



University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine



Policy on Oversight and Approval of Extramural Electives University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine

I. JUSTIFICATION:

The University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine has the responsibility to screen all extramural electives to ensure student safety by assessing potential risks to the health and safety of patients, students, and the community; the availability of emergency care; the possibility of natural disasters, political instability, and exposure to disease; the need for additional preparation prior to, support during, and follow-up after the elective; the level and quality of supervision; and any potential challenges to the code of medical ethics adopted by the home institution. To this end, the following policies and procedures will guide the oversight and approval of extramural electives.

II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Students are permitted to take certain domestic and international electives at non-UPR-SOM institutions. These electives may be completed during the pre-clinical years (Research Electives) or, most commonly, during the clinical years of our curriculum. To receive credit, the school must provide oversight and final approval of these electives.

Applications for all extramural electives must be completed at the Curriculum Office or through the AAMC's Visiting Students Applications System (VSAS). The Curriculum Office provides oversight of all VSAS applications and documentation.

DOMESTIC ELECTIVES

- Elective courses can be taken for academic credit at other LCME accredited medical schools with the approval of the Department Chair at where the comparable course is offered or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs if there are no comparable courses at the UPR - SOM.
- Students must request permission for domestic electives at least 3 months prior to the first day of the elective. Students must provide a course description and Syllabus to the Department Chairman and/or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to be considered for approval.
- Students must follow the Curriculum Office procedures to complete the approval process of domestic electives at LCME accredited institutions.

- The UPR-SOM will only approve electives taking place in a safe, academic or clinical environment. **The UPR – SOM will not approve electives where the safety of students or patients is at risk including if the area is usually prone to natural disasters, poor availability of emergency care, political instability, exposure to disease (more than the expected at any clinical site), the level or quality of supervision is inconclusive or if there seems to be any potential challenges to the code of medical ethics.** Students may decide to use their vacation time for these electives, but the UPR-SOM will not take part in the evaluation or approval process and no academic credit will be provided.

INTERNATIONAL ELECTIVES

- International electives can be taken for academic credit at one of our affiliated international programs only with the approval of the Curriculum Office and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
- Elective courses can be taken for academic credit at affiliated international medical schools with the approval of the Curriculum Office Director AND the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Once approved by these two academic officials, if the course is for credit and there is a comparable course within the curriculum, then the Department Chair at where the comparable course is offered must also approve the course.
- Students must request permission for international electives at least 6 months prior to the first day of the elective. Students must provide a course description and Syllabus to the Department Chairman and/or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to be considered for approval.
- Students must follow the Curriculum Office procedures to complete the approval process of domestic electives at LCME accredited institutions.
- The UPR-SOM will only approve international electives taking place in a safe, academic or clinical environment. **The UPR – SOM will not approve electives where the safety of students or patients is at risk including if the area is usually prone to natural disasters, poor availability of emergency care, political instability, exposure to disease (more than the expected at any clinical site), the level or quality of supervision is inconclusive or if there seems to be any potential challenges to the code of medical ethics.** Students may decide to use their vacation time for these electives, but the UPR-SOM will not take part in the evaluation or approval process and no academic credit will be provided.
- The UPR - SOM will not approve international electives for which all information pertaining to risk is not provided by the international program, even if there is an affiliation letter or agreement between institutions.

STUDENT SAFETY

For international programs, the UPR-SOM requires an affiliation letter or agreement stipulating that the host institution is expected to commit to and provide evidence of:

1. Mechanisms in place to ensure student and patient safety: The elective is not in an area prone to natural disaster, political instability or on highly infectious environment.
2. System for level supervision that is adequate and appropriate.
3. Availability of emergency care. The tenets of professional ethical conduct endorsed by the host institution and its clinical sites.

The School of Medicine acknowledges that many LCME -accredited programs, by virtue of their accreditation status, have met the standards for safety. Nevertheless, the UPR-SOM may send affiliation agreement or letter requests to LCME accredited programs at which students are accepted for electives when such electives primary goal is community medicine or service – learning and/or when there are no comparable electives at the UPR- SOM.

STUDENT AND ELECTIVE ASSESSMENT

- Student evaluations by faculty must be filled out in the approved UPR-SOM Student Evaluation Form and returned, directly from the host-institution, in either hardcopy or electronic format, to the Evaluations Office. Evaluations handed in by the student will not be accepted.
- For electives taken through VSAS, the Student Evaluation Form will be made available online for all institutions.
- Students will be required to fill out an Extramural Course Evaluation at the Evaluations Office upon return. The School of Medicine uses evaluation data provided by participating students to assess elective experiences in an ongoing fashion. All extramural elective evaluations are sent to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and this serves to monitor and prevent future student experiences should a problem be identified at a particular site.

References:

Hofstra North Shore LIJ School of Medicine
The George Washington University

Approved by Curriculum Committee on: March 13, 2015

Approved by the Committee on Administration: March 19, 2015

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