

The University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine

CORE AND SELECTIVE CLERKSHIPS TIME-OFF POLICIES AND CORE CLERKSHIP FLEX DAYS POLICY

2026

as of 10/29/2025

Time-off request website: <http://webapps1.healthcare.uiowa.edu/timeoff>

The full time-off policy can be found at the time-off request site and in the CCOM Student Handbook: [The Student Handbook | MD Program - Carver College of Medicine | The University of Iowa](#)

Reminders:

- Students are expected to attend all scheduled instruction in clinical courses. We know that unanticipated or anticipated absences may arise. All anticipated absences should be communicated as soon as possible with the clerkship via the time-off system.
- As a reminder, students should not ask for the following days off:
 - Orientation day(s)/first day of clerkship
 - OSCE day
 - Exam day/last day of clerkship
- Any absence due to illness or an unanticipated event should be reported to the clerkship contact and clinical staff/team as soon as possible. At their earliest convenience, the student must also submit the unanticipated absence into the time-off system. Failure to do so will result in a professionalism infraction.

All clerkships adhere to the CCOM time-off policy, but many have specific guidelines for their clerkship. Please review clerkship specific guidance in this document when needing to submit time-off requests. Clerkships may request time-off requests weeks in advance of a clerkship start date.

In clinical medicine, it is common to work on weekends, therefore it has been noted in the clerkship guidelines below which core and selective clerkships have weekend responsibilities. On those clerkships, students will need to include weekend requests in their time-off requests.

FLEX DAYS IN CORE CLERKSHIPS

Students can request one flex day (vacation day) per 4-, 6- and 10- week core clerkship (excludes Emergency Medicine)

- The following days are not permitted as flex days: orientation, OSCE, mid-clerkship feedback, and end of clerkship exam.
- Clerkship may blackout any other days where there is experiential learning taking place (i.e. experience cannot be replicated in another manner).
- Students must follow the specific clerkship time-off policy and submit their request using the time-off system.
- Each clerkship has a pre-specified maximum number of days or half-days that a student can miss (for any reason). Students who miss more time on the clerkship will be required to complete make-up clinical time (which is the difference between the time off they took, and the maximum time off allowed by the clerkship).

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CORE CLERKSHIP SPECIFIC GUIDANCE (in addition to CCOM Policy)

EM:8301 EMERGENCY MEDICINE

- Allowed to request up to two days off.
- Required to complete seven shifts during the two-week rotation, a one-hour in-person ethics discussion, a ten-minute mid-clerkship evaluation on the second Monday, and exam on the last Friday morning.
- Must provide schedule requests at least two weeks in advance of the start of the rotation

No OSCE

Not flex day eligible

Weekend Responsibilities: Yes

FAM:8302 FAMILY & COMMUNITY MEDICINE

Brief Description of Clerkship Structure

This 6-week clerkship is comprised of a 2-week placement at a RMEC (Regional Medical Education Center) and a 4-week placement with a family physician in a community-based practice. The RMEC locations are Davenport, Des Moines, Iowa City, Mason City, Sioux City, and Waterloo. The community preceptorship locations are across the state of Iowa. Student preferences are taken into account, and students receive placements closer to the start of their clerkship.

Students will be assigned to either of the following schedules:

- ‘2+4 Schedule’ = Rotation with the RMEC placement during weeks 1 and 2 and the community preceptorship during weeks 3-6. (All Davenport students will be on the ‘2+4’ schedule.)
- ‘4+2 Schedule’ = Rotation with the community preceptorship during weeks 1-4 and the RMEC placement during weeks 5 and 6.

During the 4-week placement with a community preceptor, students are expected to attend all professional activities with their preceptor, including night/weekend call, if applicable. Students must limit their attendance of these night and weekend activities if they would breach student duty hours, in which case students should communicate this to their preceptor.

Total Time Off

A student can only miss a total of 4 days during the entirety of their 6-week F&CM rotation without penalty, if all 4 days are excused absences (a Flex Day counts toward this 4-day total). The maximum number of excused absences allowed in the 2-week RMEC component is 2 days. Total time away from the rotation includes a Flex Day, medical absences (illness or required appointments), family leave (bereavement, funeral, family illness requiring caregiving, family emergency), and conference leave.

