

# Policy on Student Workload in the Preclinical Curriculum

**Authorizing Body:** Curriculum Committee

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## **Rationale:**

A medical school must ensure that students have time to learn. Medical students must have unscheduled time available in their week to engage in self-directed learning and independent study. Additionally, the School of Medicine is an advocate of health and wellness and is committed to reducing the excessive demands that may impact a student's health.

In order to succeed in providing more time for self-directed learning, studying and a reduction in excessive demands, the medical school limits the number of contact hours during the pre-clerkship phase of medical school. Specifically, during the pre-clerkship phase, the maximum amount of scheduled required activities during any given week cannot exceed an average of 24 hours. This includes lecture, small group, lab and other required learning activities.

## **Scope and Applicability:**

All students enrolled in the M1 and M2 years OUWB School of Medicine.

## **Standard Practice Guideline:**

### **Procedures:**

1. Student workload contact hours should not exceed 7 hours per day.
2. Student workload contact hours should not exceed an average 24 per week.
3. Time should be set aside for a daily midday two-hour break.
4. Instruction should not commence before 8 am or continue past 6 pm.
5. Scheduling should provide one unscheduled afternoon per week.

Any exception to these guidelines must be approved by M1/M2 Curriculum Subcommittee and/or the Associate Dean for Preclinical Education.

### **Definitions:**

**Workload contact hour:** A workload contact hour represents 60 minutes of scheduled instruction or formal assessment given to students. This also includes any e-learning activity that is used in place of, or in addition to the scheduled in-class instruction. This does not include time taken for patient care and clinical responsibilities. Contact time includes the sum of all scheduled and unscheduled learning activities, but does not include optional learning activities or self-directed learning activities.

**Scheduled learning activities:** Scheduled learning activities include lectures, small-group discussions, laboratories, patient panels, student presentations, assessments, and any other required instruction that occurs at a time specified in a course syllabus or schedule.

**Unscheduled learning activities:** Unscheduled learning activities include asynchronous online learning, viewing of a pre-recorded lecture or video for flipped classroom sessions, protected time for completion of group assignments, student presentations, and EMBARK capstone project research. These unscheduled activities are noted in course syllabi and should be noted with a placeholder on the OUWB Class Google calendar.

**Optional learning activities:** Optional learning activities include optional review or laboratory sessions not scheduled as counting towards required course attendance on the OUWB Google calendar.

**Self-Directed learning activities:** Self-Directed learning activities include time spent for studying and completing assigned readings. This time is intended for students to engage in studying and self-directed learning outside of contact hours.

## **Related Policies and Guidelines:**

## **Appendix:**