

Policy on Length of International Electives and Selectives in UME

Approved by: Undergraduate Medical Education Executive Committee

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Preamble:

Opportunities for Elective and Selective rotations are an important component of undergraduate medical education and provide students with the chance to explore personal interests, build upon their foundation of medical knowledge, develop the basis of their future career and experience personal and professional growth. It is, however, important that these experiences occur in the context of safe and educational environments which promote the ability of each and every student to learn as much as possible and contribute positively to the environment that they are visiting.

As such, the UME Electives and Transition to Residency (Selectives) Committees have drafted the following policy to guide the length of Elective and Selective experiences taking place outside of Canada. It is further recognized that sites outside of Canada differ enormously in their distance from Toronto and travel time required, cultural mores, health systems, etc. and it is therefore challenging to draft a single policy to suit all potential Elective and Selective sites.

The policy as drafted therefore reflects the minimum acceptable length of time to spend in sites outside of Canada for these two types of experiences. Selectives have a slightly different mandate than Electives, in that they must provide learning experiences which support the goals and objectives of the Transition to Residency Course (TTR410Y). Therefore, additional criteria apply to Selective experiences outside Canada, beyond those applied to Elective experiences. In addition, the length of Selective experiences in general is less flexible, and generally can only be 3, 4 or 7 weeks.

As a general principle, the further the distance or cultural/economic divide between Canada and the site of the Elective, the longer the student should spend in the setting to maximize their own learning and their contributions to their learning environment. Further, students are reminded of the requirement for Predeparture Training for all out-of-country Electives and Selectives and should consult the policy on Predeparture Training for more information. This requirement applies equally to Electives and Selectives in the United States.

Policy for Electives:

The minimum length of time for an Elective to the United States is 2 weeks. The minimum length for Electives outside of Canada and the United States is 3 weeks.

Policy for Selectives:

The minimum length of time for a Selective in a high income country (as defined by the World Bank classification, <http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications/country-and-lending-groups>) is 4 weeks. Exceptions may be made, at the Course Director's discretion, for Selectives in the United States that are close to Toronto, which may be 3 weeks, and Selectives at more distant geographic locations, which must be 7 weeks. The minimum length of Selective to a low or middle income country is 7 weeks.