



# QUILLEN COLLEGE *of* MEDICINE

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy Name: **Pre-Clerkship Medical Student Scheduled Time and Workload**

Policy Replaces a Previous Policy (this includes change in policy name):  Yes/  No

If so, list name of previous policy (include policy number if different): **First- and Second-Year Medical Student Scheduled Time**

Policy Number (issued by the Office of Academic Affairs upon final approval): **MSEC-1112-9**

Policy Owner (Individual, Department, or Committee/Chair): **Kenneth Olive, MD / EAD and MSEC Chair (2008-2013)**  
**Ramsey McGowen, PhD / MSEC Chair (2013-2019)**  
**Ivy Click, EdD / MSEC Chair (2020-)**

Committees, Departments, or Individuals Responsible for Implementation: **M1/M2 Course Directors**

Original Approval Date and Who Approved by: **11/13/2012 – MSEC**

Effective Date(s): **11/12/2012; 4/19/2016; 4/18/2023; 4/16/2024**

Revision Date(s) (include a brief description) and Who Approved by (made by Policy Owner and/or Policy Advisory Committee):

**4/19/2016 - language added stating course directors will evaluate whether the upcoming semester's schedule is in accordance with policy and if not, will notify MSEC / MSEC approved**

**4/18/2023 - language added for clarification of student academic workload, amount of schedule time per week for students, and MSEC's responsibility for establishing guidelines and monitoring academic workload / MSEC approved**

**4/16/2024 – Preparatory Materials Guidelines added as reference to policy and language added clarifying course director responsibility for monitoring preparatory materials – MSEC approved**

Administrative Edits (briefly describe) by Staff and/or the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and Date (these revisions do not require voting/approval by the policy owner):

Exemption(s) to Policy (date, by what committee or individual, and brief description):

LCME Required Policy:  Yes/  No

If yes, please list the Element(s) Affiliated with this Policy (include Element number/name/statement):

### **Element 6.3 Self-Directed and Life-Long Learning**

**The faculty of a medical school ensure that the medical curriculum includes self-directed learning experiences and unscheduled time to allow medical students to develop the skills of lifelong learning. Self-directed learning involves medical students' self-assessment of learning needs; independent identification, analysis, and synthesis of relevant information; appraisal of the credibility of information sources; and feedback on these skills.**

**Element 8.8 Monitoring Student Time**

**The medical school faculty committee responsible for the medical curriculum and the program's administration and leadership ensure the development and implementation of effective policies and procedures regarding the amount of time medical students spend in required activities, including the total number of hours medical students are required to spend in clinical and educational activities throughout the curriculum.**

*All policies will be reviewed by the Policy Advisory Committee every three years unless an earlier review is identified.*

Date of Review:

Revisions Made:  Yes/  No If yes, list revisions made:

Revisions Require Approval by Policy Owner:  Yes/  No

**Policy Statement:**

Student workload includes the amount of scheduled educational events delineated in the class calendar (including both instruction and assessment), the anticipated amount of time (as determined by faculty) to complete required pre-session preparatory material, and time for independent study (including self-directed learning activities). A typical school week in the pre-clerkship phase of the curriculum should not exceed 24 hours of scheduled time and should include three to four blocks (half-days) of unscheduled time to ensure adequate time for independent and self-directed learning, averaged over the semester. Exceptions may be made for COM approved learning activities.

**Purpose of Policy:**

The purpose of this policy is to protect and maximize student learning time and opportunities for unstructured, independent, and self-directed learning within the formal / structured curriculum. Required curricular activities are not to conflict with, nor overlap with, structured curricular time nor the independent and self-directed learning blocks. This policy pertains to the LCME requirements of Element 6.3 (Self-Directed and Life-Long Learning) and Element 8.8 (Monitoring Student Time).

**Scope of Policy (applies to):**

This policy applies to all scheduled instruction and assessment and to required pre-class preparatory assignments in pre-clerkship curriculum activities.

**Policy Activities:**

1. The Medical Student Education Committee (MSEC) is responsible for establishing guidelines for academic workload, monitoring compliance, and reporting on academic workload.
2. The Academic Calendar establishes the first and last day of classes, number of weeks, breaks and holidays. There will be no classes or other required activities scheduled on official university holidays. However, if due to inclement weather classes are missed, make-up sessions may be required and scheduled on Saturdays and/or delivered through use of the learning management system.
3. Required pre-clerkship educational activities will typically be scheduled Monday to Friday, 8:00AM-5:00PM. Exceptions may be approved on a limited basis by curriculum leadership.
4. The average pre-clerkship scheduled time for educational activities should not exceed 24 hours per week. The estimated amount of time to complete required preparatory materials for class should not exceed the scheduled in-class time (i.e., no more than 24 hours of required preparatory work for 24 hours of scheduled in-class educational activities). Refer to the attached *Preparatory Materials Guidelines* for more information.
5. During a typical school week (Monday to Friday, 8:00AM-5:00PM), there should be three to four blocks (half-days) on average of unscheduled time for independent study and self-directed learning.
6. Course Directors will submit schedules to the Office of Academic Affairs for approval and will supervise the amount of required materials assigned to students to prepare for class. Curriculum leadership will oversee academic workload across course elements to ensure adherence to this policy.

