



UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO
MEDICAL SCIENCES CAMPUS
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine Workload, Duty Hour and Supervision Policy

I. Workload and Duty Hour Policy

Pre-Clinical Years

The University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine will adhere to a maximum of 28 hours of formally scheduled academic activities per week. This work hour schedule may vary at times of special situations such as, but not limited to, atmospheric events, unscheduled academic recesses, strikes or other emergencies; or to meet the needs of students who require validated special accommodations. Yearly, the Medicine I and II committees will design and submit for approval of the Curriculum Committee their proposed academic calendar, detailing the scheduled class time as well as the self-directed/independent study periods.

Self-directed/ independent study periods take into account the time dedicated for preparation of active learning activities. To assure an adequate balance between academic workload and time for independent learning, the academic calendar for the pre-clinical years will have at least two blocks of time per week in the afternoons from 1 PM to 5 PM for self-directed/independent study. No review sessions, either optional or mandatory, may be scheduled during self-directed, independent study period.

Clinical Years

Duty Hours during the clinical years are defined in accordance to the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education's (ACGME's) definition:

Duty hours are defined as all clinical and academic activities related to the program; i.e., patient care (both inpatient and outpatient), administrative duties related to patient care, the provision for transfer of patient care, time spent in-house during call activities, and scheduled activities, such as conferences. Duty Hours do not include reading, studying and preparation time spent away from the duty or academic site.

Third and fourth year medical students enrolled in clinical courses (clerkships, sub-internships and clinical electives) will ascribe to the same ACGME's duty hour policy applicable to a first year intern (PGY-1). In accordance to the ACGME's policy:

- Duty hours must be limited to 80 hours per week averaged over a four week period, inclusive of all in-house call activities

Duty Hours/Supervision

- Students must be scheduled for a minimum of one day free of duty every week (when averaged over four weeks). At home call cannot be assigned on these free days.
- Duty periods of students **must not exceed 16 hours in duration, including in-house call. The only exception to this rule will be limited to one (1) in-house 24 hour call during a Saturday in the third year Clinical Surgery Clerkship. In this case, after the 16 hour period has lapsed, students' responsibilities will be restricted to shadowing under direct supervision of a surgery senior resident and/or faculty member.**
- Students should have 10 hours, and MUST have 8 hours, free of duty between scheduled duty periods
- Students must not be scheduled for more than six consecutive nights of night-float or night-shift duties
- No in-house call activity should be scheduled on the day before the final Shelf examination for the clinical clerkships
- **Duty Hour Exceptions:** The Curriculum Committee may grant exceptions to the duty hour policy in exceptional, academically sound and justified circumstances. The Course Director must submit the request in writing to the corresponding Medicine Committee for evaluation. If deemed meritorious, the Medicine Committee will present the request to the Curriculum Committee for final approval.

All clinical course's syllabi must include a copy of this policy. This policy is subject to changes in ACGME Duty Hours Policy.

II. Supervision and Monitoring

Clinical Supervision Policy:

All medical students must be supervised by a physician, either a faculty member or resident, during all required clinical activities. Students will NOT provide unsupervised patient care in any setting.

Monitoring of clinical supervision will be done by the Course Directors and corresponding Medicine Committees. Clinical course evaluations (and evaluations of courses that include clinical activities) will include questions regarding compliance with clinical supervision. When a Course Director detects non-compliance or possible non-compliance, he/she will address them jointly with the corresponding Department Chair.

Monitoring Policies:

Pre-Clinical Years

The Medicine I and II Committees will provide oversight annually to ensure compliance with workload policies. Student and faculty input will be evaluated and taken into account in the preparation of the academic calendar, in order to make any necessary adjustments so as to assure an adequate workload and independent learning balance.

Monitoring of student workload policy will be done by the corresponding Medicine Committees. Course evaluations will include questions regarding compliance with workload policy. When the Medicine Committee detects non-compliance, the appropriate course director will be notified by the committee and immediate action will be required.

First and Second Year Medicine Committee Presidents report the status of compliance with duty-hour policy on a monthly basis to the Curriculum Committee.

Clinical Years

Monitoring of duty hours will be done by the Course Directors and corresponding Medicine Committees. Clinical course will include questions regarding compliance with duty hours. Students may report violation in duty hours, in written form, to the Course Director, Medicine III-IV Committee presidents, or Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Violation incidents will be referred to the appropriate course director.

When a Course Director detects or is notified of non-compliance or possible non-compliance, he/she will address them jointly with the corresponding Department Chair. Yearly, each clinical course director, will discuss with the Medicine III-IV Committee the findings of duty hour monitoring.

Third and fourth year Medicine Committee Presidents report the status of compliance with duty-hour policy on a monthly basis to the Curriculum Committee.

References:

Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education. Common Program Requirements. ACGME. Effective July 1, 2013