean of Student and Resident Affairs. The Assistant Dean of Student and Resident Affairs, in consultation with the Associate Deans for Academic and Clinic Affairs, may grant students permission to be excused for more than three days of same day absences without making-up clinic time if a student is experiencing extenuating circumstances and can provide any requested documentation. Students are responsible for contacting the Assistant Dean of Student and Resident Affairs within **fourteen** days of a same day absence to request an exemption from the three day limit. No exemptions will be granted fourteen days after an absence and students may not be excused for more than **ten** days of same day absences.

The Boynton Health Self-Reporting of Illness Form or a Boynton confirmation of contact letter will not be accepted as forms of documentation to exceed three days of clinic same day absences.

### III. Definition(s):

- Students: For the purposes of this policy, students are those enrolled in the doctor of dental surgery program.
- Excused Absences: Students who have followed absence notification procedures and received approval for a legitimate excused absences must be granted an opportunity to make-up exams or other course requirements.
- Clinic Session: A half day in clinic. Each clinic day is composed of an AM and PM session.
- Present in Clinic: Student scheduled in clinic must be available to see patients and easily contacted, for the entire session, even when a patient is not scheduled.

Policy Owner:	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
External References:	U of M Administrative Policy: <i>Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences</i>
Related Policies:	
Approved by:	<b>Council of Chairs</b>
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