



UT Health Science Center:	
COM-GS01 Student Workload in the Pre-Clinical Curriculum - COM Medical Education	
Version 2	Publication Date: 02/21/2024

No./Title: COM-G01/ Student Workload in the Pre-Clinical Curriculum (Guideline)	Resp. Office: Medical Education Approval Body: CUME	Effective Date: 12/17/20
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Related Policy: N/A		

Rationale: Students must be afforded adequate opportunity for regular study or review. Therefore, scheduled or required attendance in the curriculum should be limited as feasibly possible. In constructing workload guidelines, LCME expectations must be considered. LCME element 8.8 (Monitoring Student Time) requires responses to the following directives in the Data Collection Instrument that is a part of the accreditation process:

Note if medical students in the pre-clerkship phase of the curriculum have required activities outside of regularly scheduled class time, such as assigned reading or online modules that include information to prepare them for in-class activities. Do not include time for regular study or review. Estimate the average amount of time students spend in such required activities and how this “out-of-class” time is accounted for in calculating student academic workload.

Summarize the content of policies/guidelines covering the amount of time per week that students spend in required activities during the pre-clerkship phase of the curriculum. Note whether the policies/guidelines address only scheduled in-class activities or also include required activities that must be completed outside of scheduled class time. How are the policies/guidelines disseminated to pre-clerkship students and faculty?

Describe the frequency with which the curriculum committee or its relevant subcommittee(s) monitor compliance with relevant policies/guidelines related to the scheduled time in the pre-clerkship phase of the curriculum and the clinical workload of medical students.

Assumptions: Comparable to clerkship training, a standard work week will be based on 60 hours commitment. All scheduled class time, whether considered mandatory attendance or not, will be counted in the workload in actual time (i.e., one hour of class time = one hour of workload). Pre-study materials associated with active learning sessions will be counted as follows: (i) recorded videos will be assigned the actual length of each video, (ii) textbook readings will be assigned as one hour for each 10 pages of reading, and (iii) faculty prepared handouts will be assigned the estimated time to deliver that content in a live lecture (to be determined by the author). Students will be assigned two hours credit for researching their clinical question that emerges from self-directed learning events. It is assumed that active learning sessions such as flipped classrooms or TBLs will reduce the time needed for regular study and review of the associated content.

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Conclusion: Given the assumptions listed above, scheduled sessions should on average consume no more than 20-25 hours of weekly workload over the duration of a course/concurrent courses. Assigned out-of-class efforts (pre-study material, etc.) should not push the average total time above 35 hours per week, allowing students up to an average of 25 hours per week for regular study or review. Effectiveness of the guidelines will be evaluated through student course surveys and faculty-led course review. The Course and Module Directors Curriculum Subcommittee (CMDCS) will evaluate the workload associated with each course as part of regularly scheduled course review and will also evaluate overall student workload every three years during phase reviews. Should a segment of the curriculum be found to consistently exceed the recommended workload limits, the involved course directors will be referred to the senior assistant dean of the basic science curriculum and/or the associate dean for medical education to determine a way to reduce the workload. The senior assistant dean and/or the associate dean, in turn, may seek the help of curriculum committees to resolve any issues.

APPROVAL HISTORY

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