Absences for Conferences

Time away for conference attendance is limited to 1 day, and time away for a conference presentation is limited to 2 days. Specific circumstances can be reviewed by the clerkship team to see if additional time can be granted in extenuating circumstances. (For example, if a student has been accepted to present at a major national or international conference and flight availability necessitates additional time.)

Flex Days

- Students may take one Flex Day during their 6-week F&CM rotation.
- Students do not need to use their Flex Day for medical appointments, but they do need to be cognizant of the total time off from rotation.
- Students must submit their Flex Day request via the CCOM Clinical/Pre-Clinical Time Off system by 5 pm Friday of the first week of their assigned 4-week preceptorship. This deadline is for non-urgent requests and will be followed aside from rare exceptions.
 - For students on a ‘4+2’ schedule, the deadline is 5pm on Friday of the 1st week.
 - For students on a ‘2+4’ schedule, the deadline is 5pm on Friday of the 3rd week.
- Eligible weeks are outlined in blue in the schedule below. During these weeks, note the following circumstances for Flex Day requests:
 - Students have a half-day each week dedicated to formal educational activities (didactics or CBL sessions), but students cannot miss these sessions for a Flex Day.

- Students are scheduled for 4 clinic days per week, plus the educational half-day and a half-day for independent study. If taking a Flex Day, students must still complete 3.5 clinic days. If a Flex Day does not overlap with the study half-day, the student must work in clinic during the study half-day. If the preceptor is unavailable, the student should identify another provider with whom they can work. Study half-days typically align with the preceptor's administrative time.
- Weeks 3 and 4 are eligible for a Flex Day request for both 2+4 and 4+2 schedules.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email the Family & Community Medicine clerkship coordinator at fm-clerkship@uiowa.edu

Days Eligible for Flex Day Requests for a 2+4 Schedule

- Weeks 1, 2, and 6 are not eligible for a Flex Day

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 (Orientation/RMEC)	Education Day 1 (Iowa City)	Travel & RMEC Orientation	Community Agency Experiences (Time Varies)		
Week 2 (RMEC)	Educational ½ Day (Time Varies) Community Agency Experiences (Time Varies)				
Weeks 3-5 (Preceptorship)			Educational ½ Day Wednesday PM		
Week 6 (Preceptorship/ Exams)				Travel/Study DSM NBME Exam	NBME Exam + OSCE

Days Eligible for Flex Day Requests for a 4+2 Schedule

- Weeks 1, 5, and 6 are not eligible for a Flex Day

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 (Orientation/ Preceptorship)	Education Day 1 (Iowa City)	Travel +/- RMEC Orientation			
Weeks 2-4 (Preceptorship)			Educational ½ Day Wednesday PM		
Week 5 (RMEC)	+/- RMEC Orientation on Monday Educational ½ Day (Time Varies) Community Agency Experiences (Time Varies)				
Week 6 (RMEC/Exams)	Community Agency Experiences (Time Varies)			Travel/Study DSM NBME Exam	NBME Exam + OSCE

2026 OSCE Dates: Feb 20, April 3, May 15, June 26, Aug 14, Sept 25, Nov 6, Dec 18

Weekend Responsibilities: Yes

IM: 8310 INTERNAL MEDICINE

- If a student misses more than 5 Inpatient days or 3 Outpatient half-days, they will be required to make-up that time.
- Not permitted as days off/Flex Days: orientation, Wednesday education days, OSCE, mid-clerkship feedback meeting, and end of clerkship exam.

