

**Policy on Specialty
Electives for Medical
Students in Phase3**

Section: 4
Policy number: 4.7
Responsible Office: Student Affairs and Admiss
Issued: 06.20.16
Latest Review: 06.2024

POLICY STATEMENT

During Phase 3, a student may choose as many as four 4-week electives in an American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) specialty area. Students may take additional specialty or subspecialty electives in a given specialty area by forgoing vacation time.

REASON for POLICY

The University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences is dedicated to the development of excellent physicians. Essential to this process is a broad-based undergraduate medical education in preparation for the more targeted training in residency. It is during residency that trainees become specialized. The School of Medicine and Health Sciences views undergraduate medical education as the opportunity to acquire the broad-based knowledge, behaviors and skills that are most likely to prepare students for any residency and gain insight into other areas of specialty practices of their future colleagues.

SCOPE of POLICY

This policy applies to:

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Managers and supervisors | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deans, Directors, and Department Heads | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____ |

WEB SITE REFERENCES

Policy Office: <http://www.med.und.edu/policies/index.cfm>
Office of Education Resources: <http://www.med.und.edu/education-resources/index.cfm>

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DEFINITIONS

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| Specialty | For the purpose of this document, specialty shall be defined as those areas of medical study where an individual may receive a general certificate of board certification. The webpage on the American Board of Medical Specialties shall be used as a guide. |
| Phase 3 Elective | A non-required course taken during Phases Phase 3. |
| Sub-Specialty | For the purposes of this document, a sub-specialty shall be defined as those areas of medical study where an individual may receive a sub-specialty certificate. The webpage of the American Board of Medical Specialties shall be used as a guide. |

FORMS

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| Elective Day Request Form | |
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RELATED INFORMATION CONTACTS

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| American Board of Medical Specialties | http://www.abms.org |
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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/FAX | Office/Dept |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--|
| Policy clarification | Education Resources | 777.5400 | Patrick.carr@und.edu |
| Policy format | Dean's Office | 777.2514/777.3527 | judy.solberg@und.edu |

PROCEDURES

Students may choose Phase 3 electives that are of interest to them or that they feel will assist them in the development of knowledge and skills.

1. Students may take four 4-week electives in a given specialty as defined by the American Board of Medical Specialties. Within these four electives, no more than two may be general electives in the specialty and no more than two may be in a single sub-specialty area unless they wish to forgo a vacation month in which case, they may take three sub-specialty electives. The expectations are as follows:
 - a. A student must relinquish a non-scheduled month in order to accommodate another elective.
 - b. The elective can be taken for academic credit.
 - c. The student may not take more than four electives in a specialty area (for example, Pediatrics, Radiology, Internal Medicine, etc.) without relinquishing a non-scheduled month.
 - d. This limitation includes the Acting Internship.
 - e. The only exception to this is within the specialty of Emergency Medicine, where due to specific letter of recommendation requirements for residency, the student may take three general Emergency Medicine electives provided that at least one of them is a UND SMHS elective.

- f. When a specialty area has no associated sub-specialties, then a student may only choose two electives in that specialty area.
- 2. Students may not take two identical UND SMHS electives whether on the same or different campuses.
 - a. If there is a question on whether two electives are too similar to be taken, the final decision lies with the department chair where the electives are cataloged.
 - b. The only exception is the research elective. This course may be taken for two separate elective periods (total of 8 weeks).
 - c. This does not apply to similar away rotations.
- 3. Phase 3 schedules must be approved by the respective campus dean prior to enrolling in and beginning an elective experience. Failure to do so may make it impossible to assign academic credit to the elective and, therefore, require the student to take another elective in order to complete the required number of credits for graduation.

| Responsibilities | |
|------------------|--|
| Campus Dean | Approve student schedules for Phase 3, making the student aware when he or she may be requesting too many electives in a specialty area or may be taking coursework that has identical objectives. |
| Student | Abide by the rules as noted. Request campus dean approval of schedule, and when desired, request an additional sub-specialty elective in writing to the campus dean. |

Examples of acceptable phase 3 elective schedules:

1. General Pediatrics in Grand Forks
 Away elective in General Pediatrics
 Away elective in Neonatology
 Pediatric GI in Fargo
 Pathology AI in Grand Forks
 Two non-pediatric electives

This student would not be able to take any further pediatrics courses.

2. Renal in Grand Forks
 Cardiology in Grand Forks
 General Internal Medicine away rotation
 Internal Medicine AI in Fargo
 Three non-Internal Medicine electives

No further Internal Medicine courses could be taken.

3. General Surgery AI in Bismarck
 General Surgery away
 Pediatric Surgery Fargo
 Pediatric Surgery away

No further General Surgery may be taken; however, separately boarded surgical subspecialties or Anesthesiology fall under their own categories on the ABMS website.

4. Orthopedic AI Fargo
Orthopedic Sports Medicine Fargo
Away General Orthopedics
Away Orthopedic Hand Surgery

No further Orthopedic rotations may be taken, however, FMED Sports Medicine or other surgical sub-specialties or Anesthesiology fall under their own categories on the ABMS website as they are separately boarded.

Examples of schedules that are not acceptable:

1. Neonatology in Grand Forks
Neonatology away elective #1
Neonatology away elective #2
Pediatric Pulmonology away elective
Pediatric AI in Fargo

This student may not take three identical sub-specialty electives and is over the four specialty course requirements with the Pediatric AI. The student would need to give up one of their Neonatology electives or take this in place of a month off.

2. Advanced OB-GYN in Dickinson
Away elective in general OB-GYN
Away elective #2 in Maternal Fetal Medicine
OB AI in Williston

This student may not take two electives and an AI which are all general electives in a specialty. They will need to give up a month of vacation or replace one of the general OB electives or AI with a sub-specialty elective.