

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY GUIDELINES

MEDICAL STUDENT DUTY HOURS

Learning and Working Environment Principles

- Clinical education should be learner-focused, fostering the acquisition of excellent clinical skills and encouraging individual well-being.
- Clinical education should be patient-centered, promoting best principles of compassionate care, diagnostic reasoning, clinical examination, patient safety, evidence-based care, and cost-effectiveness.
- Within the limits of duty hours, clinical education should involve as much direct patient care as possible, to ensure that learners understand the disease course, with a focus on continuity of patient care experiences and bedside teaching.
- Patient care should be conducted at the patient bedside (equivalent) whenever possible. When care is delivered outside of the direct patient encounter, learners should have the opportunity within that care session to see patients directly with an experienced educator or clinician.
- Direct patient care experiences should be emphasized and maximized. This principle should guide the balance between direct patient care and didactic and other enriching educational experiences that provide perspective and skills for understanding seminal issues in patient care.
- Accomplishment of the core clinical objectives should be reasonable within the designated time frame of the rotation.
- Rotations must ensure that qualified residents, staff and faculty provide appropriate supervision of medical students.

Duty Hours Definition and Guidelines

- Duty hours are defined as all clinical and academic activities related to the students; i.e. patient care, administrative duties related to patient care, the provision for transfer of patient care and scheduled academic activities such as conferences, didactics and Doctoring.
- Duty hours do not include reading and preparation time spent away from the duty site.
- Student duty hours must be limited to 80 hours per week.
- Students must not work beyond 16 continuous hours.
- Overnight shifts should not exceed 6 nights in a row.
- Adequate time for rest and personal activities between required educational activities should be provided. Optimally, this should be a 10-hour period but must be a minimum of 8 hours.
- Students must be provided with 1 day in 7 free from all educational and clinical responsibilities, averaged over a 4-week period.

- Students participating in required daytime educational activities must be excused from clinical rotations at 11pm on the previous night to assure meaningful participation.
- The Medical Student Duty Hour Policy will be communicated to students and supervising physicians (including residents, fellows and faculty) in writing as well as to the students verbally during their Transitions to Clerkships.
- Travel time to rural sites shall be included in Duty Hours calculations

Compliance & Monitoring

This policy will be monitored for compliance by the Office of Medical Education, Instructors of Record and Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education. If it is found that students have worked beyond the allowable time frame as described above, the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education will meet with specific Instructors of Record to assure compliance in the policy.

Work hour violations can be reported through an anonymous survey that is accessible on all clerkship websites or through a link at the end of each clerkship evaluation.

Non-Retaliation

Retaliatory action against students who accurately report infractions of this policy is prohibited. Persons, including attending physician and residents, found responsible for retaliatory actions of any kind will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Sources used in developing this policy include Duty Hours Policies from UC San Francisco, UC San Diego, Stanford University, Case Western University, and University of Pennsylvania.