2026 OSCE Dates: March 13, June 5, Sept 4, Dec 4

Weekend Responsibilities: Yes

NEUR:8301 NEUROLOGY

- All requests must be formally submitted through the time-off system
- Expected time off, including flex days, should be requested as soon as possible, but **no later than one week prior to the date requested**
- Requests made for routine reasons after that time will not be granted
- If time off is requested after the student's schedule is assigned, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the clinical team, including faculty, of their absence
- More urgent requests (unexpected/unplanned) will be assessed on a case-by-case basis depending on the reasons, the impact to the individual student, and any impact on other learners
- Health-related absences will generally be granted as excused
- Students may have one excused absence day during the 4-week clerkship without any make-up required. Flex days count as an excused absence day
- A day is defined as any combination of two AM or PM half days or a total of 8 hours
- Because morning rounds are essential for clinical learning on inpatient services, an absence from morning rounds on an inpatient service (Stroke, Consults, General) is considered a missed day
- Travel for conferences is limited to two missed days (and will require make-up if more than one day is missed)

Restricted Dates

Time off is restricted on the dates listed below. On a case-by-case basis, rare exceptions may be made. In these instances, the student will forfeit any study time (if the absence falls during one of the outpatient weeks) or will be assigned a night shift (if the absence falls during the inpatient weeks).

- **Orientation Day**
 - Calendar year 2026: January 12, February 9, March 9, April 6, May 4, June 1, July 6, August 3, August 31, September 8, September 28, October 26, November 23
- **Exam Day**
 - Calendar year 2026: February 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, May 29, June 26, July 31, August 28, September 25, October 23, November 20, December 18
- **Tuesday Afternoon Didactics**
- **Flex days** are not allowed during the block which includes the two Thanksgiving holidays (11/23/26 – 12/18/26)

Steps that must be completed before time off is granted:

- Student submits the time off request by the deadline
- Student confirms that the time off request does not fall on a day that's defined as restricted
- The clerkship coordinator confirms that the requested date does not fall on a restricted date and notifies the student if the request is approved or denied.

- If time off is approved, check for and complete any approval conditions (i.e., letting your team, service attending, or preceptor know to expect your absence).

No OSCE

Weekend Responsibilities: No

OBG:8301 OBSTETRICS/GYNECOLOGY

Purpose and Guiding Principles

- The OB/GYN Core Clerkship time-off policy is designed to balance the delivery of a robust clinical experience with the recognition of students’ personal needs. Time-off may be granted when it does not compromise the student’s ability to meet minimum attendance requirements for each clerkship component.
- To help the clerkship team accommodate as many requests as possible, students are expected to submit time-off requests according to the guidelines outlined in this policy. Please review the details carefully to facilitate appropriate and timely submissions.

Minimum Attendance Requirements

Iowa City Campus		
<i>Component</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Minimum Attendance</i>
Gynecologic Oncology	1 week	4 weekday assignments
Benign Gynecology	1 week	4 weekday assignments
Labor and Delivery	2 weeks	5 shifts
Specialty Clinics	2 weeks	14 half-day assignments
Continuity Provider Clinic	Throughout	4 half-day sessions

Des Moines Campus		
<i>Component</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Minimum Attendance</i>
OB/GYN at Broadlawns	4 weeks	18 total days across Benign and Gyn Oncology
Community/Specialty Clinics	2 weeks	As scheduled
Labor and Delivery	As assigned	On-call shifts rescheduled

Note: In weeks where clinical assignments at either or both campuses are reduced due to planned clerkship activities (e.g., Orientation Day, Education Day), minimum attendance expectations will be adjusted accordingly and requests for time-off will not be approved.

Time-Off Request Guidelines

Request Submission Process

- All time-off requests must be submitted by the deadline indicated in the clerkship coordinator’s preparatory email (typically sent 3-4 weeks prior to start of the next block and requests typically due two weeks prior to the start of the block).
- Earlier submissions are encouraged.
- Requests submitted after the deadline will be considered only in cases of extenuating circumstances, urgent personal/family events, or acute medical needs. Prompt and transparent communication with the clerkship team will facilitate planning and approval in these situations.

Types of Requests

- Students may request a total of three days of time-off. This total includes one flex (vacation) day.
- Requests beyond the three-day limit require direct communication with the clerkship team and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Time-off requests for personal or academic events (e.g., weddings, conferences) should be limited to 3 days maximum and submitted in advance.
- Time-off for planned medical appointments submitted prior to the deadline or unplanned or acute medical needs submitted after the deadline will be approved.

