

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND EXPECTATIONS

— 5.4.101

Policy Number: 5.4.101

Date: 2016

Reviewed: 12/20/16, 5/15/18, 10/20, 9/20/22, 1/17/2023

Revised: 12/20/16, 5/15/18, 6/19, 10/20, 11/20, 9/21, 9/22, 1/17/2023 pending BOT approval

Students are to refer to individual course syllabi for class attendance policies. Attendance may be a major portion of specific course grades and all students are encouraged to attend all classes.

Any **class absence** should be arranged in advance with your course instructor. If you are going to miss class due to illness, you must contact your instructor(s), and the Program Administrator by e-mail as soon as you know you are unable to make class.

Any **clinical absence** should be arranged in advance with the Coordinator of Clinical Support. If you are going to be unable to attend your **clinical rotation**, you must contact the facility student coordinator and the Coordinator of Clinical Support by email, and the Program Administrator by e-mail as soon as you know you will be unable to make your shift. Any absence from clinical obligation not previously approved by MTSA in writing will be considered emergency time. An absence from a clinical assignment when the student is assigned to take call will be considered as two emergency days. This includes weekend and daily 16- or 24-hour "call" shifts.

If the process for notification of an absence is not followed by the student, and if MTSA becomes aware of such an absence, the student may be charged two (2) emergency time days for each day absent. If a student fails to follow this process in more than one instance, the emergency time charged may be made up after graduation.

Any absences in excess of specified vacation, holidays, or emergency time days may result in a delay in graduation of an equal number of days.

It is NOT the responsibility of the Program Administrator to make the arrangements for the student to make up any missed tests or quizzes. Any make-up tests/quizzes/exams must be approved by the individual instructor according to his or her syllabus guidelines.

CLINICAL SCHEDULE CHANGE

A change in the daily/monthly clinical schedules after it has been distributed to affiliates is highly discouraged and is usually only done in emergency cases where the student cannot work the day that he/she is scheduled. The student wanting to make a schedule change **must** find another student who is willing to exchange days with him/her. A form to request a schedule change can be obtained from the Coordinator of Clinical Support.

PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING A SCHEDULE CHANGE:

1. Obtain the form from the MTSA Coordinator of Clinical Support.
2. Return the completed form, with signatures of both students, to the Coordinator of Clinical Support Services

3. The students will be notified in a reasonable time by email from the office of the Coordinator for Clinical Support Services of the approval/denial for the schedule change.

RELIEF STUDENT

Each month, MTSA attempts to have a relief student available, whose function is to replace full-time clinical students (*semesters 6-9*) at an affiliate who have gone through the appropriate channels to be able to take scheduled day(s) off. When these relief students are not occupied replacing students for scheduled days, they are available to replace students who may call in sick. When neither of these needs arise, the relief student will go to the pre-assigned base affiliate.

ADDITIONAL ATTENDANCE OBLIGATIONS

A limited number of students will be able to attend state and national meetings, and such attendance may be at the student's expense, with advance clearance from the Program Administrator, Coordinator of Clinical Support, and the current affiliate clinical coordinator.

TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ANESTHETISTS (TANA) ANNUAL CONVENTION

This convention, currently held in Murfreesboro each fall, is a three-day event for Nurse Anesthetists and SRNA's to attend lectures on various aspects of nurse anesthesia practice.

Students are required to attend two complete days at the conference, not to interfere with their personal religious observance.

Student research from courses may be presented at this meeting in poster sessions or oral presentations. Non-attendance is considered an absent day and is subtracted from the bank of emergency time granted.

SPECIAL EVENTS/GUEST LECTURERS

Attendance at specific group functions and evening lectures by guest speakers is mandatory, unless the student is scheduled on vacation, call, or out-of-town affiliation. These are announced with as much advanced notice as possible and are part of MTSA's program. Non-attendance will result in Progressions Committee action with penalties including having an emergency day subtracted from the bank of emergency days granted and/or a one-day extension in the program for each missed day of an event.

HOLIDAY TIME

MTSA celebrates six (6) Holidays in which the campus will be closed and there are no classes for students. **Holidays observed:** New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, & Christmas Day.

If a student is scheduled to be at clinical on a holiday, compensatory time will be granted and added to the student's "Comp time" bank (see *Compensatory Time below*).

VACATION BREAKS

Vacation breaks are scheduled at the end of each semester to allow students time off. Typically, all students get a two-week **semester break** from classes at the end of semester 1 and 2. During the semester breaks at the end of semesters 3, 4, and 5, students will have clinical duties for half of each break based on their group (A or B) and vacation during the other half of the break.

Vacation time from the start of semester 6 through the end of semester 9 will be as follows: two (2) weeks will be scheduled (5-day blocks) with the clinical office through the Coordinator of Clinical Support, and all students will be on vacation for one week in early September prior to the start of the Senior Elective.

Students may be scheduled a call-shift on the weekend prior to, or the day after vacation. Students will want to check their call schedule prior to making any travel arrangements during their vacation time.

