



Area: University of Oklahoma School of Community Medicine PA Program, Tulsa
Title: Student Educational Obligations and Limitations Policy

The PA program curriculum is designed to prepare students for the demands of clinical practice while limiting fatigue, which may impair a student's ability to learn. The program has developed and implemented the following policy regarding: i) student work hours, and ii) the days and times that students are obligated to curricular activities.

The OU School of Community Medicine PA Program recognizes that education is the primary goal of PA students. As such, the program expects that students make clinical activities a high priority and ensure that outside activities (including but not limited to personal activities and commitments, scheduled travel, and other activities) do not conflict with their obligation to curricular activities.

Didactic Curriculum Policy

The amount of scheduled class time in the didactic curriculum is based on course credit hours. Required activities to be completed outside of the classroom (e.g., independent study reading assignments or activities required to prepare for in-class activities) will be considered a type of scheduled activity, will be included on the student course schedule, and will be included in the scheduled credit hour calculations.

Didactic Coursework Scheduling and Times During Which Students are Obligated to Curricular Activities

Didactic curriculum classwork is typically scheduled between 8:00am and 5:00pm, Monday – Friday. This includes activities scheduled in advance as well as activities that must be re-scheduled. On rare occasions students may be required to participate in instructional or assessment activities that occur outside of this schedule (including evenings and weekends).

Clinical Curriculum Policy (i.e., Duty Hours)

The work hours (or “duty hours”) for PA students are consistent with the medical student policy and ACGME duty hour guidelines. Duty hours are defined as all clinical and academic activities associated with the clinical course.

Duty hours are limited to no more than 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period.

Students must be scheduled for a minimum of one day in seven free of clinical and academic activities (when averaged over four weeks). Clinical and academic activities must not exceed 24 hours of continuous duty.

Time off between shifts:

Students should have 8 hours off between scheduled periods of clinical and academic activities.

Students must have at least 14 hours free of clinical and academic activities after a 24-hour in-house call

Overnight call for OU SCM students varies across clinical courses.

Clinical Course Scheduling and Times During Which Students are Obligated to Curricular Activities

Students are obligated to clinical courses (including clerkships) beginning the morning of the start date* of the rotation continuing until the point that students are released on the stop date* of the rotation. Students may be asked to participate in activities at any time and on any day during the rotation providing that students do not violate the work hour policy.

Students do not have obligations on the weekend following the end of a clinical rotation except for the Saturday following the last scheduled rotation of the academic year, which may be used as an exam make-up date. Students are obligated to attend all make-up activities, including this Saturday, and must not make personal plans that potentially conflict with make-up activities.

* The start and stop dates are university business days according to the rotation date schedule annually published by the College of Medicine and the PA Program.

Reporting, Assessing, and Correcting Violations

Students will be oriented to this policy. Students may report violations of duty hours policies to the PA Director of Clinical Education, PA Student Program Manager, or the PA Program Director.

The PA Clinical Committee will address any violations of the policy, including reporting violations to the Curriculum Review Committee.