



Title/Subject: Calendar Scheduling Policy

Applies to: faculty students staff Curriculum Committee & OAA

Policy System Process/Procedure Guideline/Standard Position Description

• **Introduction**

- **Historical/Contextual Overview:** Official Academic Calendars provided to TAMU include semester start and end dates and holidays. More specific schedules and calendars within TAMU COM must not be called Academic Calendars because this term is reserved for TAMU Academic Calendar. Each year a COM Calendar delineating the number of weeks of the curriculum and a curriculum model will be created for internal use by staff and students.
- **Reason for the Policy/Process:** This policy defines curricular time across MD campuses and tracks at TAMU COM to maximize learning and balance student vacation/holiday time. This policy defines how the COM calendar process functions including timelines and division of duties/responsibilities between faculty and administrative offices.
- **Scope:** This policy is designed to set the standards and process for developing a schedule for medical student education at TAMU COM. All faculty, educational staff, residents, fellows, and volunteer clinical faculty are expected to follow this policy in regards to MD students, but this policy does not apply to other medical school learners (graduate, PhD students).

- **Policy Statement:** All MD campuses and MD tracks within the TAMU COM will follow standardized academic calendars, approved by the Curriculum Committee, for courses, clerkships, and electives in all phases of the undergraduate medical curriculum. Academic calendars and COM Calendars will be standardized to provide comparable duration, contact hours, and unstructured time for students at all educational sites for a given course, clerkship, or elective.

• **Process/Procedure:**

- The Curriculum Committee (CC) and the Office for Medical Education (OME), will review and approve the start and end dates for all TAMU COM MD campuses/tracks to follow.
- Scheduling of the start and end dates, as well as holiday considerations for each academic year will be completed 9 months - 1-year prior to the next AY. Planning to begin in June with finalization expected by the September prior to start. Revisions to upcoming academic year calendars must be approved and finalized by no later than September 30th to ensure adequate time for scheduling. Changes to any parameters or scheduling expectations outlined below will require approval by the CC.
 - May/June – Complete a calendar review from previous year including an audit of credit hours

Effective Date: September 2020

Last Updated: 10.23.20

Authority: Curriculum Committee

Responsible University Office: Office of Academic Affairs

Responsible University Administrator: Director of AA and Assistant Deans of AA

Review/Revision Schedule: Annually in May/June, 09/2020 last review

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and weeks. This will especially focus on Preclerkship courses.

- July – Draft COM Calendar and Draft Academic Calendar for all phase subcommittees and administrative review.
- August – Curriculum Committee review of Calendars
- September – Submit Academic Calendars to TAMU Registrar for approval and post COM Calendars to website and email MD students with notice of both.

Preclerkship Phase

Calendar Parameters: M1 Orientation occurs the week prior to the start of curriculum. Orientation is coordinated by Student Affairs & Academic Affairs to ensure all campuses and tracks receive standardized content. Local campus/track content is coordinated locally.

- Preclerkship Phase, Year 1: The first year is at least 45 weeks in duration. The fall semester is typically twenty-one (21) weeks in duration and the spring semester is typically twenty-four (24) weeks in duration. Holidays follow TAMU student holidays unless the CC determines otherwise. Winter break is at least two (2) weeks in duration and Summer break is at least four (4) weeks in duration. (Total number of days Semester 1 not less than – 103 days (21 x 5 = 105 – 2 days for Thanksgiving break) (Total number of days Semester 2 not less than – 118 days (24 x 5 = 120 – 2 holidays, MLK Day and Memorial Day)
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- Preclerkship Phase, Semester 3: The third semester is at least twenty-one (21) weeks in duration. Holidays follow TAMU student holidays unless the CC determines otherwise. Winter break is at least two (2) weeks in duration. Preclerkship (M1 and M2) student start dates align with each other whenever possible, in order to assist with billing and financial aid distribution and communication thereof.

Course Scheduling: Individual courses must abide by their scheduled number of weeks and maximum contact hours as listed below. Please see Preclerkship Work Hours Policy for more details on what and how to count contact hours.

- Preclerkship holidays usually align with TAMU holidays as noted on the approved Academic Calendar.
- IPE activities such as IPER Symposium and Disaster Day are considered when building course start and end dates.

Determining Course Length: See COM Credit Hour Policy

- $\text{Credit Hours} = (\text{contact hours}/16) + (\text{lab hours}/48)$
- $\text{Course Length in Weeks} = \text{Credit hours} \times 24 \text{ contact hours}$
(Rule is 28 contact hours per week, but PoM usually has ~ 4 hours per week.)

Please use Credit Hour Audit to determine number of weeks/days for courses.

Clerkship Phase

Calendar Parameters: Each calendar is built to minimally accommodate eight (8) six-week blocks which will allow for four (4) 8-week blocks/4-week elective block.

Course Scheduling: The first full week of January is utilized for clerkship orientation. The second full week of January

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starts block 1. The clerkship calendar is forty-eight (48) weeks long.

- Clerkship Holidays include Spring break, Thanksgiving, and Winter break. Thanksgiving includes Thursday and Friday through the weekend with clerkships resuming on Monday. Winter break will minimally include December 24th through the end of the calendar year. Students may utilize non-clerkship weeks for electives as needed.

Elective Phase

Calendar Parameters: Fourth year begins the Monday following the last clerkship and runs through December 31. Fourth year resumes January 1 and runs through graduation. The Fourth-year Calendar has students continuously enrolled through graduation, with a MINIMUM of 44 weeks (36 weeks of curriculum, 4 week interview block, 4 weeks USMLE Step 2 study).

Course Scheduling: Students rotating on COM electives, especially required courses such as EM, ICU, or AI may have clinical shifts on holidays. Students have administrative weeks available in the fourth year which can occur during holidays as needed.

- **Resources and Tools:** *(List any applications, tools, or forms required and where they can be located.)*

Name	Purpose	Location	Distribution
Time Clock Plus	Clerkship Duty hours Tracking	Phone/internet app	Distributed to students at clerkship orientation
Syllabus Face Sheets	Both clerkship and PC face sheets have questions related to duty hours or work hours for students	OAA	Distributed annually with updated syllabus template
COM Credit Hour Policy	Ensure calendar and courses align with this policy	COM Policy Website	Website
Previous COM Calendars & COM Curriculum Models	Ensure number of weeks/days are adequate each AY and for each class as they progress between phases.	OAA Shared Drive	OAA admin access

- **Revision History:**

Date of Change	Authority	Summary of Changes	Document Location
08.05.20	OAA/Curriculum Committee	Created Calendar Scheduling Policy	OAA Files
09.11.20	OAA/CC	Revised policy for CC approval	OAA files
10.23.20	OAA	Edited for errors	OAA files

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