Blackout Dates

- The following dates are considered essential components of the clerkship and are not eligible for flex or personal time-off requests:
 - Orientation Day
 - Education Day
 - Midblock Feedback Meetings (students must be available for at least two of the three days during which midblock meetings may be scheduled — Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of Week 3)
 - OSCE Day
 - Shelf Exam Day

Weekend Policy

- Each student will be assigned to clinical assignments over one weekend during the Labor and Delivery component.
- All weekends are considered part of the clerkship until the schedule is finalized. Students desiring to keep specific weekends available for personal events are encouraged to submit time-off requests for those dates in advance.
- Additional weekend assignments may be required to make up for missed clinical time if a students' absences prevent them from meeting minimum attendance requirements.

General Expectations

- In weeks where clinical assignments are reduced due to planned clerkship activities or (e.g., Orientation Day and Education Day in Week 1) or holidays, time-off requests will be limited accordingly. For example, if only three clinical days are available in a given week, additional time-off will not be approved for that week.
- Students are responsible for notifying their clinical teams, residents, and faculty of any planned absences.
- The clerkship team may limit the number of students approved for personal time-off on any given date, and requests will be considered in the order they are received.

Special Circumstances and Exceptions

- The clerkship team understands that unexpected or significant life events may arise. Students facing extenuating circumstances—such as family emergencies, acute medical issues, or other unanticipated and serious personal matters—should communicate promptly and directly with the clerkship team.
- These rare requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with every effort made to accommodate student needs.

Joint Ob/Gyn & Surgery Education Day 2026: Jan 16, April 10, July 10, Oct 2

2026 OSCE Dates: Feb 13, March 27, May 8, June 19, Aug 7, Sept 18, Oct 30, Dec 11

Weekend Responsibilities: Yes

PEDS:8301 PEDIATRICS

All student time-off requests are due **TWO WEEKS BEFORE** the start of the rotation. All medical/urgent needs should be communicated to the Clerkship Administrator.

Pediatrics Clerkship blocked-out dates:

- Orientation Day
- Education Afternoons
- Didactic Afternoons
- Last Week of Clerkship
- 2026 Shelf Exam Dates: February 19, April 2, May 14, June 25, August 13, September 24, November 5, December 17
- 2026 OSCE Dates: February 20, April 3, May 15, June 26, August 14, September 25, November 6, December 18

Due to the clerkship being broken into different clinical sections, there is a minimum number of days that students must be on clinical duties during each block.

- Inpatient: 12 half-days plus 1 weekend morning
- Specialty: 12 half-days
- Newborn Nursery: 3 half-days
- General Peds: 6 half-days

This time-off policy allows for orientation, education half-days, assigned study half-days, the final exam and the OSCE. **The expectation is that students will be present in clinic/inpatient for more than the minimum number of days per block.** This policy has been developed to address those times when students are ill or have other circumstances arise that require them to miss clinic/inpatient.

Flex Days

Students may request 1 flex day during the clerkship. Students must request this day at least one business day in advance (i.e. Friday for Monday, Monday for Tuesday, etc) and may not fall on any blocked-out dates. No flex days will be granted one day prior or after a holiday. The maximum number of students requesting a flex day for the same date may be determined at the discretion of the clerkship team. The guidelines above will still apply so students will need to make sure they will be present for the minimum number of half-days on each block.

Guidelines

By following the time off guidelines below, students will be present for 20 of the 25-27 schedulable days of the Pediatric Clerkship. When a block includes a holiday, the expectations will be that students will be present for the same number of days (20). Clerkship will communicate changes in the event schedule is impacting student's requirements to pass. If a student were to be absent and not be present for the minimum required number of half-days due to illness or other approved days off, time would need to be made up before passing the clerkship.

Inpatient (14-18 half-days)

Hours: 6:45 am – sign-out (approximately 6:00 or 6:30 pm)

Required Days to Pass: 12 half-days

Other Requirements: 1 long day per 2-week block. Hours 6:45 am – 10:00 pm. 1 weekend morning during the middle weekend of the block. These take the place of call.

