SOD Engagement Policy

Purpose

The UCSF SOD considers engagement to be an integral part of the dental education process. Consistent engagement enables the student to achieve the highest level of didactic and clinical competence while providing an increased level of dependable comprehensive care to patients. The responsibility of patient care and personal education advancement requires regular student participation in all didactic and clinical curriculum and assignments. Students pursuing the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree at UCSF are required to comply with the School’s engagement policy in all phases of their education and clinical training. Full participation aligns with accreditation and licensing standards, as well as expectations in clinical practice and patient care.

Policy

Engagement is mandatory at all academic and clinical activities including but not limited to class lectures and laboratories, pre-clinical and clinical sessions, clinical rotations, externships, small group sessions, Kanbar Center scheduled sessions, inter-professional sessions and experience based activities. Students must submit assignments and projects on the due date and follow all protocol in regard to assessment policies. In addition to this policy, students must follow all procedures as listed in the UCSF School of Dentistry Laboratory and Clinics Policies and Procedures Manual if they are absent for any clinical activity.

Except during days on which UCSF and/or the UCSF SOD is closed or when specific communication regarding clinic and/or class closure is communicated to students, they are expected to attend classes, examinations, and clinics Monday through Friday throughout the school year. A student whose pattern of absence, tardiness, and/or failure to meet deadlines suggests a failure to demonstrate professional growth and hence will be subject to disciplinary action that could include dismissal.

All absences must meet the requirements and follow the procedures and as outlined in the SOD General Absence Procedures or the SOD Short Term Leave of Absence Procedures. The Learner Success Center will track absences each quarter and will submit any patterns of unapproved absences to the relevant Student Status Committee for consideration/appropriate action in accordance with SOD Engagement, and Professionalism Policy and Procedures, and SOD Bylaws, Regulations and Procedures.

This may result in a student being receiving a non-passing grade, placed on Academic Warning, Academic Probation and/or identified as being as being Eligible for Dismissal.

Types of Absences

Unplanned Absence: An illness or day of emergency.

Planned Absences: A planned and approved absence. SOD approved absences may be approved for the following:

(note: absences from rotations/community based education-externships will be approved on a limited basis)

Approved Excused Absence (review approval requirements here):

1. Bereavement
2. Government/Immigration
3. Approved Religious Accommodation
4. Approved Short Term Leave of Absence
5. SOD INBDE or NBDE Mock Exam (day of exam only)
6. INBDE or NBDE Board Exam (day(s) of exam only)
7. Residency Examination (day(s) of exam only): GRE, CBSE, ADAT, ADEX, CTP, CA Law & Ethics
8. Professional Residency Interview (4th year only)
9. Professional Research Presentation
10. Professional Summer Research Fellow Mandatory Activity

Other Absences (review approval requirements here):

1. Professional Externship/Observership (3rd/4th year only)
2. Conference Attendance
3. Other (e.g. family care giving, childcare concerns)

Discretionary Absence (review approval requirements here):
A planned absence for matters at the discretion of the student. In order to accommodate time off for personal matters, students may take up to three discretionary days per academic year in addition to their scheduled breaks and any approved excused absences. A discretionary absence may not take place during any mandatory activity (see course syllabus), scheduled specialty rotation, or scheduled community based externship.

**Unexcused Absence:** An absence in which a student fails to attend classes and/or pre-clinical or clinical activity for which they are scheduled and expected and that has not been excused. This includes unapproved absences that are taken in spite of not having met the criteria of the SOD Absence Policies and Procedures, including deadlines for submission and other procedures not followed as outlined in the SOD Engagement Policy or Absence Procedures.

**Short Term Leave of Absence:** A short term medical leave, parental/maternity leave, leave for a critical emergency. A short term leave of absence is one that requires five or more days off but does not exceed one quarter. [Link](#)

**Formal Leave of Absence:** A leave of absence is defined as a leave of one entire quarter or more with the expectation of returning to study. [Link](#)

**Honorable Withdrawal:** A permanent leave from the University. [Link](#)

**Definitions**

**Mandatory Activity:** Each course director will specify mandatory activities in their syllabus. Other mandatory activities include the following:

- Specialty rotation, externship, exam, test case, mandatory clinical or pre-clinical activity
- Inter-professional date (PCC 111, 112, 113, 114)
- Any other activity that cannot be made up within the quarter (e.g. lab work, clinic sessions, group work, Kanbar Center)

**Good Standing:** Good Standing defined as no Incomplete (I), No Pass (NP), or Unsatisfactory Progress (UP) grades on student transcript.

**Preclinical and Course Absence Tracker Form: D1 & D2 Students:** The form that students use to submit a preclinical and course absence in the first and second year. The Learner Success Center will audit quarterly and will report any students not adhering to the Engagement Policy and/or Absence Procedures to the relevant Student Status Committee. [Link](#)

**Clinic and Course Absence Tracker Form: D3, ID3, D4, ID4:** The form that students use to submit a clinic or course absence in the third and fourth year. The Learner Success Center will audit quarterly and will report any students not adhering to the Engagement Policy and/or Absence Procedures to the relevant Student Status Committee. [Link](#)

**Short Term Leave of Absence Request Form:** The form used to initiate the request for time off for short term leave (five days or more and not to exceed one quarter off) for an emergency, medical, parental, or maternity leave. [Link](#)

**SOD Religious Accommodation Form:** The form used to initiate a request for approval for a religious accommodation. Must be submitted three months in advance of date for religious accommodation. [Link](#)