TITLE OF POLICY
Application Phase and Individualization Phase Holiday/Wellness/“Day-back” Policy

PURPOSE AND SCOPE
This policy outlines the attendance expectations for students as it relates to University Holidays, Wellness Days, and “Day-backs” (SHS4, etc.; see “Definitions” below)

RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE
Application Phase and Individualization Phase Committees will review this policy in odd-numbered years and Education Committee will approve final and amended policy

LCME REFERENCE(S)
N/A

HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES
Approved by Application Phase and Individualization Phase Committees July 2024
Approved by Education Committee July 2024

POLICY
The professional standards and expectations in medical school are designed to simulate those in residency and beyond. While patient care continues year-round, as a student, you will have University (Government) holidays off. This refers to a single day on which you are excused from clinical duties and, depending on the clinical rotation, may not confer absence on the surrounding weekend (‘long weekend’).

You are also excused from clinical activities on observed holidays, wellness days, and “day-backs.” Please see the general Application Phase attendance policy for procedures related to absences outside of days back, holidays, and wellness days.

Guidance to students, course directors, and course coordinators for scheduling is as follows:
Students will be provided the calendar day off (24-hours) correlating to the holiday, wellness day, or “day-back.”

Students are to be diligent about scheduling travel outside of scheduled clinical, didactic/teaching and testing sessions. Travel plans impacting aforementioned clinical schedule will count towards an unexcused absence.

Night Shifts: If the student is on a night shift, they are still permitted the 24-hours around the holiday, wellness day, or “day-back” and should be provided the following guidance:
- For holiday or wellness days, student participates in clinical activities through the day prior to the holiday/wellness day, even if that extends overnight. For example, if the shift starts 7pm the day prior to holiday/wellness day and is scheduled to end 6am on the day of the holiday/wellness day, the student will be excused at 6:00am on the day of the holiday/wellness day. They will be expected to return the day after the holiday/wellness day.
For example, if the shift is 7:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. on a Tuesday to Wednesday, the student will be excused at 6:00 a.m. If a wellness day is on a Wednesday, students work a normal night on Tuesday night. The student then returns to night shifts the day after the holiday/wellness day. In this example, the next required shift would be Thursday night.

- For “day-backs”, student to be excused from clinical activities at midnight (12:00 a.m.) on the day of the day-back. For example, if the shift is 7:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. on a Tuesday to Wednesday, the student presents from 7:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m (Wednesday). Student is expected to participate in “day-back” on Wednesday and return to their next shift on Thursday night.

PROCEDURE(S):
During the course’s orientation, course directors and coordinators will notify students of holidays, wellness days, and day-backs within the course. Guidance will be provided as to how these days may impact scheduling. If any additional guidance is needed, parties may reach out to the Offices of Medical Student Education Student Affairs team.

University holidays, wellness days, and “day-backs” will be noted on the Application Phase Academic Calendar and guidance will be provided as to how these days may impact scheduling during course orientation.

If a student’s absences requires makeup course work, the clerkship site director, at their discretion, may schedule the student for a previously unscheduled time as long as it observes this policy.

DEFINITION(S):
University Holiday: Observed holidays determined by the University of North Carolina and published on the university-wide academic calendar.

Wellness Days: A day to facilitate student mental and physical well-being. The School of Medicine determines the placement of these days to optimize support of students. While the number of provided wellness days is the same as recommended by main campus, their occurrence within the clinical phases may be different.

“Day-backs”: A day during Application Phase where all students are excused from clinical activities to participate in other curricular or required activities. These facilitate student collaboration and learning across the phase. Attendance is required. Example: Social and Health Systems Science 4 days, Application Phase Career Day