

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Clinical assignment policy

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- A. To inform UH College of Medicine students, staff, and faculty of the guidelines for clinical assignments.
- B. To ensure the UH College of Medicine complies the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) standards for the medical education program, including LCME Standard 10.9.

II. BACKGROUND

To provide students with a relevant, comprehensive and high-quality medical education, and to educate them to care for diverse patient populations, work in diverse settings, and to interact with different groups of students, the UH College of Medicine places students at community teaching sites away from the medical school campus. *Student assignment to these sites is primarily based on the educational merit of the site and is not primarily based on the proximity of the site to the student's home*

III. POLICY

- A. Clinical assignment process for Longitudinal Primary Care (LPC)
 - 1. Students will submit a request for their preceptor site prior to matriculation by the Office of Student Affairs in conjunction with the LPC Course Director.
 - 2. Students may choose based on specialty or location and rank their preferences 1-5.
 - 3. Students will be assigned to a site by a lottery system.
 - 4. Every effort will be made to assign a student to one of their 5 requests, but students are not guaranteed to receive their requested site.
 - 5. At the end of the first semester, students will give feedback on their preceptor sites; if a student raises a concern, the LPC Course Director will meet with the student to see if reassignment is needed.
 - 6. If a student has an issue prior to the end of the first semester or at any time during the LPC courses, they should meet with the LPC Course Director to discuss their concern.
 - 7. A request for change in assignment may be considered on a case by case basis depending on capacity issues.
 - 8. If a student does not receive the change in assignment that they seek, they may utilize the appeal process.
- B. Clinical assignment process for Clerkships – Year 2 - 3
 - 1. Students will be able to rank their preference of site for the core clinical experience.
 - 2. Assignments will be made on a lottery basis that considers student preferences by the office of Student Affairs. Specific sites cannot be guaranteed.
 - 3. If a student misses the deadline for turning in their request, that request will be assigned the largest number in the lottery (last considered).
 - 4. If a student has concerns about their assigned clinical site related to special circumstances, they may meet with the ADSAAO to discuss options for changing the schedule.

- C. Clinical assignment process for Advanced clerkships/Electives Year 3-4
 - 1. Students will submit their preferences for electives and advanced clerkships by the due date established by the Office of Student Affairs.
 - 2. If a student misses the deadline for turning in their request, that request will be assigned the largest number in the lottery (last considered).
 - 3. Office of Student Affairs will assign the schedule to the student.
- D. Criteria for change of clerkship site
 - 1. Documented family hardship
 - 2. Medical conditions that affect assignment
 - 3. Irreconcilable transportation issues
 - 4. Religious reasons
 - 5. Academic difficulty
 - 6. Other exceptional circumstances
 - 7. Any issue related to the learning environment must be reported and reassignment may be considered as part of the solution
- E. Trading with another student
 - 1. Trading is not allowed for LPC. Students must meet with the LPC Course Director to discuss any changes.
 - 2. Prior to the beginning of a clerkship experience, students may submit a request for a trade if another student has agreed to trade.
 - a) Each student involved in the trade must submit a written request to the ADSAAO which includes the reason for the request
 - b) The ADSAAO may choose to meet with the students individually for further clarification
 - c) Trades are not effective until approved by the ADSAAO in writing
- F. Appeal of process for clinical assignments
 - 1. A student may appeal a decision of the LPC Course Director or Office of Student Affairs if they feel there are extenuating circumstances.
 - 2. Students must submit the appeal in writing to the ADSAAO and describe the reason for the request based on the criteria for change of clerkship site.
 - 3. The ADSAAO will meet with the student and consider the request.
 - 4. The ADSAAO will deliver the decision in writing to the student and the appropriate course/clerkship director.
 - 5. The decision of the ADSAAO is final.
- G. Driving distance guidelines
 - 1. During their pre-clerkship and required core clerkships, medical students will be expected to travel to a community hospital or clinic located within a 30-mile radius of UH College of Medicine campus. Students that have concerns regarding the timely arrival at clinic should speak with the course/clerkship director and the preceptor.
 - 2. Students must be prepared to travel to sites which will not have access to public transportation. It is the student's responsibility to arrange travel to and from clinical sites at his or her own expense. In addition, the student must be prepared to travel in adverse weather conditions and at various times of the day.
 - 3. Advanced Clerkships and Electives may require travel of greater distances.
 - a) The students' required Rural Clerkship may take place outside of the 30-mile radius.
 - b) Students may, at their discretion and with approval by the UH College of Medicine ADSAAO schedule electives at any approved location.

4. Clerkships that are scheduled at a location that is outside of a 75-mile radius of the UH College of Medicine Campus must include a provision for overnight housing for the student(s) involved.
 - a) Housing will be provided by the UH College of Medicine at rural training sites that are regularly used by UH Medical Students.
 - b) Housing during an Away Elective must be arranged in advance by the medical student and any involved costs will be the responsibility of the student.
 - c) Documentation that housing has been arranged will be a requirement for approval of the clerkship or away elective.
5. For students with a documented disability that impairs their transportation abilities, they must make this fact known to the ADSAAO and LPC or relevant clerkship director prior to scheduling of site assignments. Students will work with the University of Houston Center for Students with DisABILITIES (CSD) office, who will recommend accommodations and support services to UH students who have temporary or permanent health impairments and/ or physical limitations. The student must still be prepared to travel to sites which are not close to their home address and the student should provide the coordinator with a range of site addresses which they can access by public transportation or by other means.

IV. MONITORING OF THIS POLICY

- A. Distance travelled will be monitored by the Course and Clerkship Directors as they onboard preceptors for clinical experiences in the LPC, LIC, and advanced clerkships.
- B. The Offices of Student Affairs and Medical Education will work with students as accommodations are needed.

| Approval History | | |
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| <i>Approver</i> | <i>Status</i> | <i>Date</i> |
| Transitional Curriculum Committee | Approved | August 7, 2019 |
| Curriculum Committee | Approved | April 8, 2020 |
| Review by UH Office of General Counsel | Pending | |

| Document History | |
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| Date Created | August 2019 |
| Date Last Modified | March 24, 2020 |
| Responsible Office | Medical Education |
| Next Scheduled Review Date | May 2022 |
| Stakeholder Communication Method and Date | |
| Revision History/Purpose | March 24, 2020: structural modifications only |