

MEDICAL STUDENT POLICY

Title: Duty Hours Policy	
Relevant LCME Element(s): 8.8: Monitoring Student Time	Last approved: 2/7/2024

I. PURPOSE

Define duty hours for medical students in clerkships.

II. PERSONS AFFECTED:

Medical students, clerkship directors

III. BACKGROUND STATEMENT

During the clinical years, Feinberg medical students should assume an increasing level of professional responsibility, learning to care for patients with dedication, integrity, and compassion. One of the challenges of becoming a physician is learning to fulfill one's clinical responsibilities without sacrificing one's own physical and mental health. The clinical years should provide an environment in which students can attend both to their education and to their personal well-being as they develop into physicians.

IV. POLICY STATEMENT

- Medical student duty hours will never exceed resident duty hours as specified by the ACGME and will often be further restricted to facilitate the learning needs of students.
- Duty hours are defined as any clinical work or required educational experiences (e.g. conference, lectures, exams); they do not include time at home to study or travel time to and from clinical sites.
- Medical students must not work more than 80 hours per week, averaged over a period of 4 weeks.
- Medical students must not work more than 16 consecutive hours caring for patients. After 16 hours, they may continue to work for up to 2 hours for continuity of care (handoffs, morning report, M&M).
- Medical students will have a minimum of eight hours off between scheduled shifts.
- Students working an overnight shift will be excused from any classroom learning activities following their clinical shift. Alternate experiences and resources will be provided.
- Medical students should be excused from clinical shifts at 5 p.m. the night before an exam.
- Medical students working on evening or overnight shifts are dismissed from clinical duties by 11pm at the latest on the Thursday prior to required monthly Friday integrated curriculum activities (IC2), which occur from 1-5 p.m. Students scheduled for an evening shift or students who are on call on the same day/night of IC2 are to report after IC2 has concluded to their medical teams and work until no later than 11 p.m. Students not on call are dismissed after IC2.
- At a minimum, medical students must receive one day off per week averaged over a four-week rotation.

Holidays

- Thanksgiving: For all rotations except sub-internships, the Thanksgiving Holiday shall be observed beginning at 6pm on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and ending on Sunday afternoon; these count as days off. A small number of students may need to report for night float the Sunday evening after Thanksgiving. During sub-internship rotations, medical students may be required to work during the Thanksgiving holiday.
- Students are not required to report to clerkships over the university winter break. In rare instances, students may work over winter break to make up for any absences due to residency interviews.
- Other university holidays (e.g. Independence Day, Labor Day, Memorial Day, Martin Luther King Day, Juneteenth) shall be treated like weekend days, on which students may be on call.

V. PROCEDURE STATEMENT

- It is the responsibility of both students and clerkship leadership/administration to comply with duty hour guidelines as described above.
- The clerkship directors and coordinators are responsible for creating medical student schedules for each individual rotation that comply with the above guidelines.
- Residents and fellows will sign off on their review and understanding of this policy annually. Clerkship directors are also responsible for and expected to disseminate specific duty hour guidelines to residents and attending clinicians who supervise medical students in each clerkship.
- Students are individually responsible for complying with the duty hour policy and must track their hours. Every student is required to record duty hours after each clerkship on the anonymous clerkship evaluation form. Every student is asked to report any concerns of a potential violation in advance to the clerkship director or Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education. Reporting duty hour concerns or violations will not affect student grades.

VI. REVISION HISTORY:

2/7/2024: Added wording reflecting possibility of night float the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

VII. APPROVING BODY:

Curriculum Committee