

Colorado State University
College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Program
Class Attendance Policy

Updated January 2024

- I. Students are required to fulfill all published course requirements for completion of work assignments, successful achievement of evaluation criteria, and attendance of scheduled class time. Course coordinators and the Associate Dean for Veterinary Academic and Student Affairs (AD-DVM) are responsible for establishing class attendance policies.

In accord with CSU attendance policies, students are not required to attend lectures unless there is a compelling reason such as a guest lecturer or some other unique opportunity; however, attendance is highly encouraged by the faculty of CVMBBS. In contrast, students are required to attend laboratories and clinical rotations as they are specifically set up for a particular educational purpose which cannot be easily replicated.

These policies should attempt to accommodate student participation in College-sanctioned extracurricular or co-curricular activities.

In the case of an excused absence, students must inform their instructors prior to the anticipated absence, take the initiative to submit completed absence requests, and make up missed work in the same semester of registration in the course. Following this, instructors should make reasonable efforts to enable those students to make up work, which must be accomplished under the instructor's supervision (e.g., examination, laboratories).

Within the third and fourth year practicums, an unexcused absence or unsatisfactory performance in one rotation (a U/D grade) would require makeup. For the third year practicum, two U grades earned in a semester will result in a grade of F and lead to academic dismissal. For the fourth year practicum, two D grades earned anytime in the fourth year will result in a grade of F and lead to academic dismissal. A U/D grade may be assigned to a student by the Assistant Department Head for Clinical Education for an unexcused absence from the third and/or fourth year practicum orientation.

II. Procedure

A. Responsibilities

1. Implementation of policy: Responsibility for the implementation and application of this Policy and Procedure rests with the AD-DVM. Any questions regarding the Policy or Procedure shall be directed to the Office of the Dean.
2. Requesting excused absences: It is each student's responsibility to

submit appropriate documentation to the office designated for administration of attendance records for their year in the DVM Program, which in turn will provide certification to the instructor/clinician whose class must be missed.

- a. The CVMBS College Office is the designated office for 1st and 2nd year DVM students.
 - b. The Clinical Sciences Departmental Office is the designated office for 3rd and 4th year DVM students.
3. Evaluation of requests: It is the responsibility of the instructor or clinician, when approached by a student seeking an excused absence, to evaluate the legitimacy of the request (see Section III) and to assist the student in filing the appropriate documentation as described below.

B. Specific procedures and allowances

1. To request an excused absence from a class or practicum rotation in advance of a planned absence, the student should first discuss the proposed absence with the instructor (didactic courses) or clinician (practicum rotations) to determine the potential impact on fulfillment of learning objectives and whether the purpose for the planned absence is consistent with CVMBS policy (see Section III). The instructor or clinician approving an excused absence must sign the Excused Absence Form submitted electronically by the student. Each Excused Absence Form will be reviewed by the AD-DVM for final approval or denial, or recommended modification. A copy of the form reflecting the decision of the AD-DVM will be given to each requesting student. The designated college offices will maintain records of excused absences for the duration of each student's enrollment in the DVM program.
2. To request an excused absence from a class or practicum rotation due to unanticipated absence such as illness or family emergency, the student must contact the designated college office as soon as possible to register the extenuating circumstance. Once informed, the designated college office will record the excused absence and issue an e-mail to the instructor/clinician whose class must be missed, with copies to the student and course or practicum coordinator.
3. With the exception noted in II.B.4, students are allowed one day of excused absence for personal leave or illness (not one day for each) in any third or fourth year practicum (not one day per week). More than one day of excused absence from a rotation will require the student to develop and implement a plan, in consultation with the Assistant Department Head for Clinical Education and the 3rd and 4th year DVM Student Coordinator, to make up the missed work or to repeat the rotation.
4. To encourage students to stay home when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, the attendance policy for 4th year DVM students is revised until further notice, as follows. With approval from the Assistant Department Head for Clinical Education and notification of the 3rd and

4th year Student Coordinator, 4th year students may be absent for up to two weeks with appropriate documentation from a health care provider. Students who are unable to participate in a clinical rotation for up to 14 days will be advised to repeat the rotation at a later date or to complete rotation activities online; in some cases, participation in the rotation at a later date may be optional (e.g. electives). Absences due to illness that extend beyond 14 days will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3. Students whose class attendance record exceeds five excused absence requests in one academic year will become subject to review for legitimacy by the AD.
4. When identified by the AD, patterns of abuse of the Excused Absence Policy may be reported to the Honor Board for investigation of potential violation of the CVMBS DVM Program Code of Honor.

III. Factors to consider in evaluating an excused absence request

- A. Students must assume responsibility for requesting excused absences for legitimate reasons, and instructors/clinicians must assume responsibility for objectively evaluating those reasons. It would be impossible to anticipate every possible example of acceptable and unacceptable reasons for absence from class. Questions regarding the legitimacy of reasons for an excused absence request should be directed to the AD-DVM.
- B. Examples of legitimate reasons for excused absences include, but are not limited to:
 1. Death in the family.
 2. Birth or adoption of a baby (any guardian).
 3. Personal illnesses or ill spouse, child, child caregiver or parent.
 4. Veterinary-related conference attendance
 5. Civic duties such as jury duty or military service.
 6. Wedding of a family member or close friend
 7. Religious holidays
 8. Serious emergency illness or death of a student's animal
- C. Examples of reasons not considered legitimate for excused absences include, but are not limited to:
 1. Alarm clock problems or oversleeping
 2. Saving money on airfare
 3. Showing an animal
 4. Attending entertainment events
 5. Hunting and fishing
 6. Employment obligations
 7. Elective veterinary or personal health appointments
- D. Third year students who wish to participate in an off-site independent study, or an independent study that would require absence from afternoon classes, should communicate with course coordinators as soon as possible (i.e. prior to making commitments) to determine whether there are assessments or required

laboratories during the week in question. Ultimately, the decision to grant an excused absence rests with the course coordinator.

IV. Prolonged Absences from Classes

Students who accumulate consecutive unexcused or excused absences for laboratory, lecture, or recitation sessions where the contiguous total exceeds two hours per course credit will become subject to receiving a “U”/”D” grade or an Incomplete (“I”) grade that may require an academic leave of absence until the course(s) can be satisfactorily completed at a later date. There may be exceptions to this rule if contact hours can be easily rescheduled (e.g. VM616 Functional Anatomy independent laboratory study, practicum rotations).

Individual course coordinators may request from the AD-DVM moderate extensions beyond those stipulated above; however, there must be truly exceptional circumstances to support the request.

Participation in any annual orientations (e.g. on program entry, at the start of the third and fourth years) is required. Unexcused absence may result in a “U”/”D” grade and prevent the student from continuing in the DVM Program.