Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Program
Class Attendance Policy

Effective May 2005 (Modified February 2015)

I. Statement of Class Attendance Policy from the DVM Scholastic Standards Policy, approved by faculty vote March 2001:

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 departments 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 CVMBS. 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).

For the junior and senior practicum, each rotation is an assignment that must be fully attended and mastered. An unexcused absence or unsatisfactory performance in one rotation would be the basis for a “U”/“D” grade, and require makeup. A second unexcused absence or unsatisfactory performance would be the basis for an “F” grade and lead to academic dismissal.

II. Procedure

A. Responsibilities

1. Implementation of policy: Responsibility for the implementation and application of this Policy and Procedure rests with the Associate Dean for Veterinary Academic and Student Affairs (AD). 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 must 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 an Excused Absence Form that the student must deliver to the designated college office. Each Excused Absence Form will be reviewed by the AD for final approval or denial, or recommended modification. A copy of the form reflecting the decision of the AD 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 receipt to the instructor/clinician whose class must be missed, with copies to the student and course or practicum coordinator.

3. Students are allowed one day of excused absence for personal leave or
illness (not one day for each) in any one junior or senior practicum rotation (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 3rd and 4th year DVM student coordinator, to make up the missed work or to repeat the rotation.

4. Students whose class attendance record exceeds five excused absence requests in one academic year will become subject to review for legitimacy by the AD.

5. 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.

B. Examples of legitimate reasons for excused absences include, but are not limited to:

1. Death in the immediate family.
2. Birth of a baby (whether mother or father).
3. Personal illnesses or ill spouse, child, or child caregiver.
4. Presentations at scientific meetings.
5. Student organization meetings for officers of those organizations.
6. Civic duties such as jury duty or military service.
7. Wedding of a family member or close friend.

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. Illness of an animal (exceptions may be made for critical illness).
IV. Addendum Addressing Prolonged Absences from Classes

*Approved 03 February 2005 (Modified February 2015)*

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, e.g. for those courses in which contact hours can be easily rescheduled. Examples include VM616 Functional Anatomy and rotations in VM786AV Junior Practicum and VM 786BV Senior Practicum. However, there are sometimes more specific attendance requirements, such as those within practicum rotations: students are allowed one day of excused absence for personal leave or illness (not one day for each) in any one junior or senior practicum rotation (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 instructor/clinician to make up the missed work or to repeat the rotation.

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

Participation in all yearly orientations (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year) is required. Unexcused absence from the first or second year DVM student orientation must be made up and may prevent the student from continuing in the DVM Program. Unexcused absence from the third or fourth year orientation must be made up and may result in a “U”/“D” grade in the junior or senior practicum, respectively.