

Distance Degrees and Programs – Absence Policy
University of Colorado Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

This policy is developed in alignment with the University of Colorado Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (SSPPS) Absence Policy, and this policy forms a framework to provide consistency for student absences within enrolled courses while considering individual circumstances. Only absences from required quizzes/exams, activities, other evaluated assignments or assessments that require attendance should be processed through the Distance Degrees and Programs (DDP) office. Documentation is required for these requests. Decisions regarding the status of an absence request may take up to seven business days. Please see the *Student Responsibilities* section for further information.

The school expects that a student will participate in every class and for the entirety of the class, independent of whether attendance is formally part of the course grade. Excessive absences, whether approved or not, may make it impossible for a student to meet the outcomes/expectations of a course. The student must understand the outcome an evaluation expectations of each course through deliberate communication with course director(s) and a thorough review of the course syllabus. If a student needs to take an extended time away from the curriculum for reasons beyond the student's control, an administration solution should be explored with the academic advisor, the student, and the course directors.

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

Students must submit an Absence Request Form along with documentation of their absence to their academic advisor. Each request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The school is required to provide make-up accommodations for the following situations, provided it is reasonable to do so and it does not fundamentally alter the curriculum:

- **Disability-Related Absences** – Disability-related absences that are documented must be provided by a Faculty Notification Memorandum (FNM) from DRS. The FNM must specifically include the ability to make-up missed work.
- **Absences Due to Jury Duty**
 - A student who receives a jury duty summons must notify their academic advisor immediately. It is recommended that students postpone their jury summons (if possible) due to the challenges of coordinating the rigors of coursework with jury duty.
 - If a postponement is not permitted, the student must inform their academic advisor and 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 their academic advisor 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.

Course directors, in collaboration with the academic advisor, DRS, and Office of Equity, will determine if and when make-up work will be completed, e.g. before or after an evaluation is administered to the rest of the class, but typically as soon as reasonable before a student's departure or return to school. 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. A student may choose to waive their right to this process and follow the policies for other types of absence that are published in the syllabus. The school reserves the right to deny make-up options if the student does not provide the adequate notification.

B. Absences Managed at the Course Level

Students must submit an Absence Request Form along with documentation of their absence to their academic advisor. Each request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Examples of absences that fall into this category are listed below. Individual course syllabi/course directors dictate how these absences are managed. It is the sole responsibility of the student to review the course syllabus, and in collaboration with the 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.

- **Medical necessity** refers to an unpredictable or serious illness of the student or immediate family that requires urgent or immediate evaluation by a healthcare provider. Non-emergency routine office visits or elective procedures within the control the student do not qualify and should be scheduled around the student's course schedule.
- **Death of a family member** includes the death of spouse/partner, children, or significant other within the immediate family as well as parents, grandparents and siblings of the student and/or spouse/partner.
 - The amount of time a student will be allowed to be absent for the death of a family member is limited. It is usually the amount of time to travel to, attend and return from any service(s).
 - The student must contact their academic advisor as soon as possible to discuss their options.
- **Pre-Approved Professional Activities (e.g. Conferences)** – Students attending a professional meeting must contact their academic advisor and course director(s) at least four weeks in advance of the start of the meeting. The student's academic advisor and the course director(s) will review the meeting schedule 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 student's class and exam schedule.
- **Weddings**
 - If the student is a bride or groom, the maximum number of days a student will be absent will be decided in conjunction with the DDP Director or designee and the student's course director(s).
- **Extenuating circumstances** includes those not covered by the previous categories. A determination on these absences will be made by the DDP office in collaboration with course directors associated with the course, when necessary.

C. Unapproved Absences

Unapproved absences do not fall into any of the above categories. The school shall not provide make-up opportunities in these situations. Common examples of these types of absences include student-scheduled experiential activities, outside employment, tardiness due to poor planning (e.g., traffic, sleeping through an alarm, not reading directions, etc.), and their extracurricular/family events. A student who decides to be absent is encouraged to use their discretion and discuss the ramifications of the missed activity or evaluation with the course director.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for the following:

- Students who are (or anticipate) experiencing any circumstances which may impact their ability to be successful in the pharmacy curriculum, or have questions about the Absence Policy are strongly encouraged to contact their academic advisor and the course director as soon as possible.
- **Submitting an Absence Request Form**
 - **Organization** – Students must compile a summary of all assessments missed, including the course name and number, the course directors' names, and the originally scheduled date and time of evaluations or required attendance activities.
 - **Documentation** – Students must provide necessary and complete documentation to allow the school to sufficiently evaluate the request for an absence. Additional information can be found in the "Acceptable Forms of Documentation" section within the absence form.
 - **Preapproval** –
 - Students are expected to communicate with their academic advisor 30 days before the absence, or when that is not possible, as soon as possible thereafter.
 - Failure to obtain preapproval in situations where it was reasonable 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.
 - **Follow-Up** – Students are expected to work with their course directors and in collaboration with their academic advisor to determine how the absence will be managed. This will involve reference to the course structure/syllabus, as appropriate. When applicable, an email confirmation of the date and time of make-up plans will be forwarded to the the academic advisor (with course directors cc'd). This typically occurs within 48 hours before the student's departure or return to curriculum.
- Obtaining authorization for accommodations through Disability Resources and Services (DRS) 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 the DDP office can determine whether a student has a disability that is eligible for accommodations. Accordingly, students requesting accommodations for a disability must contact:

Sherry Holden | Coordinator
University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus Disability Resources and Services
Bldg. 500, Room Q20-EG 305A Aurora, CO 80045
Phone: 303-724-5640, Fax 303-724-5641
Part-Time: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
Sherry.Holden@cuanschutz.edu

DRS will assist in determining reasonable accommodations. Be aware that the determination of accommodations can take several weeks. No accommodations will be made for the course until DRS has notified the course directors and/or the academic advisor of the approved accommodations. Once authorized, it is the student's responsibility to coordinate approved accommodations with the academic advisor well in advance. Further general information regarding disability resources and services can be found at: <http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/disability-resources-services/Pages/disability-resources-services.aspx>

- Pregnant students needing additional assistance or resources may contact:

William Dewese
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Office of Equity
University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus
1380 Lawrence Street, Room 1234 Denver CO 80204
Phone: 303-315-0120 | William.Dewese@anschutz.edu | equity.ucdenver.edu