

<b>Title:</b>	Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (SSPPS) Absence Policy
<b>Description:</b>	To provide a framework for the consistent management of student absences.
<b>Effective:</b>	Fall 2023
<b>Applies to:</b>	All currently enrolled PharmD and Distance Degree Programs (DDP) Students
<b>Approved By:</b>	Dr. Ralph Altieri, Dean
<b>Responsible School Officer:</b>	Sr. Associate Dean for Student Affairs
<b>Responsible Office:</b>	Office of Student Services (OSS)   303-724-2882
<b>Policy Contact:</b>	Operations Manager
<b>Last Reviewed/Updated:</b>	June 2024

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Student participation and engagement in curriculum activities is essential to success therefore, the SSPPS expects all students to participate in every class. The school, however, recognizes certain life events may interfere with attendance and warrant flexibility. This policy provides a framework that outlines criteria and procedures for consistent and equitable management of student absences.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Only absences from required and/or graded coursework, activities, assignments, and programmatic requirements should be processed through the Office of Student Services (OSS). Excessive absences, whether approved or not, may make it impossible for a student to meet the outcomes/expectations of a course. If a student needs to take an extended time away from the curriculum for reasons beyond the student's control, an administrative solution should be explored via OSS.

### **ABSENCE CATEGORIES**

Absences are defined in the following categories:

- A. *Absences protected by law***
- B. *Absences managed at the course level***
- C. *Unapproved absences***

#### **A. *Absences protected by law***

- Disability-related absences documented through the Office of Disability, Access, and inclusion (ODAI)
  - Students must provide a formal request for accommodation via a Faculty Notification Memorandum (FNM) from ODAI. The FNM must specifically include the ability to make-up for the missed work.
- Absences due to court mandated appearances
  - Court mandated appearances include jury duty, subpoenas, and participation in trials.
  - Jury Duty: students must provide the jury summons *and* the certificate of completion of jury duty from the court.
- Absences due to the observance of protected religious holidays
  - A student must inform OSS of their intention to observe religious holidays at the beginning of the semester.
- Medically related absences due to pregnancy
  - The absence duration may be as long as deemed medically necessary by the student's health care

- provider.
- Applies only to medically necessary absences associated with pregnancy and childbirth. It does not, for example, apply to childcare or routine medical appointments.
- Applies to a spouse/partner during the labor and delivery, and 48-hours post-delivery.

The school is required to provide make-up options for absences protected by law, provided it is reasonable to do so, and it does not fundamentally alter the curriculum. Students will work directly with their course directors to determine when make-up work will be completed. Students are required to complete make-up work as soon as reasonable before departure or after return to school. If a student fails to communicate appropriately with their course director, the school reserves the right to deny make-up options. A student may choose to waive their right to make-up options and follow the policies for absences managed at the course level that are published in the course syllabus. The OSS is available should a student require additional support with navigating absences protected by law.

## **B. Absences managed at the course level**

- Medical necessity
  - Refers to an unpredictable or serious illness of the student or immediate family member that requires immediate evaluation by a healthcare provider and/or situations involving urgent treatment.
  - COVID-19 related absences: review the CU Anschutz [COVID-19 Protocols & Resources](#) page for additional guidance. Acceptable documentation for a COVID related absence includes PCR test results (rapid/home tests will not be accepted) or a medical statement from a provider on official letterhead.
  - Students have a right to privacy when seeking care and are therefore not required to disclose specific diagnosis and/or type of care being sought or received. Whenever possible, students are expected to schedule medical appointments outside of scheduled classes and curricular activities.
- Death and bereavement of immediate family members, relatives, and close friends
  - The allowable time off for bereavement related absences is limited. It is usually the amount of time it takes to attend and return from any service(s).
  - The SSPPS recognizes that navigating a loss can be incredibly difficult. Students are encouraged to contact OSS as soon as possible to discuss individual circumstances, receive guidance/support, and learn about their options.
- Pre-approved professional activities (e.g., conferences)
  - Students attending a professional meeting must submit an absence request form at least four weeks in advance of the start of the meeting. It is the student's responsibility to inform and consult with their organization's faculty advisor for any additional considerations.
  - The meeting schedule will be reviewed to determine the number of days a student can be absent. Factors that will be considered include the role of the student at the meeting, conference programming specific to students, and the impact of travel on the student's class and exam schedule.
  - Students are expected to plan around their course schedule whenever possible.
- Weddings
  - If the student is a bride or groom, the maximum number of excused absences will be determined in conjunction with the Sr. Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the student's course director(s) as needed.
  - If attending a wedding in which the student is not the bride or groom, a maximum of one class day will be excused.
  - Students are expected to plan around their course schedule whenever possible.
- Extenuating circumstances
  - This includes temporary or short-term difficulties that impact a student's ability to engage in required activities that are not covered by the previous categories. A determination on these absences will be made by OSS on a case-by-case basis and in collaboration with the course directors associated with the course.

