



Title/Subject: Clinical and Educational Work Hours Policy

Applies to: faculty students staff Other

Policy System Process/Procedure Guideline/Standard Position Description

Introduction

- **Historical/Contextual Overview:** In order to provide a learning environment that places an emphasis on self-directed learning with time provided for independent study, it is necessary to set guidelines for the amount of time a student spends in required activities. The goal of this policy is to ensure students are provided opportunity time to allow for independent learning, while also promoting both student wellness and patient safety.
- **Reason for Policy/Process:** This policy is intended to define the expectations for monitoring 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. LCME Element 8.8 Monitoring Student Time.
- **Scope:** This guideline is to be followed by faculty, residents, and other health care providers that supervise TAMHSC COM medical students and other visiting medical students under the auspices of TAMHSC COM, in the clinical setting. This policy applies to all students in all courses and clerkships on all campuses.

Policy/Process Statement:

- In components of the curriculum that are primarily centered on patient care, on average over the course:
 - There are no more than ten (**10**) hours of traditional lecture per week.
 - Clinical and educational work hours are defined as all clinical and academic activities related to the clerkship; i.e., patient care (both inpatient and outpatient), administrative duties relevant to patient care, the provision for transfer of patient care, time spent in-house during call activities, and scheduled activities, such as conferences.

Work hours do not include time spent studying for exams or supplemental reading/research to prepare for rotations. Clinical and educational work hours must be limited to **80** hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house call activities.

 - Students must be provided with one day in seven free from all clinical and educational responsibilities, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of call.

Approval Committee: Curriculum Committee

Implementing Office: Office of Academic Affairs

Policy/Process POC:

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- Adequate time for rest and personal activities must be provided. This should consist of an 8-hour time period provided between all scheduled clinical work and education periods and after in-house call.

- On-call Activities:
 - In-house call **must** occur no more frequently than every third night, averaged over a four-week period.
 - Continuous on-site work hours, including in-house call, **must not** exceed 24 consecutive hours. Students may continue to participate in clinical and educational work for up to six additional hours. Examples include: 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 work.
- At-home call (or pager call)
 - The frequency of at-home call is not subject to the every-third-night, or 24+6 limitation. However, at-home call must not be so frequent as to preclude rest and reasonable personal time for each student.
 - Students taking at-home call must be provided with one day in seven completely free from all educational and clinical responsibilities, averaged over a four-week period.
 - When students are called into the hospital from home, the hours students spend in-house are counted toward the 80-hour limit.

Procedures/Compliance:

- It is the shared responsibility of the course/clerkship director in conjunction with site coordinators and supervising faculty to assure that the specifications of this policy are followed. All violations will be investigated.
- All students are expected to track clinical and educational work hours in a college approved system. This should be completed on a regular basis during the rotation and will be monitored as needed by the clerkship.
- The student work hour guidelines will be communicated to students in writing as well as to students in the overall clerkship orientation and at each individual clerkship orientation.
- The student work hour guidelines will be communicated to Supervising physicians (including residents, fellows and faculty) in writing through their annual course orientation module.
- If a student is concerned about a violation of the work hours policy at a site, the student can report this on the end-of-clerkship evaluation form, and/or use the Aggie Conduct Awareness reporting mechanism to confidentially report work hours violations.
- All reports of work hour violations including concerns about on-call issues are immediately communicated to the relevant Clerkship Director and the Executive Clerkship Director, as well as the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, who will work together to address the violation. For non-anonymous work hour violations, the clerkship director will alter the student's schedule to bring the student's work hours into compliance, where possible. For

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issues identified after the clerkship, the clerkship director will gather information and propose a response plan for approval to the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs.

- The Core Clinical Subcommittee and Curriculum Committees review summary work hour violation reports at least annually with more regular urgent follow up occurring as needed.
- If work hours exceed the maximum amount as indicated in this policy, clerkships will be subject to ongoing, proactive monitoring and will be required to log students' hours.

Exceptions: Variances from his policy must be approved by Academic Affairs and/or the Office of Medical Education.

Revision History:

Created	Approval Committee	Implementing Office	Summary of Changes	Document Location
4.25.19	Curriculum Committee	Office of Academic Affairs	Put into template	
9.3.21	Curriculum Committee	Office of Academic Affairs	Change duty hours to clinical work hours	
9.14.22	Curriculum Committee	Office of Academic Affairs	Remove 7 AM deadline for input of clinical work hours.	

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