

# Policy on Student Workload and Clinical Duty Hours for Clerkships

The UMKC School of Medicine strives to create an optimum environment that facilitates medical student learning. The Council on Curriculum is responsible for the curriculum to obtain the medical degree; this policy was developed to balance student workload between scheduled clinical responsibilities, classroom learning in a variety of formats, independent learning, and time for attention to personal health and well-being.

**Objective:** Faculty responsible for clerkships must be committed to promoting student well-being and to provide a supportive educational environment.

## LCME Standard – Element 8.8 Monitoring Student Time

The medical school faculty committee is responsible for the medical curriculum and the program's administration and leadership ensure the development and implementation of effective policies and procedures regarding the amount of time medical students spend in required activities, including the total number of hours medical students are required to spend in clinical and educational activities during clerkships.

## SCOPE & APPLICABILITY

- This policy applies to medical degree (MD) students.
- Clerkship directors are responsible for counting contact hours and ensuring there is a balance between scheduled classroom learning, time spent in required clinical activities, and that contact hours are counted and reported in a consistent manner across all required clerkships.
- Didactic and clinical education must have priority over patient management in the allocation of students' time.
- Duty hour assignments must recognize that faculty and residents collectively have responsibility for the safety and welfare of patients.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Clinical Hour:** A unit of measure that represents 60 minutes, of scheduled clinical time such as patient care, administrative duties related to patient care, and time spent on-call.
  - **Call:** The time that students are expected to be on site and may report for patient care responsibilities when needed. Requirements for call are established by each clerkship.
- **Workload Contact Hour:** A unit of measure that represents 60 minutes, of scheduled instruction or formal assessment given to students. This also includes any eLearning activity that is used in place of, or in addition to the scheduled in-class instruction. This

does not include time taken for patient care and clinical responsibilities. Contact time includes the sum of all scheduled and unscheduled learning activities, but does not include self-directed learning activities.

1. **Scheduled learning activities:** Scheduled learning activities include lectures, small-group discussions, student presentations, assessments, and any other required instruction that occurs at a time specified in a course syllabus or schedule.
  2. **Unscheduled learning activities:** Unscheduled learning activities include asynchronous online learning, viewing of a pre-recorded lecture or video, completion of homework assignments and preparation of student presentations. These activities are completed according to the student's schedule
  3. **Self-Directed learning activities:** Self-Directed learning activities include time spent for studying and reading, completing assigned readings and optional review sessions not scheduled on a clerkship syllabus. This time is intended for students to engage in self-directed learning outside of contact hours.
    - Identify, analyze, and synthesize information relevant to their learning needs
    - Assess the credibility of information sources
    - Share the information with their peers and supervisors
    - Receive feedback on their information-seeking skills
- **Clinical Duty Hours** must not exceed 60 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house call.
    - Students must be provided with 1 day in 7, free from all required educational activities and clinical responsibility averaged over a 4-week period, inclusive of call.
    - Adequate time for rest and personal activities must be promoted. Students should have 10 hours, and must have 8 hours, free of duty between scheduled duty periods and after in-house call.
    - Continuous on-site call duty should not exceed 24 consecutive hours, however, Students may remain on duty for up to six additional hours to participate in didactic activities, transfer care of patients, conduct outpatient clinics, and maintain continuity of medical and surgical care. No new patients may be accepted after 24 hours of continuous duty.
  - Students must immediately communicate any deviation to the above Policy to their Clerkship Director, Clerkship Coordinator, and/or to their Attending Physician.

- Clerkships that require students to take in-house call for more than 16 hours of continuous duty, must provide a call room that allows for student privacy and the opportunity to study or sleep.
  - Student Workload Contact hours must be limited to 12 hours per week, averaged over the entire clerkship and not to exceed 15 hours in a single week. If workload contact hours exceed 15 hours, clinical duty hours must be reduced accordingly.
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- Examples of scheduled and unscheduled activities that lead to student workload:  
Clinical experiences
  - Clerkship Orientation
  - Required E-learning modules such as MedU assignments, IHI learning modules with assessments
  - Large group learning, flipped classroom online assignments
  - Lectures
  - Practice-based, case-based learning, small group work
  - Required review sessions
  - Study Halls
  - Morbidity and Mortality conference
  - Grand Rounds
  - Case conferences
  - Journal club
  - Preparing case presentations, homework, discussion boards, etc.
  - Required clerkship assessments including the NBME, internally written examinations, quizzes, etc.
  - Simulation Sessions

UMKC program requirements that count towards student workload hours (students should be released from their clinical duties):

- Clinical Performance Assessments
- Basic Life Support and Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support training
- Comprehensive Basic Science Examination and Comprehensive Clinical Science Examination
- Interprofessional Education sessions

Examples NOT included in student workload:

- Reading and preparation for patient care
- Service learning and community service excuses absences
- Recommended study materials: MedU modules for study and preparation for clinical responsibilities

- Student Affairs orientations, class meetings
- Flu shots, immunizations or any other medical care required for clinical experiences
- Optional review sessions, case conferences, or journal clubs

### **Policy Administration**

**Responsible for policy:** Council on Curriculum

**Responsible for tracking:** CQI committee

**Authorized by:** Council on Curriculum

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