Individual course syllabi/course directors dictate how absences at the course level are managed. It is the sole responsibility of the student to review the course syllabus, and in collaboration with their course director(s), determine how an absence of this category will be managed, and if it will affect their grade and/or ability to succeed in the course.

### C. *Unapproved Absences*

- Unapproved absences do not fall into any of the above categories. Common examples of these types of absences include student scheduled experiential activities, elective medical procedures, absence requests without documentation, outside employment/training/orientation, absence/tardiness due to poor planning (e.g., traffic, sleeping through an alarm, not reading directions, etc.), and extracurricular/family events.
- Retroactive requests are considered unapproved. Students are expected to submit absence requests in advance whenever reasonable to do so. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- A student with an unapproved absence who decides to be absent is encouraged to use their discretion and discuss the ramifications of the missed coursework or programmatic requirement with the course director(s).

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Students' Role

- Students must understand the outcome and evaluation expectations of each course through deliberate communication with the course director(s) and a thorough review of the course syllabus.  
Students who are (or anticipate) experiencing any circumstances which may impact their ability to be successful in the pharmacy curriculum or students with questions about the Absence Policy are strongly encouraged to contact OSS either via email ([sop.oss@cuanschultz.edu](mailto:sop.oss@cuanschultz.edu)) or by phone (303-724-2882) as soon as possible.
- Submitting an [Absence Request Form](#)
  - Preapproval
    - Students are expected to communicate with OSS in person or at [sop.oss@cuanschultz.edu](mailto:sop.oss@cuanschultz.edu) **30 days before an absence**, or when that is not possible, as soon as possible thereafter.
    - Failure to obtain preapproval in situations where it was reasonable to do so may result in an unapproved absence, or for legally protected absences, not providing make-up options.
    - Students must obtain confirmation of an absence before booking any travel arrangements.
  - Organization
    - Students must compile a summary of all assessments missed, including the course name **and** number, the course director(s) full name(s), and the originally scheduled date and time of evaluations or required attendance activities.
  - Documentation
    - Documentation is required for all absence requests. It is the student's responsibility to provide necessary and complete documentation to allow the school to sufficiently evaluate the request for an absence. **Absence requests that are submitted without supporting documentation will be processed as unapproved.** If documentation is not available at the time of submission, students must notify OSS and provide a specific plan and timeline for when the documentation will be available.
    - All documentation must contain identifiable information including the student's name, dates of absence, etc. Examples of acceptable forms of documentation can be found in appendix A below.
  - Follow-up

