

August 2016

Dear Faculty Colleagues:

Greetings from the Student Health Service!

We know that it can be challenging at times for faculty to manage and respond to students' class absences.

The mission of the Lewis & Clark Student Health Service is to promote the health of students and to promote the public health of the broader Lewis & Clark community. Toward those ends, the Student Health Service is happy to provide medical care for students who need treatment. For public health reasons, though, we believe that it is not in the best interest of our community for contagious students who do not need treatment to be circulating to the Student Health Service just to get a medical absence note (i.e., a note which attributes a recent academic absence to an illness) for their instructor. When contagious students who do not need treatment circulate for this purpose, it increases the risk of disease transmission. Also, in the past, students have at times clogged the schedules of our busy medical providers in order to get excuse notes for instructors. This pattern has resulted in fewer clinical hours for students who need medical assessment and treatment.

To avoid confusion about documentation for medical illnesses provided by the Student Health Service, please be aware of the Student Health Service's policy on Medical Absence Documentation below.

Student Health Service Policy on Medical Absence Documentation

The Student Health Service will provide medical absence related documentation when students are out of class for extended periods of time (defined as 4 days or more) and not when students are missing class for shorter periods (1-3 days). We encourage faculty and students to communicate directly with each other when short-term medical absences occur.

If you have questions about this policy, please contact the Student Health Service at 503-768-7165.

We wish you the best in your health and your work as the semester unfolds.

Sincerely,
John Hancock
Associate Dean of Students for Health and Wellness, Chief Psychologist

Bess Austin
Director of Student Health Services

