

TITLE OF POLICY

TEC 2.0 Foundation Phase Attendance Policy

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy outlines the Attendance Policy for the Foundation Phase TEC 2.0 curriculum as well as the procedure for students to use excused half days. The policy also states the thresholds for reporting absences to Student Affairs Leadership, the Committee on Professionalism Education, and the Student Progress Committee.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE

Foundation Phase Committee will review this policy in odd-numbered years and Education Committee will approve the final amended policy.

LCME REFERENCE(S)

LCME 12.4: Student Access to Healthcare Services

HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Approved by the Education Committee March 20, 2023

The goal of this policy is to support students in identifying time needed during the pre-clinical curriculum to take care of personal matters and to attend to life events that require *limited* time away from class while balancing learning and accountability to classmates. For larger concerns and need for time away (i.e., more than two days away from class), please consult Student Affairs directly by emailing SALeadership@listserv.med.unc.edu.

The TEC 2.0 curriculum has multiple open afternoons each week. Students should plan appointments such as doctor visits, therapy, regular home and car maintenance and other business during free, non-curricular afternoons.

In the event of an unanticipated need to be absent from class or planned, fixed-date need (e.g., family wedding), students may use an excused half day. Below is detailed information about how excused half days may be used and how students should request them.

I. What are “excused half days”?

- Excused half days are intended to allow a student to miss scheduled class time for illness, delay of transportation (such as car breakdowns), family emergencies, urgent medical care (i.e., not

routine doctor's appointments) or other similar needs. Students are not required to submit documentation, doctors' notes, or other justification for taking an excused half day.

- **Students are allotted four excused half days per semester** for unplanned health/wellbeing needs or personal/family matters.
- A half day is defined as 8 AM to 1 PM or 12 PM to 5 PM.
- If a student takes time away from class that spans the morning and afternoon (e.g., 10 AM – 3 PM), the use of two excused half days is required.
- A student cannot take more than two half days during any course (including 6-week medical sciences courses, the semester-long Patient Centered Care (PCC) course, and the semester-long Social and Health Systems (SHS) course).
- A student cannot take a half day during an exam or major assignment in any course or during resource-intensive sessions such as patient encounters and labs. The only exception to this rule is for Peer Accelerated Learning (PALS) quizzes, which may be made up if they are missed during an excused half day.
- Half days do not carry over to the next semester.
- Half days cannot be taken the day before or after a university holiday.

II. **Should I use an excused half day for religious observance?**

- No, the School of Medicine (SOM) follows the University's [Religious Accommodations Policy](#) for religious observance.
- To apply for a religious accommodation, fill out the form available at the link above and follow the instructions for submission to the RAAC.
- The form must be submitted to Equal Opportunity and Compliance (EOC) Office with SALeadership@listserv.med.unc.edu, copied at least 10 business days before the accommodation/absence is needed (per university policy).
- Students are expected to make up any missed work (including but not limited to assignments, labs, quizzes, exams) in a timely manner and should arrange with their instructor plans for alternative completion deadlines.
- Students with approved religious observance accommodations will not need to deduct excused half days from their semester allotment.
- A student may be granted additional religious observance accommodations beyond the university-approved two days per calendar year at the discretion of the SOM.

III. **How do I document that I am taking an excused half day?**

- Requests for half days should be submitted through the excused half day [Qualtrics form](#) as soon as the need becomes apparent and not later than the start of any class session during that half day.
- Students will receive an email confirmation of their absence requests and are responsible for monitoring their use of half days and for not exceeding the allotted number.
- When a student completes the excused half day [Qualtrics form](#), the instructors or facilitators for each missed session will receive an emailed copy of the form, but it is the responsibility of the student to communicate with them regarding makeup sessions
- If a student is absent and unaccounted for due to not submitting an excused absence form, Student Affairs will initiate a health and safety check. If for any reason a student does not

submit an excused absence form, the absence will still be counted as one of the four permitted per semester.

IV. How do I document my attendance in all my different classes?

- Students will badge into all required curricular sessions including large-group PALS sessions, case-based learning (CBL), SHS, and PCC meetings, class meetings, and anatomy/micro labs.
- If your individual badge will not scan after two attempts, students should send an email to foundphaseattendance@med.unc.edu to document their attendance at each class until the badge issue is resolved. In the event of a complete system failure, attendance will not be taken for that session.
- Please remember that it is a violation of the Foundation Phase Professionalism Standards as well as the [UNC Honor Code](#) to badge into a session and leave or to misrepresent your attendance or any classmate's attendance in any way.

V. What should I do if I'm sick?

- If a student is ill and cannot come to class, they should use an excused half day. This includes time needed for mental health.
- Students should report via Qualtrics that they are using an excused half day no later than the beginning of the class they will miss.
- If you are sick on an exam day or other day when excused half days are not allowed (physical or mental health), follow the procedures listed in section VIII below.
- Students are expected to follow the [COVID exposure and symptom protocol](#) on the SOM website.
- Any time missed due to isolation while awaiting test results should be submitted as an excused half day.

VI. What happens if I have exhausted my excused half days OR have met the allowed number of half days in any one course and need additional time away from class?

- If a student needs to take time off beyond the allotted four excused half days, the student must email the SALeadership@listserv.med.unc.edu as soon as they become aware of the need for time away from class.
- If a student is ill during an exam, major assignment, or resource-intensive session, they should still submit for an excused half day so that they are known to be safe and accounted for, as well as email SALeadership@listserv.med.unc.edu.

VII. How will I make up work that I miss when I take an excused half day?

- CBL: Students will be required to review the case, review the Panopto recording of the missed session, and submit written responses to the "high-yield discussion questions" and other questions embedded within the case to their CBL facilitator via Canvas inbasket.
- PALS: Students must make up missed PALS quizzes if they use an excused half day. Following submission of the Qualtrics excused absence form indicating that a PALS session will be missed, students will receive an automated email with a link to SignUpGenius to schedule the makeup quiz.
- SHS, PCC, & Anatomy: Students must communicate directly with their facilitator/tutor/instructor and agree on a make-up assignment. Students are expected to complete the makeup assignment defined by the instructor on the agreed upon timeline.

VIII. What happens if I miss class and don't submit for a half day, if I miss class and have used up all my half days, if I exceed the allotted number of half days in any one course, or if I miss class on an exam day or other day when excused absences are not allowed?

- Steps taken regarding a student's failure to follow attendance and excused half day procedure in a timely manner:
 - 1st occurrence: Student has an in-person meeting with one of the Student Affairs deans or Senior Director of Student Affairs and the student's advisor, if available. Goal: To make sure that the student has a clear understanding of the policy and to plan for not missing more than the allotted number of half days in the future.
 - 2nd occurrence: Student is reported to Committee on Professionalism Education (CoPE) and must take all subsequent steps. Goal: To discover and address any underlying barriers to professional behavior regarding attendance.
 - 3rd occurrence: Student will be required to appear before the Student Progress Committee (SPC) Goal: To determine whether a student has the professional demeanor necessary to continue at the SOM.

OMSE has the discretion to grant additional excused days for extenuating circumstances and/or to engage students in discussion of longer leaves as needed.