

David Geffen School of Medicine Discovery Year Policies and Guidelines

I. Attendance Policy for Discovery

The Importance of Attendance

Full engagement in curricular activities, including attendance, is a core principle promoting the professional development of health care professions students and is in line with the expectations for students as they mature into fully-functioning, independent health care providers. Being present and engaged for faculty-led educational sessions positively impacts personal learning (i.e., one's ability to learn from peers, faculty, and staff), strengthens team dynamics (e.g., group participation and interactions) and the learning environment for all, and fosters the development of sound work ethic and habits expected of physicians.

Expectations

In accordance with this philosophy, all students are expected to meet the following expectations:

- a. Attendance is mandatory for Discovery Exploration Fair, Discovery Preparation didactic curriculum, quarterly workshops during the Discovery Year, and Discovery Scholarship Day.^{1 2 3}
- b. During Discovery, students pursuing area of concentration experiences are expected to engage in approximately 35-40 hours/week of Discovery-related work. There may be some weeks where the student's project may require more time. Students should never engage in more than 70 hours/week of Discovery-related work. We recognize that specific schedules, the location of work (in-person or remote), and degree of flexibility will vary based on individual projects. Students should adhere to expectations co-created with their mentors and are reminded of DGSOM's policy on professionalism.
- c. Students and their mentors must also ensure time is allotted for weekly Longitudinal Clinical Experience activities.
- d. Students should notify the Course Coordinator, Course Director, and their mentor of [any](#) absence. For any absence, including personal days, the Course Director or Course Coordinator will determine how missed coursework can be remediated to fulfill course requirements.
- e. A [Personal Day Notification Form](#) must be submitted **at least 7 days prior to the date in question**.

Excused Absences

For absences of an urgent nature, please contact the Course Director and Course Coordinator to let them know you will not be in attendance. Scenarios for which students will be excused for absence include the following:

1. Illness affecting one's ability to report to the scheduled session.

¹ Students participating in the Global Health Pathway and MSTP students are exempt from this requirement

² Students enrolled in dual degree programs must adhere to attendance policies of the degree program's corresponding school.

³ Students are entitled to 2 personal days during the Discovery Preparation period.

2. Students seeking health care for which health care appointments cannot be rescheduled.
3. Personal Emergency (for example, illness of a loved one)
Please note that it is the student's responsibility to also notify their Society Dean (and/or Dr. Calmes for students in the UCLA/Drew Medical Education Program) for absences related to a personal emergency.

Please note that if a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, the student must submit a note from a clinician or the [Clearance to Return to the Curriculum](#) form to the Student Affairs Office (dgsomsao@mednet.ucla.edu) attesting to the student's ability to resume participation in the curriculum. No personal health information should be included in this documentation.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absence(s) during the course will be reviewed by the Course Director and may result in the submission of a [Professionalism Concern Reporting Form](#). If a student needs to miss a mandatory session for any reason, the student must contact the Course Director and Course Coordinator before the session begins. **Failure to notify the Course Director and the Course Coordinator in advance of the missed session will likely result in an unexcused absence.**

Forgetting to sign-in to a mandatory session once will result in a warning. Forgetting to sign-in a second time will result in an unexcused absence and will be reported to the Course Director and may result in the submission of a [Professionalism Concern Reporting Form](#).

Religious Observances

Faculty and staff are committed to supporting diversity at DGSOM.

The DGSOM at UCLA allows for the observance of religious holidays; however, students may be required to make up missed time. Medical students are professionals with responsibilities that may require them to work on religious holidays. Students must request approval from the Course Director at least one month prior to the date. Attempts will be made to adjust the student's schedule to allow for the use of a day off on the requested religious holiday.

The Course Director will notify the coordinator and clinical/research team of any approved absences. Should the requested number of religious holidays exceed the maximum days off for the course, then these requests must be discussed with a dean to ensure that course requirements are fulfilled.

Jury Duty

For information regarding Jury Duty, please navigate to our Registrar's website [here](#).

Vacation

All medical students in Discovery are excused from curricular responsibilities during Winter Break and Academic holidays (See Academic Calendar at <https://medschool.ucla.edu/current-student-calendars>).

II. Grading policy for Discovery:

Discovery operates on a pass/fail system. Students completing all required coursework to a satisfactory level will receive a “Pass” for the course. Students who do not complete all required coursework to a satisfactory level will receive a “Fail” for the course. Course grades will be based on attendance at mandatory sessions, periodic evaluations by faculty, and completion of assignments, including a final scholarly project. Students who fail Discovery must remediate prior to advancing to MS4 electives. Students who fail Discovery will be referred to the DGSOM Year III Academic Performance Committee.

The Course Chair may assign an Incomplete grade when any portion of the required Discovery coursework has not been completed. Once an Incomplete grade is assigned, it remains on the transcript until resolved. To resolve a grade of Incomplete in Discovery, students must satisfactorily complete all required Discovery coursework and the final project, as specified by the Course Chair, and resolve the Incomplete prior to the NRMP verification deadline.⁴ A student who receives an Incomplete grade may not advance to MS4 electives unless their Discovery mentor attests to the likelihood of the student being able to resolve the Incomplete prior to the NRMP verification deadline.

In addition to the above, students enrolled in dual degree programs must adhere to the grading policies of the degree program’s corresponding school and successfully complete their degree.

⁴This date is determined each year by the National Residency Matching Program and usually falls in February or early March of the MS4 academic year