

## ***Standards for course hours and student self-study time in the Preclerkship***

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***Approved by:*** Undergraduate Medical Education Executive Committee

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***Date of next scheduled review:*** 31 July 2017

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The Undergraduate Medical Education program respects the importance of enabling students to achieve an appropriate balance between their academic responsibilities, independent learning time, and personal lives. To this end, the following standards have been adopted.

The number of scheduled teaching hours (lectures, seminars, laboratory sessions, and small-group learning activities) by the Faculty in a week of the Preclerkship is not to exceed 32. A week is defined as Monday through Friday, excluding holidays; there are no required educational activities on Saturdays and Sundays.

In addition, across each entire year of the Preclerkship there will be a maximum of 30 hours of mandatory but flexibly scheduled curriculum experiences. Mandatory but flexibly scheduled curriculum experiences include Family Medicine Longitudinal Experience encounters, Inter-Professional Education electives, etc.

Over the course of each year of the Preclerkship, there shall be a minimum total of 36 **unscheduled half-day blocks**<sup>1</sup>, i.e., an average of one half-day block of unscheduled time per week. In addition, these half-day blocks shall be complemented by other periods of unscheduled time to ensure an average of at least eight hours in total per week. The daily lunch hour (which is usually held from 12 to 1 PM) is not included in this unscheduled time.

Moreover:

- The maximum number of scheduled teaching hours in a day shall be seven, and this maximum shall be attained no more than two days per week. On all other days, the maximum number of scheduled teaching hours shall be six.
- There must be no more than three hours of lectures scheduled consecutively.
- There should be no more than four hours of lectures in a day.
- In circumstances where the curricular framework requires additional lecture time, a maximum of four consecutive hours of lecture or six hours of lectures in one day may be permitted only with prior approval from the Preclerkship Director. Extra consideration should be given on such occasions to employing engaging and interactive large-group formats.

Exceptions can be made for unusual circumstances (e.g., to recover a session that was cancelled on short notice due to University closure, unforeseen lecturer unavailability, etc.), but strict adherence to this policy is otherwise expected.

Course directors, insofar as they are responsible for designing and implementing their courses, hold primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with these Standards. Course directors of courses that run synchronously

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<sup>1</sup> An unscheduled half-day block is a period of time that will typically extend until 12 PM (“all morning”) or begin at 1 PM (“all afternoon”) on a given day. Lengthy unscheduled periods that fall between scheduled teaching activities do not constitute unscheduled half-day blocks. For example, if there is scheduled teaching from 9 AM to 11 AM and then more scheduled teaching from 4 PM to 5 PM, the unscheduled period between 11 AM and 4 PM will not be considered an unscheduled half-day block for the purposes of these Standards, but will be recognized as four hours of unscheduled time (with a fifth hour for lunch).

are expected to work collaboratively to ensure that total scheduled teaching hours do not exceed the limits specified above.

Course directors are encouraged to be mindful of students' increased need for self-study time immediately prior to examinations, and to arrange the schedule of sessions in their courses accordingly.

Concerns from students, teachers, or administrative staff members regarding breaches of these Standards should be brought to the attention of the course director in the first instance. If the response is unsatisfactory or if a pattern of breaches emerges, the matter should be raised with the Preclerkship Director for review and redress.