Allowed Study Time: Students may request one afternoon for study time. This must be arranged with the team and Sofia Ramirez must be notified ahead of time. Only one student per team may be gone on any given afternoon.

Specialty (14-18 half-days)

Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:45 am – approximately 5:00 or 5:30 pm

Required Days to Pass: 12 half-days

General Peds (6-10 half-days)

Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:45 am – approximately 5:00 or 5:30 pm

Required Days to Pass: 6 half-days

Newborn Nursery (4 half-days)

Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:30 am – approximately 4:00 pm

Required Days to Pass: 3 half-days

Weekend Responsibilities: Yes

PSYC:8301 PSYCHIATRY

- Students are allowed to request up to two days off during the four-week clerkship. Requests must be submitted through the time off system two weeks prior to the start of the rotation.
- Students who have approved absences beyond one full day, regardless of the reason for the absence, will make up the time by working an additional weekend day for each subsequent day missed. Weekend shifts will consist of rounding with your inpatient team and working with the residents on call to match the time missed. (This is in addition to the weekend on call shift required for each student).
- Time off may not be taken during orientation, the OSCE, or final shelf exam.
- Students are expected to be in clinical care every weekday/assigned weekends unless a time off request has been approved.

Flex Day Policy:

One missed day (“flex day”) is permitted during the 4-week clerkship without additional work hours to make up missed time. Students are expected to request planned time off at least two weeks prior to the start of the clerkship to assist clerkship leaders in schedule planning. Flex days requested within two weeks of the start of the rotation or after the rotation has begun will be considered only if they do not conflict with scheduled requirements of the rotation (i.e., mid-clerkship meetings, individually assigned clinic times, etc.). We value students’ role in the care of patients and request judicious use of allotted time off from this short rotation. Flex days are not permitted during the block which includes the two Thanksgiving holiday days.

- 2026 Orientation Dates: Jan 12, Feb 9, March 9, April 6, May 4, June 1, July 6, Aug 3, Aug 31, Sept 28, Oct 26, Nov 23

- 2026 OSCE Dates: Jan 29, Feb 26, March 26, April 23, May 21, June 18, July 23, Aug 20, Sept 17, Oct 15, Nov 12, Dec 10

- 2026 Shelf Exam Dates: Feb 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, May 29, June 26, July 31, Aug 28, Sept 25, Oct 23, Nov 20, Dec 18

Weekend Responsibilities: Yes, one 4-hour weekend on call shift is required during your rotation. You will choose the day/time that works best for you during orientation.

SURG:8301 SURGERY

Students **may not miss more than 3 total weekdays** from any core or elective rotation. This is inclusive of flex days, days off for illness, days out for conference, etc. Missing more than three weekdays will prompt review by clerkship directors, with potential for need to make up days and potential for report of professionalism issue to College of Medicine.

Flex days are to be requested at least two full WEEKDAYS in advance and are subject to approval.

Unless the flex day has been scheduled in advance of the clerkship, students must check with the resident team to ensure that the flex day they wish to take is appropriate given clinical duties and patient care needs. Failure to request the flex day via appropriate mechanism and sufficient lead time may result in the flex day request being denied or report of professionalism issue to College of Medicine.

When requesting time off from core clerkship or advanced elective, including flex days:

- Time off may not be taken from one clerkship in order to make up time from another clerkship.
- Weekends are part of the clerkship; you must request weekend days off so that you are not scheduled to work that weekend. Requests for multiple weekends off are unlikely to be approved, so prioritize your requests.
- Blackout days – days that cannot be taken off - are as follows:
 - First day / orientation
 - NBME Exam day, for any reason
 - Fridays if student is rotating at the Iowa City VAMC, unless clinic has been canceled
 - Day of the OSCE
 - Any day of Week 6
 - Joint OB/Surgery Education day
 - Wednesday preceding or Monday following Thanksgiving

For professional/educational obligations that require special scheduling during the clerkship, please complete the College of Medicine electronic request.

