



Policy on Student Academic Workload in the Preclinical Years

I. PURPOSE

The UCC School of Medicine (UCCSoM) recognizes that achieving high education standards that allow excellence in the educational program is the primary goal of medical students. It is also recognized that the time spent in acquiring knowledge is critical to achieve a solid and sound medical education. This policy outlines the limitations on academic workload in order to allow students in the preclinical years to maximize educational benefit from academic activities and limit fatigue which may impair the ability to learn and hinder wellbeing. The main reasons for the meaningful engagement in monitoring students' workload are to demonstrate the UCCSoM's responsibility not only in the learning/teaching process but also in the management of time spent on study and its relation with acquired knowledge.

II. DEFINITIONS

Course: An individual unit of study toward a qualification, identified by a course code and title and carrying a specified grade point value.

Credit Hour: The assigned period of contact hours allotted to a course each week and defined as lecture, laboratory, discussion, clinical clerkship, or supervised independent study. Refer to the Regulations for Student Evaluation and Promotion for specific details.

Semester: Consist of 15 working weeks comprised of 90 days (5 days/week) of academic work. Refer to the Regulations for Student Evaluation and Promotion for specific details.

Academic Workload: The amount of time medical students spend in required academic/educational activities, including the total number of hours medical students are required to spend in clinical, community service and educational activities during the preclinical phase of the curriculum.

III. POLICY CONTENT AND GUIDELINES

The learning objectives of each educational experience cannot be compromised by excessively scheduled contact hours in the pre-clinical educational experience. It is agreed that academic workload expectations for a course should correspond to the number of credits, irrespective of the discipline or the mode of delivery.

This policy establishes that beginning in academic year 2010-2011, and during the preclinical phase of the curriculum, at least an average of two afternoons per week will not be scheduled with any required academic activity.

It is also established that during academic year 2011-2012, and during the preclinical phase of the curriculum, at least an average of three afternoons per week will not be scheduled with any required academic activity.

The oversight of this policy will be the responsibility of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs of the SoM, and the ultimate responsibility for which will reside with the Curriculum Committee.

Specifics of the Policy and Procedures:

1. Since the vast majority of educational activities in pre-clinical education require mandatory student attendance, monitoring of all scheduled educational activities resides with the Curriculum Committee.
2. At least annually, the Curriculum Committee will monitor the scheduled student academic workload for all required courses to assure that learning is not compromised by an excessively dense educational schedule.
3. Any concerns of the Curriculum Committee will be reported immediately to the course coordinator via the SoM Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for corrective action.

REFERENCES:

- Glossary of Medical Education Terms <http://www.iime.org/glossary.htm>
- Kržin-Stepišnik, J., Kolar, O., Trunk-Širca, N., Lesjak, D. (2007). "Student Workload – Student or Teacher Responsibility; Case Study in Higher Education, Slovenia". Presented at the 20th International Congress for Effectiveness and Improvement. Retrieved from: <http://www.fm-kp.si/zalozba/ISBN/978-961-6573-65-8/169-176.pdf>
- LCME Accreditation Standards (Medical Program ED-38 b)
- Regulations for Student Evaluation and Promotion (School of Medicine)

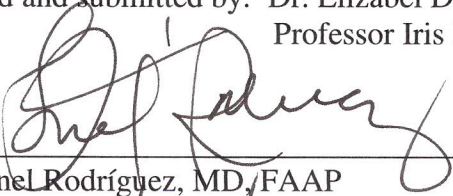
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This Policy takes effects on: September 2011

This Policy will be reviewed on: Every year

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Date: