



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

School of Medicine

Operating Policy and Procedure

SOM OP: 30.02, **Student Workload/Duty Hours**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this School of Medicine (SOM) policy and procedure is to define the workload/duty hour expectations for students in the curriculum of the School of Medicine.

REVIEW: This SOM Policy and Procedure shall be reviewed within each even-numbered fiscal year by the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee. Revisions will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean for approval and publication.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. **General.** The School of Medicine has the responsibility to develop and implement workload/duty hour policies for medical students in all phases of the curriculum, in accordance with LCME Element 8.8, Monitoring Student Workload. These policies should promote student health and education.
2. **Scope.** This policy applies to students in all courses and clerkships on all campuses.
3. **Workload Guidelines in Pre-Clinical Curriculum.**
 - a. The pre-clinical curriculum is designed to provide students with learning experiences that include active learning experiences and time for self-directed learning. Learners are encouraged to attend all activities and are required to attend specific activities such as small group sessions, simulation activities and patient presentations, as defined in [SOM OP 40.02, Student Attendance](#).
 - b. Exclusive of preparatory and study time, learners should expect an average of 20 hours of synchronous and asynchronous didactic or active learning sessions per week. Students should be scheduled for no more than 10 additional hours of organized learning activities in longitudinal blocks. All activities are defined in course syllabi.
4. **Workload/Duty Hour Guidelines in Clinical Curriculum.**
 - a. Students should not be scheduled for on-call time, patient-care activities or formal didactic sessions in excess of 80 hours per week. Students should not be scheduled for more than 30 continuous hours. Students should have at least one day off each week averaged over a one-month period.
 - b. Overnight call and night float, if any, should have comparable frequency on all campuses for any particular clerkship. Overnight call should also have comparable frequency within any particular department on a single campus. The clinical departments will determine the frequency of overnight call, but it should not be more frequent than every 4th night.

- c. It is anticipated that student attendance at clerkship seminars, conferences, and other didactic sessions will be facilitated by this policy and that provisions in this policy are not the basis for missing these sessions. Requests for excused absences from these sessions should be submitted to the clerkship director or his/her designees on an individual basis ([SOM OP 40.02, Student Attendance](#)).

5. Monitoring.

- a. Pre-Clinical Curriculum: The Education Operations Committee will review block schedules prior to the beginning of each semester to ensure that the guidelines described above are being followed. Student perceptions of workload will be evaluated on Block Questionnaires (BQ) and reported to the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee after each block.
- b. Clinical Curriculum: Clerkship Directors and Coordinators will be responsible for ensuring that individual student schedules adhere to the guidelines described above. Students will report on duty hours on Clerkship Questionnaires (CQ), which will be analyzed during regular clerkship reviews performed by Lead Clerkship Directors and the Clinical Education Operations Committee. An annual report on levels of adherence to this policy will be presented to the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee.
- c. Variances from this policy must be approved by the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee.

6. Responsibilities.

- a. Office of Curriculum: Creation and maintenance of evaluation tools for collecting student feedback on workload/duty hours. Generation of aggregated reports on student feedback.
- b. Block Directors: Design of block schedules based on guidelines.
- c. Clerkship Directors/Coordinators: Design of student schedules to adhere to guidelines.
- d. Education Operations Committee: Review of Block Questionnaire-derived information about student perceptions of workload
- e. Lead Clerkship Chair/Clinical Education Operations Committee: Review of Clerkship Questionnaire-derived information about student perceptions of workload/duty hours.
- f. Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee: Receipt of reports on student workload from EOC and CEOC and development/review of this and related policies.
- g. Medical Students: Will be aware of the details of this policy and will identify and assist in rectifying any concerns about workload/duty hours.

7. Related Documentation.

- a. LCME Standard 8: Curricular Management, Evaluation, and Enhancement.
- b. LCME Element 8.8: Monitoring Student Time: The medical school faculty committee 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 throughout the curriculum.