

NEOMED ACADEMIC POLICY	Policy No: 3349-AC-409
ACADEMIC POLICY TITLE: Curriculum Contact Hours	EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2018
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: College of Medicine, Office of the Dean and Medical Education	Approval Authority: Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Responsible Office: Office of the Dean and Medical Education

(A) PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to specify the amount of time medical students may spend in scheduled curricular activities in accordance with the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). LCME requires that “the medical school faculty committee responsible for the medical curriculum and the program’s administration and leadership ensure the development and implementation of effective policies and procedures regarding the amount of time medical students spend in required activities, including the total number of hours medical students are required to spend in clinical and educational activities during clerkships.” (*LCME Functions and Structure of a Medical School*, effective July 1, 2016, Standard 8, Element 8.8)

(B) SCOPE

This policy applies to all credit-bearing courses that are part of the College of Medicine Curriculum, M1 through M4 years. It does not apply to any pre-matriculation courses or offerings and does not apply to co-curricular activities at any level or student independent study effort.

(C) DEFINITIONS

- (1) **Contact Hour:** A contact hour is considered to be 50 minutes, which is typically the amount of time in a 60-minute period used for instructional purposes.
- (2) **Credit-bearing Course:** A course offered by the College of Medicine in which a student is enrolled, the course appears on the student’s official transcript with either contact hours or credit-bearing acknowledgment, and a grade is assigned.
- (3) **Specified Independent Learning Activities:** For the purposes of this policy, specified student independent learning includes, but is not limited to, activities and assignments required as preparation for participation in specific learning activities, a structured or unstructured teaching session, including activities such as simulation exercises and related activities such as medical record

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documentation; self-instructional packages; video reviews; preparatory assignments as part of a flipped classroom; and required readings, reports and assignments.

- (4) **Structured Teaching:** For the purposes of this policy, structured teaching (an instructor-intensive activity) includes, but is not limited to instructional activities such as lectures, grand rounds, and whole class sessions/lectures that contain small group interaction.
- (5) **Unstructured Teaching:** For the purposes of this policy, unstructured teaching (a student-intensive activity) includes, but is not limited to, instructional activities such as small group discussions, laboratory sessions and team-based learning.

(D) POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- (1) Monitoring adherence to the policy for all academic years is the responsibility of the Curriculum Management and Assessment Committee, with support by the M1/M2 and M3/M4 Curriculum Sub-committees.
- (2) Students shall be informed of this policy via *The Compass*, individual course syllabi and course orientations, as appropriate, as well as the NEOMED Office of the General Counsel Policy Portal.
- (3) Faculty shall be informed of this policy via the Course Director Handbook and the Site Director Handbooks for clerkships as well as the NEOMED Office of the General Counsel Policy Portal.
- (4) M1 and M2 Years
 - (a) Curriculum hours in the M1 and M2 years are calculated in terms of contact hours of scheduled activities each week.
 - (b) Scheduled contact hours per week should be 25 or fewer averaged across the academic year, with no individual week exceeding 28 contact hours

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inclusive of structured teaching, unstructured teaching, specified independent learning activities and examinations, e.g., activities that contribute to the calculation and determination of course hours.

* An exception to this policy is made for fall semester, 2018, during which scheduled contact hours per week will not exceed 40 hours averaged across the semester.

(c) Independent studying, estimated to be 40-60 hours each week, is not included as part of scheduled contact hours.

(5) M3 and M4 Years

(a) Contact hours in the M3 and M4 years shall include both clinical experience and educational activities related to all courses, clinical courses as well as non-clinical courses that may be offered concurrently or independently and considering acceptable limits of comparability across clinical teaching sites.

(b) Clinical and educational work hours will adhere to the guidelines provided by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, Common Program Requirements.

(i) Clinical and educational work hours must be limited to no more than 80 hours each week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house clinical and educational activities (e.g., lectures, simulation labs, clinical skills assessments, examinations, specified independent learning activities) and clinical work done from home, such as home call.

(a) While the requirement is written with the intent of allowing students to remain beyond their scheduled work periods to care for a patient or participate in an educational activity, these additional hours must be accounted for in the allocated 80 hours averaged over four weeks.

(ii) Students should have eight (8) hours off between scheduled clinical work and education periods.

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- (iii) Students must have at least 14 hours free of required clinical work and education after 24 hours of in-house call.
- (iv) Students must be scheduled for a minimum of one day in seven (7) free of clinical work and required education, when averaged over four weeks.
- (v) Clinical and educational work periods for students must not exceed 24 hours of continuous scheduled clinical assignments. Students who have completed a 24-hour clinical and educational work period may spend up to an additional four (4) hours at a clinical site for transitions of care including rounds, and in educational activities; this additional time must not be used for care of new patients.
- (vi) In rare circumstances, after handing off other responsibilities, a student, on his/her own initiative, may elect to remain or return to the clinical site in the following circumstances:
 - (a) to continue to provide care to a single severely ill or unstable patient;
 - (b) humanistic attention to the needs of a patient or family; or
 - (c) to attend unique educational events.
 These additional hours of care or education should be counted toward the 80-hour weekly limit.
- (vii) Independent studying is not included as part of scheduled contact hours.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the clinical education/course directors in the M3 and M4 years to develop and seek curriculum committee approval of mechanisms for collecting information about and monitoring clinical experience and education hours.
- (d) Each clinical teaching site is provided with flexibility of determining students' on-call requirements in compliance with this policy and with approval of the course director within specified limits of comparability.

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- (6) Students may report violations of contact hours (M1 and M2) and clinical experience and education hours (M3 and M4) without fear of retaliation. Students may submit violation reports or any incidents of retaliation to the course director, the clinical experiential director, the clinical site director, the associate dean for medical education or the University ombuds. Corrective action will be taken, as indicated, by one of the aforementioned College of Medicine personnel.

<p>Approval Information:</p> <p>Initial Approval: Curriculum Management and Assessment Committee (03/13/2018) M1/M2 Curriculum Committee (endorsed 10/19/2017) M3/M4 Curriculum Committee (endorsed 02/28/2018)</p> <p>Next Scheduled Review: May 2019</p> <p>Subsequent Approval:</p>
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