

**Clinical Duty Hours
For Medical Students**

CATEGORY: Programmatic

POLICY TITLE: Clinical Duty Hours for Medical Students

APPLICABLE FOR: Deans, Directors, Department Heads; Managers and Supervisors; Faculty; Staff; Students

REVISION RECORDS: 07.2023

POLICY NUMBER: 4.3

RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE/COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: UMEC; Office of Student Affairs and Admissions

POLICY STATEMENT

Duty hours shall not exceed 80 hours per week (including in house call activities). Students shall be provided with, on average, one 24-hour period off each week. In-house call shall not average more frequently than every third night, over a 4-week period. Duty hours in the hospital or clinic setting shall not exceed 24 consecutive hours, including hours spent sleeping while on in-house call if less than four hours. There are no exceptions.

REASON for POLICY

The participation of medical students in clinical courses involves two important but often conflicting responsibilities on the students; 1) development of clinical skills and professional attributes, and 2) contribution to medical teams and care of patients. In balancing these competing needs, it is recognized that clinical courses must provide students with adequate time for individual study, sleep, and relaxation. Accordingly, the policy on student duty hours has set forth the maximum acceptable time that a student may be involved in clinical course responsibilities.

PROCEDURES

I) Duty hours shall not exceed 80 hours per week. These 80 hours include in-house (but not out-of-house) call activities.

II) Students shall be provided a minimum of one day in seven free of clinical work and required education (when averaged over four weeks). School holidays that occur during a rotation may be included as days off for the time period during which they fall.

III) Adequate time for rest and recreational activities shall be provided. This will include a minimum 8-hour time period free of student responsibilities between all daily duty periods and a 14-hour time period free of student responsibilities after in-house call.

I) In-house call shall not occur more frequently than every third night, averaged over a 4-week period.

II) If required to return to the clinical care site during at-home call, the student will include the hours-in-house in their weekly total for duty hours. If they are called in while on at-home call, they will be required to have the 8-hour duty-free period either before or after being called in.

VI) Duty hours in the hospital or clinic setting shall not exceed 24 consecutive hours, including hours spent sleeping while on call if less than four hours. Up to 4 hours of additional time after the 24 hours may be used for activities related to patient safety, such as providing effective transitions of care and/or student education. Additional patient care responsibilities may not be assigned to the student during this time.

VI) Students shall not be expected to use duty hours on tasks that are not directly related to learning activities.

VII) Clerkship directors and elective preceptors may promulgate duty hour restrictions that are more (but not less) stringent than those outlined herein.

VIII) Duty hour tallies do not include service learning or other UND SMHS-sanctioned activities. Voluntary return to the hospital or clinic would be included in the duty hour tally.

RESPONSIBILITIES	
Clerkship Directors, Acting Internship Directors and Elective Preceptors	The primary responsibility for enforcing these duty hour policies rests with the clerkship directors, acting internship directors and elective preceptors. The clerkship director and elective preceptor are responsible for forwarding details regarding any perceived or actual problem with the implementation with this policy to the Phase3/Phase 3 Committee and the appropriate departmental chair.
Medical students in clinical courses	Students must monitor their duty hours in real time and communicate to their preceptors the need to make changes to the student's schedule as they approach duty hours that exceed the limitations of this policy; students with continued concerns after communicating with a preceptor should contact their respective campus dean.

DEFINITIONS	
Duty Hours	Time allotted to all required and voluntary educational activities in clerkships and courses during Phases 2 and 3 of the medical school curriculum, including inpatient and outpatient care, administrative activities related to patient care (charting, discharge planning, transfer planning, etc.), and scheduled educational activities such as conferences, rounds, lectures, etc. Duty hours do not include reading and preparation time spent away from the duty site or service learning activities.

RELATED INFORMATION	
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CONTACTS

General questions about this policy can be answered by your department's administrative office. Specific questions should be directed to the following:

Subject	Contact	Telephone/FAZ	Email contact
Policy clarification	Student Affairs and Admissions	777.4221/777.4942	
Policy format	Dean's Office	777.2514/777.3527	judy.solberg@med.und.edu
Investigation Report	Office of Safety	777.3988/777.3341	und.safety@und.edu