

Protected Time and Duty Hours Policy

Office of Accountability:	Undergraduate Medical Education
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Undergraduate Medical Education
Approver:	Undergraduate Medical Studies Committee
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Definitions

Break	A day or days during which no learning experiences are scheduled in the curriculum.
Clinical Block	For the purpose of this policy, a clinical block refers to a core clinical rotation, elective, or selective that is completed by an undergraduate medical student during Phase 4.
Duty Hours	Time in Phase 4 during which an undergraduate medical student is scheduled to participate in patient care or educational activities, such as seminars, lectures, and rounds. Duty hours do not refer to study time.
Phase	A unit of the curriculum with an integrated theme composed of a number of courses or clinical rotations after which a learner's academic and professional performance is reviewed by the Student Promotions Committee for promotion or graduation.
Protected Time	Time during which undergraduate medical students are not required to participate in clinical or academic activities.
Required clinical learning experience	A subset of required learning experiences that take place in a health care setting involving patient care that are required of a student in order to complete the medical education program.

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	These required clinical learning experiences may occur any time during the medical educational program.
Required learning experience	An educational unit (e.g., course, block, clerkship rotation or longitudinal integrated clerkship) that is required of a student in order to complete the medical education program. These educational units are usually associated with a university course code and appear on the student's transcript. Required learning experiences are in contradistinction to electives, which are learning experiences of the student's choosing.
University Holiday	Holidays as listed for Memorial University Academic Staff Members.
Vacation	Normally measured in week long blocks, a period of time in Phase 4 during which undergraduate medical students are exempted from all clinical and academic activities related to the M.D. program, providing the opportunity for leisure activities.

Overview

The Undergraduate Medical Studies (UGMS) committee, a standing committee of Faculty Council, has responsibility for the overall evaluation of the curriculum and its objectives, as well as any policy and procedure related to such. This committee is accountable for preparing, for approval by Faculty Council and the appropriate University bodies, the regulations required for the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) program and for monitoring compliance with the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (**CACMS**).

This policy defines the amount of time medical students can spend in clinical and academic activities during required scheduled learning experiences, establishing the concept of **protected time** within the undergraduate medical education (UGME) curriculum. Use of protected time is at the discretion of the student.



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Purpose

To establish the limits on the time that medical students are expected or required to spend in clinical and academic activities and to ensure compliance with **CACMS Element 8.8**.

This policy will also serve as a guide to curricular planners to ensure sufficient time in the UGME curriculum is available for active and self-directed learning.

Scope

Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) program at Memorial University.

Policy

1.0 Phases 1-3

- 1.1. Student attendance at all required learning experiences is expected, but is **mandatory** when a session includes student assessment (ex. quiz, examination, lab report,) or skill development (ex. labs or clinical skills sessions).
- 1.2. The scheduling of sessions and the creation of protected time will be guided by the following:
 - 1.2.1. Sessions may be scheduled from 0900h until 1600h Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 0900h – 1200h on Tuesday.
 - 1.2.2. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Associate Dean, UGME, in consultation with the Assistant Dean, Student Affairs, when:
 - 1.2.2.1. sessions during the preceding week were cancelled due to storms or other emergency closures; or,
 - 1.2.2.2. with respect to Clinical Skills teaching, students are notified in advance and an equivalent or greater amount of protected time is provided in their schedule.
 - 1.2.3. A one (1) hour break must be given between 1200h and 1400h on

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Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

- 1.2.4. At least twenty-four (24) hours must elapse between the end of a course and the final exam for that course.
- 1.2.5. University Holidays, as outlined in the Holidays section of the [Student Handbook](#), are free of any required learning experiences.
- 1.2.6. Weekends are free of any required learning experiences except that they may be used for special exams (e.g., OSCEs) or in the event that scheduled exam time was lost due to a storm or other emergency closure.

2.0 Phase 4

2.1. Duty Hours

- 2.1.1. Attendance is mandatory during all scheduled duty hours.
- 2.1.2. A clinical block normally starts on a Monday and ends, at the latest, by 1700 hours on the last Friday of the clinical block.
- 2.1.3. Duty hours shall not exceed ten (10) hours per day, five (5) days per week, when averaged over the entire clinical block (excluding call days), unless warranted by urgent or emergency circumstances.
- 2.1.4. Regular duty hours (excluding call or shift work) are generally scheduled within the hours of 0645 – 1800, Monday through Friday. In some clinical services, these regular duty hours may vary due to circumstances and conditions inherent within the clinical environment. Students will have duty hours on weekends when scheduled for call or a designated shift.
- 2.1.5. Students must not be scheduled for duties after 1700h if they are taking an examination the following day.
- 2.1.6. Pregnant students will be excused from in-hospital duty including shift work or any scheduled time on call, after 1700 hours Monday to Friday, or at any time during the period of 0800 hours Saturday to 0800 hours

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Monday, subsequent to their thirty-second (32nd) week of pregnancy.

2.1.6.1 Deviations may not be allowed by the clinical service.

2.1.6.2 Students requiring additional accommodation should seek the support of the Student Affairs office.

2.1.7 Time spent attending academic rounds is considered protected time from clinical activities.

2.1.8 A student may request two hours off service each week to attend to personal business.

2.1.8.1 The request must be approved by the clinical block preceptor prior to the student taking the time off service.

2.1.9 All deviations must be approved by the Phase Lead.

2.2. On-call Duty Hours and Designated Shift Work

2.2.1. Normally, on-call responsibilities will not exceed seven (7) days in a twenty-eight (28) day period (i.e., normally one (1) in four (4) call).

2.2.2. Students who are on-call after midnight normally are not expected to work past mid-day the following day.

2.2.3. After twenty-four (24) consecutive hours of service, students must be excused from new consults and clinic duties.

2.2.3.1. After twenty-four (24) hours of consecutive service and before noon of that day, duties should be limited to rounds, follow-up care of patients/transfer of patient care, or academic sessions.

2.2.4. On-call duties and designated shift work end at midnight on the eve of an official break (e.g., call ends at 2359h on the 17th of the month, when the break period commences on the 18th of the month).

2.2.5. Academic Half-Days post call or following overnight designated shift work

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are mandatory.

2.2.5.1. Students are expected to attend sessions that are scheduled in the morning or, with the permission of the discipline coordinator, be required to complete the session 'asynchronously' by reviewing a pre-recorded version of the session.

2.3. Holidays

2.3.1. Unless on call, students are entitled to the holidays as outlined in the Holidays section of [the Handbook](#).

2.3.2. Regardless of the Holiday, call duty and designated shift work must be fulfilled.

2.3.3. On-call duties or shift work cannot start on a Holiday, but the end of on-call duties or shift work can fall on a Holiday.

2.4. Vacation

2.4.1. During academic Year four (4), students must take four (4) weeks of vacation.

2.4.1.1. At least one (1) week of vacation must be taken between the end of the 8710: Core Experiences course and before the start of the calendar year-end break.

2.4.1.2. At least one (1) week of vacation must be taken between the end of the Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS) interview period and before the start of the 8720: Advanced Procedural Competencies course.

2.4.2. Requirements for reassessment or remediation may affect required vacation time.

2.4.3. Deviations must be approved by the Phase Lead.



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- 3.0** Any protected time and/or duty hour violations should be reported to the appropriate Phase Lead.

Related Links

[CACMS](#)

Previous Versions

There is at least one previous version of this policy. Contact the [Policy Analyst](#) to view earlier version(s):

Approval Date: November 20, 2006