



**Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science**  
"A Private University with a Public Mission"

**Medical Student Conference and Travel Policy**

**POLICY: # 322.5**

**Supersedes: 5/1/24**

**Issuing Officer:** Dean, College of Medicine  
**Responsible Office:** Office of Medical Education  
**Effective EPCC Date:** 5/13/2025  
**Effective University Date:** 5/28/2025  
**Next Review Date:** 5/13/2027

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**I. PURPOSE:**

*This policy outlines the medical student travel policy for the Pre-Clerkship and Clerkship Phase as well as the procedure for students to obtain an excused absence and travel funds for medical school conferences.*

**II. POLICY STATEMENT:**

*As part of Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU) College of Medicine (COM) Doctor of Medicine (MD) Program student professional development, students may request permission to attend and request travel funds to attend conferences, workshops, or other educational events.*

**Permitted Attendance:**

- To ensure students can fully focus on their academic performance, conference attendance is not permitted during the first half of the first year of medical school.
- Notwithstanding those conferences that students seek to attend on their own non-academic time and at their own expense, students are allowed to attend one conference during the pre-clerkship phase and one during the residency preparation phase.
- For any conference that will conflict with required coursework, attendance, or clinical responsibilities, students must obtain permission to attend that conference. Permission to attend a conference that conflicts with required coursework, attendance, or clinical responsibilities will only be granted under the following conditions:

- The student has been invited to present and/or
- Holds an elected leadership position within a national association or organization with a role to fulfil at the conference.

***Reimbursement of Conference Fees and Associated Costs:***

- Students may be reimbursed up to \$2,000 of documented conference fees and attendance costs over the course of their four years in medical school, contingent upon the availability of institutional funding.

**III. POLICY:**

***Rationale:***

To ensure appropriate academic prioritization and responsible travel planning, the following guidelines apply to student conference attendance and travel funding requests:

- **Academic Standing:** Students must be in good academic standing to be eligible to seek permission for attendance or request travel funds.
- **Travel Requests:** Students are responsible for submitting travel requests in accordance with institutional procedures and timelines.
- **Academic Conflicts:** Students should avoid scheduling or participating in conference-related activities that conflict with required coursework, clerkships, or examinations.
- **Attendance Limits:** Students may miss no more than two days of academic commitments to attend a conference.
- **Minimize Disruptions:** All travel should be planned to minimize disruption to academic responsibilities, including not travelling the week prior to an examination.
- **Funding Limitations:** Due to limited funding, approval is not guaranteed.
- **Independent Attendance:** This policy does not prevent students from attending conferences on their own non-academic time and at their own expense.

***Pre-Approval Process:***

Students must complete the following steps outlined on the [Medical Student Travel Pre-Approval Request Form](#) - **6 weeks prior to travel**. The following written approvals are necessary before proceeding with travel arrangements. Keep in mind that each step may take time to complete.

1. Contact Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions to determine if funding is available.
2. Contact Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education to ensure the student is in good academic standing.
3. Contact faculty sponsor (for example SNMA faculty advisor, or research mentor) affirming the educational value of the proposed trip.
4. Contact course directors (including longitudinal courses) to develop a plan for make-up of missed educational activities.
5. Return [Medical Student Travel Pre-Approval Request Form](#) with all approvals to Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions **6 weeks prior to travel**.
6. The Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions will notify students if approved or denied within one week of receipt of the completed request form.
7. **Students who do not follow this process will not be eligible for an excused absence and/or reimbursement.**

**Documentation Requirements:**

Before traveling, students must complete the following forms:

- Medical Student Travel Pre-Approval Request [Form](#): Submitted to the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) for initial approval.
- CDU Travel Pre-Approval Form: Sent to designated personnel for reimbursement, along with original itemized receipts.
- Pre-Clerkship Absence Request [Form](#): Submitted to faculty and coordinators of the student's absence, ensuring appropriate arrangements can be made.
- Additionally, students should email their instructors and course coordinators to inform them of their absence.

**General Guidelines:**

Conference Attendance: Students must provide proof of conference attendance, including agendas, schedules, flyers, or invitations.

Reimbursement Categories: Expenses eligible for reimbursement only for the student presenting include registration fees, air transportation (economy class), ground transportation (taxi/Uber/no car rental), accommodations (hotel), and meals (per diem as set by the university). Refer to CDU Travel and Reimbursements Policy for details.

**IV. APPLICABILITY:**

The faculty, students, and staff of the CDU COM are responsible for knowing this policy and its procedures. By adhering to these guidelines, students can ensure efficient processing of travel fund requests and maintain their academic responsibilities effectively.

**V. DEFINITIONS:**

- Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee (EPCC) is the committee charged to represent the faculty to oversee the medical education program as a whole and has responsibility for the overall design, management, integration, evaluation, and enhancement of a coherent and coordinated medical curriculum.
- Good standing: A student is considered to be in good academic standing when they are meeting all academic requirements, maintaining satisfactory academic progress, and are not on academic warning, probation, or subject to dismissal and have not exceeded the number permissible absences. This includes successful completion of coursework, clerkships, and compliance with institutional professionalism standards.

**VI. RELATED POLICIES:**

- *CDU COM Policy # 322.4 Pre-Clerkship Attendance and Absence Policy*
- *CDU Policy #701.15 Travel and Reimbursements [Policy](#)*

**VII. RELATED LINKS:**

- *Medical Student Travel Pre-Approval Request Form: Submitted to the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) for initial approval. <https://forms.office.com/r/kg1ufhb2EZ>*
- *CDU Travel Pre-Approval Form: Sent to designated personnel for reimbursement, along with original itemized receipts.*
- *Pre-Clerkship Absence Request [Form](#)*
- *US General Services Administration <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>*
- *LCME Standards, Publications, & Notification [Forms](#)*

### VIII. POLICY HISTORY:

Review Dates:	Change Description:
5/21/24	New Policy. Approved by the EPCC on 5/21/24
10/3/24	Policy reviewed by CDU Policy Committee – no conflict with university policies. Approved by the EPCC on 10/3/24
5/13/25	Policy updated to limit conference attendance to the second half of the MS1 year and the MS2 and MS4 years. Approved by the EPCC on 5/13/25.