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7. Academic workload will be monitored by MSEC and its sub-committees through annual course review, phase review, and comprehensive review cycles.

<b>Administrative Reviews/Approvals</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>
<i>University Compliance (if applicable)</i>	
<i>Policy Advisory Committee (includes three-year reviews)</i>	
<i>Associate Dean for Accreditation Compliance (if applicable)</i>	
<i>Vice Dean for Academic Affairs</i>	

<b>Policy Review and/or Revision Completed By (if applicable)</b>	<b>Date Policy Reviewed and/or Approved (if applies to that department, committee, or group)</b>
<i>Office of the Dean</i>	
<i>Office of Academic Affairs</i>	March 2016; April 2016; March 2023, 5/10/2023
<i>Office of Student Affairs</i>	
<i>Department of Medical Education</i>	
<i>Medical Student Education Committee</i>	11/13/2012; 4/19/2016; 4/18/2023; 4/16/2024
<i>Student Promotions Committee</i>	
<i>Faculty Advisory Council</i>	
<i>Administrative Council</i>	
<i>M1/M2 Course Directors</i>	March 2016 for input; May 2016 for distribution; April 2024
<i>M3/M4 Clerkship/Course Directors</i>	
<i>Student Groups/Organizations (describe):</i>	
<i>Other (describe):</i>	

<b>Final Policy Emailed to:</b>	<b>Date of Email Notifications</b>
<i>Medical Education Director for Posting on Educational Policies Website</i>	5/15/2023; 5/1/2024
<i>Policy Owner</i>	5/1/2024
<i>Admissions Office for Catalog (only new policies)</i>	

Appendix A

## Preparatory Materials Guidelines

The expected overall workload per week should aim to be reasonable, providing time to fully engage in a challenging curriculum and time of learning, while also recognizing personal health and wellness needs. The overall workload per week, including all activities across all elements, should be calculable based on a tally of scheduled in-class activities, required out-of-class activities, and an estimate of the independent preparation and self-directed learning time necessary to master the learning requirements each week.

**In-class activities:** large group sessions, small group discussions, IQ cases, review sessions, labs, simulations, preceptorships, and exams.

**Out-of-class activities:** assigned reading to prepare for in-class sessions, recorded lectures or videos, independent modules, and weekly checkpoints.

**The total student workload should not exceed 60 hours per week.** Total student workload includes in-class activities, required out-of-class activities, and time for self-directed learning. Faculty should clearly label required materials for learning sessions. Except in rare circumstances, supplemental materials should only be provided by student request.

**The total length of required preparation materials should not exceed your session time.** If you are teaching a 50-minute session, the combination of required reading, video lectures, etc. should equal approximately 50 minutes of work. This allows students time to complete the required activity and to engage in independent study and self-directed learning during the week.

## Estimating Time to Complete Assignments

Please use the following references when estimating the time to complete required assignments and pre-work.

**Textbook readings:** 10 pages per hour (assuming approx. 500 words per page)

**Recorded videos/lectures:** Actual length of video. Faculty should aim for video segments no longer than 20-30 minutes. If you cannot cover one topic in this time, break your content into multiple videos. Most OnlineMedEd, Boards & Beyond, & Amboss videos meet this recommendation. Faculty should provide time markers of relevant material students should view in longer previously recorded videos.

**Faculty prepared handouts:** If the handout contains new/unique information, estimate the same as textbook reading (10 pages per hour at approximately 500 words per page). If information in the handout is supplementary to textbook or recorded lectures, then do not count this in the workload (e.g., the handout provides a guided walkthrough of other assigned materials but does not contain new content).

**Written H&P:** 1 hour for every 500 words

**Written Reflections/Discussion Posts:** 1 hour for every 250 words

### Other considerations for workload:

**Weekly checkpoints:** Time required to take checkpoint based on number of questions

**IQ cases:** In-class time plus time to research objectives

**Exam weeks:** Required activities should be reduced the week of major exams to allow students time for independent study.

## Pre-Work Assignment Examples

Every session should include concise learning objectives for the student. Daily quizzes and weekly checkpoint assessments should be linked to the learning objectives.

Required pre-work for a 110-minute session:

Example 1:

- 10 pages of textbook reading
- Two 20-minute video lectures with accompanying guided handout
- 10 practice questions

Example 2:

- 15-page detailed handout with new content (not included elsewhere)
- 20-minute video lecture

Example 3:

- 10-page detailed handout with less than 50% new content
- Two 15-minute video lectures
- 40 Amboss questions

## References

- Rice University Course Workload Estimator: <https://cte.rice.edu/workload>
- Wake Forest University Enhanced Course Workload Estimator: <https://cat.wfu.edu/resources/tools/estimator2/>
- Klatt, Edward C. MD; Klatt, Carolyn A. MLIS. How Much Is Too Much Reading for Medical Students? Assigned Reading and Reading Rates at One Medical School. *Academic Medicine* 86(9):p 1079-1083, September 2011. | DOI: 10.1097/ACM.0b013e31822579fc
- Shaffer, Kerri MLIS, MEd; Colbert-Getz, Jorie PhD, MS. Best Practices for Increasing Reading Compliance in Undergraduate Medical Education. *Academic Medicine* 92(7):p 1059, July 2017. | DOI: 10.1097/ACM.0000000000001729