Clinical Service Work Hours

Medical students rotating on clinical services (clerkships, selectives and electives) should be subject to the same principles that govern the 80-hour work week for residents. Clerkship, electives and selectives directors are responsible for monitoring and ensuring that duty hours are adjusted as necessary. Student duty hours should be set taking into account the effects of fatigue and sleep deprivation on learning and patient care. In general, medical students should not be required to work longer hours than residents.* (Curriculum Committee 9/9/2004; modified 12/18/2008)

* LCME Standard ED-38. The committee responsible for the curriculum at a medical education program, along with the program’s administration and leadership, must develop and implement policies 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 during clinical clerkships (or, in Canada, clerkship rotations).

Attention should be paid to the time commitment required of medical students, especially during the clinical years. Medical students' hours should be set after taking into account the effects of fatigue and sleep deprivation on learning, clinical activities, and health and safety.