

# MD Program

## Curricular Time in Year 1, Year 2, and the Clerkship Curricular Units Policy



**Queen's**  
UNIVERSITY

*Curricular Component: Policy #CC-12v4*

*Approved by Curriculum Committee: April 8, 2024*

*Approved by MD PEC: November 26, 2024*

*Effective Date: July 1, 2024*

### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 This policy brings principles and decisions by the Curriculum Committee about the time medical students spend in required activities, to provide a balance among academic learning events, independent study time, and personal lives of a student. It is also intended to determine the length of an academic day, protect Independent Learning time, and reflect other decisions about curricular time.

### 2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 In Year 1, Year 2, and the Clerkship Curricular Units, curricular time for required activities for students is defined as from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., with 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. free for lunch, Monday to Friday inclusive. The exceptions to this definition are statutory holidays as outlined by Queen's University. There are no scheduled academic learning events on Saturday or Sunday.
- 2.2 Independent Learning (IL) time is protected time in the calendar deliberately set aside for students to use as they deem fit, on their own specific study needs, determined by their own objectives. This time allows for such activities as service learning, First Patient Project, or any other independent study by students.
- 2.3 "Curricular learning events" are required learning activities for students that are part of a course, recognized by the Curriculum Committee.

### **3.0      Regulations**

- 3.1      Students will be granted a 10-minute break for every 50 minutes of teaching.
- 3.2      Curricular time will **not** be used to schedule non-curricular events.
- 3.3      In any given week, each student should have a minimum of 8 hours of IL time, preferably in two 4-hour contiguous blocks, or at minimum, at least one 4-hour contiguous block, in addition to at least one 2-hour block and two other hours. In four-day weeks (those affected by Statutory Holidays), six hours of IL time are allotted where students should have at least one 4-hour block and 2 other hours in the week as IL time.
- 3.4      IL time will be protected, except in extenuating circumstances, so that no curricular learning event will be scheduled for students in those blocks. Extenuating circumstances that affect this time must be approved by the relevant Curricular Director.
- 3.5      Lunch time is scheduled in addition to IL time.
- 3.6      Curricular events may not be scheduled during the student lunch hour.
- 3.7      Some curricular learning events such as those involving more than one cohort of students or students from other schools, may need to be scheduled outside of the school day. In this case, each event must be brought to Curriculum Committee for approval.
- 3.8      If a curricular learning event takes place outside of curricular time, students must have a reciprocal amount of IL time during the week in addition to the usual number of hours of IL time for that week.

### **4.0      Oversight and Monitoring**

- 4.1      The Curricular Directors, with the support of the Curricular Coordinators, are responsible for implementing and addressing challenges to the policy.

- 4.2 The Teaching, Assessment, and Learning Committee will track and report on independent learning events as part of the current learning type tracking processes.
- 4.3 Concerns from students, teachers, or administrative staff members regarding breaches of this policy should be brought to the attention of the Course Director, initially, and if not resolved satisfactorily, then to the Curricular Director for review and redress. Finally, appeals to the Assistant Dean, Curriculum may be made if there is disagreement with the Curricular Director.

## **5.0 Reporting**

- 5.1 A report of IL time in Pre-clerkship and the Clerkship Curricular Courses will be reviewed annually by the Curricular Directors and the Curriculum Committee at the committee's annual retreat. The report will also include data on when exceptions had to be made to the curricular time. Corrections will be made where necessary for the following academic year.

## **6.0 Procedure In Pre-Clerkship and Clerkship Curricular Courses**

- 6.1 Scheduling is managed by the Curricular Director in conjunction with Course Directors, assisted by Curricular Coordinators.
- 6.2 IL time will be scheduled for each week of curricular time.
- 6.3 With reference to 2.3, not all students will necessarily have the same 8 hours of IL time in a week; it will vary according to small group schedules and individual schedules based on group work, labs, etc. However, each student should have 8 IL hours in almost all curricular weeks, except for 4-day weeks.
- 6.4 With Reference to 2.4, an extenuating circumstance might include a situation where a teacher was unable to teach (e.g. death in the family, unexpected clinical urgent clinical commitment, etc.) and a session had to be rescheduled and could not be accommodated at any other time. The Curricular director must approve this request.
- 6.5 The weeks containing December 6<sup>th</sup> (National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women), and September 30<sup>th</sup> (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) will be considered 5-day weeks. No curricular events will be scheduled

on these days (or their alternates if they fall on a weekend) and this time can be counted towards IL time.