

Policy on Medical Student Workload

I. PURPOSE

An important component of managing the curriculum is planning and monitoring student workload and duty hours throughout the curriculum. The Curriculum Committee is responsible for overseeing the arrangement of the curriculum, and establishing limits on student workload and duty hours. The school must monitor student workload to assure that there is adequate time for independent studying and preparation for in-class activities.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Medical students
- Faculty (e.g., Course/Clerkship/Elective directors)

III. POLICY

The Curriculum Committee establishes and approves the academic calendar including determining the appropriate sequencing and scheduling of courses, clerkships, and electives. The Curriculum Committee reviews and approves any significant changes to the calendar. Significant changes are those that alter the sequence of courses, number of weeks of the medical education program, or that have the potential to affect students' ability to meet curriculum requirements.

During the Foundations phase of the curriculum, the maximum number of scheduled hours of required synchronous coursework is 24 hours per week. Students will have at least two half-days per week of independent learning time during standard business hours. Exceptions to these guidelines will be reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee.

During the Clerkships and Bridges phases of the curriculum, the maximum number of scheduled hours for clinical courses will be described as "duty hours." Duty hours are defined as all clinical and academic activities related to the clinical student program, i.e., patient care (both inpatient and outpatient), administrative duties related to patient care, the provision for transfer of patient care, time spent in-house during call activities, and scheduled academic activities such as conferences. Duty hours do not include reading and preparation time spent away from the clinical site. Duty hours are averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house all activities and must be limited to 80 hours per week on average.

Averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of call, students must be provided with 1 day in 7 free from all educational and clinical responsibilities. One day is defined as one continuous 24-hour period free from all clinical, educational, and administrative Activities.

It is the responsibility of the Clerkship Director, faculty, and the individual student to ensure full compliance with both the letter and spirit of these respective duty hour Requirements.

For non-clinical courses in the Clerkships and Bridges phases of the curriculum, the maximum number of scheduled hours of synchronous coursework is 32 hours per week. Exceptions to this limit will be reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee.

IV. POLICY AUTHOR(S)

- Office of Medical Education

V. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

☐ None

VI. REFERENCES

LCME Element 8.8: Monitoring Student Time.

VII. APPROVALS

Curriculum Committee, originally approved June 2, 2025.

This policy combines two separate policies previously approved by the Dean, School of Medicine: Duty Hours and Calendar/Scheduling (both on 9/5/18).