Requests which may or may not be granted depending on the clerkship, duration of requested time off, and amount of advanced notice include:

- In-person presentation at a regional or national meeting (up to 2 weekdays granted, one of which must be a flex day)
- Attendance at an established CCOM meeting for which the student is member of the committee
- If a conference falls on a weekend, you must still request this off as you may be scheduled to work on a weekend

Joint Ob/Gyn & Surgery Education Day 2026: Jan 16, April 10, July 10, Oct 2

2026 OSCE Dates: Feb 13, March 27, May 8, June 19, Aug 7, Sept 18, Oct 30, Dec 11

Weekend Responsibilities: Yes

SELECTIVE CLERKSHIP SPECIFIC GUIDANCE (in addition to CCOM Policy)

~ Selectives are not flex day eligible ~

ANES:8301 ANESTHESIA

Students must be present and participate in their scheduled clinical assignments in the care of patients for a minimum of six (6) days over the two-week rotation, not counting the first day (orientation) and the last (exam) day. Any absences from the clerkship must be approved in advance of rotation start unless emergent/illness.

Weekend Responsibilities: No

DERM:8301 DERMATOLOGY

Students should not ask for the following days off:

- Mondays, 8:00 AM-12:00 PM
- Thursdays, 1:00-5:00 PM
- Exam Day (last Friday)

Expected time off should be requested as early as possible but not less than 1 week before the start of the clerkship. Requests made for routine reasons after that time may not be granted.

Weekend Responsibilities: No

OPHTH:8301 OPHTHALMOLOGY

Medical students are required to attend every lecture and assigned clinic/OR during the 2 week clerkship.

There are two independent days, one each week, built into the schedule for each student. This is time dedicated for students to complete the interactive content and watch the additional videos for the course.

These days may be used for medical appointments, conferences, COC, etc. We are happy to try and accommodate these commitments, but prior approval is required. Students will need to attend in person lectures on their study days.

Weekend Responsibilities: No

ORTH:8301 ORTHOPEDICS

- All time off requests should be formally submitted online in the student time off system.
- Students are not permitted to request time off on the first day (orientation) or the last day (exam).

- During your rotation month in the residency interview season, you may take up to 2 days off for interviews.
- Requests for time off for COC clinic will not be approved due to the limited duration of the rotation.
- Some absences are unavoidable and unanticipated such as acute illness, adverse weather, or family death. In the event of an unanticipated absence, students are expected to notify the clerkship director and coordinator, the faculty/resident they were scheduled to work with, and to submit an absence request on the student portal.
- Requests for anticipated absences or time off must be submitted as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to the start of the clerkship. Only one day off will be permitted unless extenuating circumstances apply. All time off requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine's Absence Policy, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Weekend Responsibilities: No

OTO:8301 OTOLARYNGOLOGY

Allowed up to 2 absences in a 2-week rotation. Anything over 2 days will need to be made up.

Weekend Responsibilities: No

PATH: 8302 PATHOLOGY

- Clerkship in-person hours are approximately 7:00a – 4:00p M – F
- Expected time off should be requested as early as possible, but not less than one week before the start of the clerkship.
 - Requests made for routine reasons after that time may not be granted
- All requests should be formally submitted online in the student time off system
- A make-up assignment is required if the student misses more than 4 hours
- Time off on orientation day and exam day is not permitted unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Students are permitted to attend only one half-day or meeting per week during the rotation.

Weekend Responsibilities: No

RAD:8301 RADIOLOGY

- Clerkship hours are 7:30 am – 4:00 pm M-F
- Requests for time off on orientation day and exam day will be approved in extenuating circumstances only.
- Expected time off should be requested as early as possible but not less than 1 week before the start of the clerkship. Requests made for routine reasons after that time may not be granted.
- All requests should be formally submitted online in the student time off system.
- A make-up assignment is required if the student misses 4 hours or more.

Weekend Responsibilities: No

URO:8301 UROLOGY

Time missed during the Urology rotation will be deducted from the student's Academic Day allowance. Any absence that exceeds one full day must be made up at the discretion of the Urology Clerkship Director. Students are permitted to attend only one Continuity of Care (COC) half-day or meeting during the rotation.

Weekend Responsibilities: No