EMERGENCY TIME OFF

Students are given **three (3)** days of emergency time in semesters 3-5 and 6-8, for a total of **six (6)** days of emergency time during the 36-month course. No emergency days are given during semesters 1-2 or during senior elective in semester 9. This time should only be taken for true illness, emergencies, and/or inclement weather. Using emergency time from clinical also prevents you from participating in academic activities for that day. You will need to follow the procedures for missing class as well.

Students may be requested to submit a physician's report documenting illness. Absences from meetings that require attendance (e.g., guest lecturers) will be charged to this bank of time unless the student is at an out-of-town affiliation. *Emergency days Do Not carry over into the next academic year.*

PROCEDURE FOR TAKING EMERGENCY TIME OFF:

*The student **MUST** complete each of these steps:*

Clinical

1. **Call** the affiliate and ask to speak to the Student Coordinator if possible. If the Student Coordinator is not available, request to speak to someone in the anesthesia department, preferably, or else someone else in the operating room that can get a message to the Student Coordinator and other anesthesia staff. Announce the absence and inform them of the illness (or other emergent reason). If unable to speak with the actual Student Coordinator, make a note of the name of the individual to whom you directly spoke to report the absence, as this will need to be relayed to the Coordinator of Clinical Support.
2. Email the **Coordinator of Clinical Support** regarding the specifics of the absence, to include the name of the individual to whom the illness (or other emergent reason) was reported at the affiliate.
3. Email the **Program Administrator** identifying that the appropriate procedure was followed and the time and name of the person at the clinical site with whom the student notified. If you are going to miss class, also include that information in your email.

Academic

4. Call/email your class instructor(s) and inform them that you will be unable to attend class based on their contact preference on their syllabus. If you are going to miss an exam/test, it is your responsibility to reschedule it with your instructor.

PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO COMPLETE STEPS TO TAKE EMERGENCY TIME OFF

If MTSA finds that a student has failed to complete these when taking emergency time, the student will be charged TWO (2) full days for each day or portion of a day missed (without site Clinical Coordinator or designee approval). Furthermore, if MTSA finds that a student has failed to complete these steps when taking time off in more than one (1) instance, the student will not only be charged TWO (2) full days for each day or portion of a day missed (without site Clinical Coordinator or designee approval), but the student will also be required to make these days up AFTER the scheduled graduation date.

If a student takes time off (i.e. "calls in sick") on the day before or after a scheduled day off, or before or after a weekend, or before or after a holiday, the student will be charged TWO (2) full days. The student may be requested to submit a physician's report documenting illness.

Emergency time taken for sickness on dates of exams, and specifically final exam week, will be evaluated carefully. The student may be requested to submit a physician's report and/or be required to use two (2) days for time taken during exam week. Students affiliating at sites where they are scheduled 24 hours on, and 48 hours off are charged two (2) days for each one (1) emergency day taken while at that affiliation.

Absences in excess of emergency time must be arranged with the Program Administrator and may require days to be made up at the end of the program.

COMPENSATORY TIME

Compensatory time is time earned for working on a scheduled holiday or for extra events. This time is recorded in a separate bank called **Comp Days** and managed by the **Coordinator of Clinical Support**. Comp days may be earned only when approved by the Program Administrator and/or the Coordinator of Clinical Support. Earned comp days may be taken off as the schedule permits. Earned comp days off must be scheduled fourteen (14) days in advance and coordinated through the Coordinator of Clinical Support. Only one student at a time may take an earned comp day in any affiliate, and then only with approval from the Coordinator of Clinical Support. Typically, one student is scheduled as a relief student, and this person can assume another student's position in an assigned affiliate on the weekday they request off (weekends and MTSA approved holidays excluded).

If earned comp days are requested less than 48 hours in advance, it is highly unlikely the request can be honored. For all requests made less than 14 days in advance, two (2) comp days will be subtracted from that student's bank of days. Comp days must be used within the academic year they are earned (i.e. if earned during the first academic year, must be used during the first academic year). *No Comp Days can carry over to another year, unless earned late in the calendar year and approved by the Program Administrator.*

PROCEDURE FOR TAKING COMP DAYS:

The following process for requesting days off is provided to better serve student requests and to adhere to COA guidelines regarding supervision and scheduling of students. **MTSA is the official supervising body of the SRNA schedule and their requests for time away from clinical.**

1. All requests for Comp Days are to be made to the Coordinator of Clinical Support.
2. All requests must be made at least 14 days in advance of the desired day(s) off. This allows the Coordinator of Clinical Support the opportunity to use every reasonable resource to grant the requested day(s) to the student.
3. Request forms are located in the student mail room. If a student is at an out-of-town facility, they should request an electronic copy of the form.
4. After the form is returned to the Coordinator of Clinical Support, the student will be notified as soon as possible if the time is granted.
5. The Coordinator of Clinical Support will notify the clinical site of the student day off from clinical.