

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 12, 2025

TO: Angie Hill Price, PhD
Speaker, Faculty Senate

FROM: Kristen Harrell, PhD
Chair, Rules and Regulations Committee

SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to the Texas A&M Student Rules

Attached please find proposed revisions to the Texas A&M University Student Rules as approved by the Rules and Regulations Committee on Monday, May 12, 2025.

JUSTIFICATION

Since the last Student Rules & Regulations Committee meeting, the submitters (Claudia Garrett and myself) have worked with committee member Dr. Chris Cherry along with University Health Services representative Dr. Tiffany Skaggs to alter changes to 7.2.2.10 for clarity and consistency.

The following justification is the same as the previous proposal:

Currently, over 75 blood cancers and blood disorders can be cured through a bone marrow or stem cell transplant. Even with a national registry of millions of volunteer donors, many blood cancer patients may not find their life-saving match. Because tissue types used in matching are inherited, patients are most likely to match someone of the same ethnic background. Increasing a patient's likelihood of finding a matching donor on the national registry (NMDP) depends on recruiting young, healthy, and diverse adults. College-aged students are the key to saving the lives of those needing a transplant because research shows that younger donors lead to better outcomes for transplant recipients. However, NMDP often hears from students that it is challenging to be someone's second chance at life because their attendance policy does not allow them to miss class. They either cannot make the commitment or take significant steps to fit it into their busy school schedule.

Transplant, when considered by doctors, is often the only remaining treatment option to save the lives of patients who have blood cancers or disorders. Those patients hope with all their hearts that their donor will say "yes." Changing Student Rule 7 to clearly excuse bone marrow & stem cell donation would ensure Aggies who match with a patient in need are able to show their Selfless Service and save that patient's life.

Current language of Student Rule 7 could be interpreted to not include stem cell donation, as it is an elective donation and likely to a non-relative. Despite how it is non emergent for the student donor, it is emergent for the blood disease patients. The addition of this would clarify that transplant is an excusable absence, and therefore reduce barriers for patients to receive their treatment.

There are no concerns for students to abuse this change. Unlike blood donation, stem cell & bone marrow donation is limited to three times in a person's life. Only about 1% of registry members are contacted as a match. The national registry, operated by NMDP, will provide official documentation of a student missing class for their donation or any activities associated with the procedure.

PROPOSED BY:

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7.2.2 Attendance

Student Rule 7.2.2 Change for Consideration

Proposed Change: It is proposed to amend **Student Rule 7.2.2** to include the underlined sentences:

7.2.2.9 Mandatory participation as a student athlete in NCAA-sanctioned competition.

7.2.2.10 Required pre-donation and donation activities for a student selected as a donor of a transplant such as bone marrow, stem cells (Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Donation), and organs, provided that it cannot be rescheduled.

7.2.2.10.1 An absence for single visit donations such as blood donation, plasma donation, and platelet donation does not constitute an excused absence.

7.2.2.~~40~~ 11 For compelling reasons not included in Section 7.2, the dean or dean's designee of the student's college with the support of the dean or dean's designee of the college offering the course may provide a statement (email is acceptable) that the deans or designee have verified the absence as excused.