- Students are expected to work with their Course Directors to understand course policy and options.
  - All students who take a make-up evaluation separately from the rest of the class will be required to sign an acknowledgment of the school's Student Ethics and Conduct Code.
- IPPE/APPE Absences
  - Excused Absence Request Form: Students requesting 3 or more days absent from a single rotation must complete the Experiential Absence Form found in CORE. Students who do not submit documentation of the absence, as required by the school's absence policy, may be subject to cancellation of the rotation, failure of the rotation, and/or a delay in progression in the program. Students who accrue absences beyond 1 week may require a leave of absence and are expected to engage with the Office of Student Services.
- Obtaining Authorization for Accommodations
  - Authorization for accommodations through the Office of Disability, Access, and Inclusion (ODAI) to allow for any make-up work due to a medical disability must occur before any make-up work will be administered. Neither the Course Director nor OSS can determine whether a student has a disability that is eligible for accommodations. Accordingly, students requesting accommodations for a disability must contact the Office of Disability, Access & Inclusion at [disabilityaccess@cuanschultz.edu](mailto:disabilityaccess@cuanschultz.edu).
  - ODAI will assist in determining reasonable accommodations. Be aware that the determination of accommodations can take several weeks. No accommodation will be granted for courses until the student has notified the course directors and/or OSS of the approved accommodation via an FNM. Once authorized, it is the student's responsibility to coordinate approved accommodations with the Course Directors well in advance.
  - Additional general information regarding disability resources can be found [here](#).
- Pregnancy related accommodations
  - Students needing additional assistance or resources may contact:  
Office of Equity  
Phone: 303.315.2567  
Email: [equity@ucdenver.edu](mailto:equity@ucdenver.edu)

#### **Office of Student Services' Role**

- OSS is responsible for maintaining a centralized database where absence requests and supporting documentation will be collected.
- OSS evaluates and processes student absence requests.
- OSS staff will use all available information to arrive at a final decision regarding absence category and inform all stakeholders as appropriate. OSS is available as a resource to both students and faculty.

#### **Course Directors' Role**

- Course Directors are responsible for establishing course policies and clearly communicating expectations via the course syllabus.
- Course Directors are expected to work with their students directly to determine how an absence will be managed per their course policy.

#### **APPEAL PROCESS**

OSS decisions are considered final. Students wishing to dispute an absence policy decision may follow the established appeal process under the [Scholastic Advancement and Appeals Policy](#).

# APPENDIX A

## Acceptable Forms of Documentation

The following represents examples of acceptable documentation that may support the reason for your absence(s). All documentation must contain identifiable information including the student's name, dates of absence, etc.

It is important to recognize that these are examples and OSS will evaluate individual circumstances to determine if submitted documentation is sufficient. Please note, students have a right to privacy when seeking healthcare and are therefore not required to disclose specific diagnosis and/or type of care being sought or received.

- Disability related absences
  - Faculty Notification Memorandum (FNM) from ODAI
  - Medical statement from a provider on official letterhead
- Absences due to court mandated appearance
  - Copy of jury summons received.
  - Certificate of service from the court confirming appearance on the date reflected in the summons.
  - If selected, a certificate of service from the court documenting dates of service.
  - Other court summons, subpoena/trial documents, etc. with identifiable information.
- Preapproved professional activities:
  - Support from the student organization advisor(s)
  - Confirmed conference registration.
  - Flight itinerary or hotel reservation confirmation
- Observance of Religious Holidays
  - Official document from religious leader confirming dates of religious observance.
- Pregnancy related absences
  - Medical statement from a provider on official letterhead
- Absences due to medical necessity:
  - Medical statement from a provider on official letterhead
  - Appointment records
- COVID-19 related absences
  - PCR test results (rapid/home tests will not be accepted)
  - Medical statement from a provider on official letterhead
- Death/Bereavement:
  - Copy of obituary, service program, or statement from a funeral official on official letterhead
  - Flight itinerary (if applicable)
- Weddings:
  - Invitation, ceremony program, newspaper announcement
  - Flight itinerary (if applicable)

For all other types of absences, or if you have any questions, please contact [sop.oss@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:sop.oss@cuanschutz.edu) for assistance in determining acceptable forms of documentation.

# APPENDIX B

## Forms and Resources

### Forms

- [Absence Request Form](#)
- [Scholastic Appeal Form](#)

### Resources/Policies

- [Scholastic Advancement and Appeals Policy](#)
- [Student Ethics and Conduct Code](#)
- [Office of Disability, Access, and Inclusion \(ODAI\)](#)
- [Office of Equity](#)

### HISTORY:

- Reviewed and updated in June 2024
- The SSPPS Absence Policy was updated in August 2023 for the Fall 2023 semester. There is no indication of when the policy was last updated nor when it was originally published.