POLICY NAME: Elective Rotations

Responsible Party: Office of Medical Education

Applies To CMED: [X] Students  [X] Residents  [X] Staff  [ ] Administration

Approval Date: 1/20/16 CurrComm

[ ] Policy  [ ] Procedure

DEFINITIONS:

**Elective clerkship**: The third and fourth year of the curriculum is divided into 4 week blocks. The 4 week block after completion of 5 required inpatient clerkships during 3rd year is available for a Year 3 elective. Additionally, electives may be taken in any block during Year 4. Electives may focus on patient care at the level of a year 3-4 student, or on research related to topics of clinical relevance (e.g. epidemiology, clinical trial, translational science). Electives are chosen at the discretion of the student, under the guidance of their faculty advisor, based on their needs and interests. Pre-requisites for desired elective must be completed prior to enrollment.

**Intramural elective clerkship**: An elective approved by the CMED Curriculum Committee offered at the student’s home campus or a CMED clinical teaching affiliate site.

**Extramural domestic elective clerkship**: An elective offered by an LCME-accredited medical school or ACGME accredited residency outside of CMED. All out-of-system domestic electives must be approved by the Associate Dean, Distributed Campuses or designee at least 30 days in advance of start date.

**Extramural international elective clerkship**: An elective conducted outside of the United States and Canada. All international electives must be vetted and approved by the Global Health Elective Committee (GHEC) and the Associate Dean, Distributed Campuses or designee at least 60 days in advance of start date. In addition, all international electives are subject to the approval of CMU Office of Study Abroad.

**Research elective clerkship**: An elective with focus on a particular research project with a faculty mentor. This research may be related to topics of clinical relevance (e.g. epidemiology, review of literature, clinical trial) or topics of basic and applied science (e.g. bench research). Only 4 weeks of research activity will be counted toward the 24 week total elective requirement.
Research electives conducted with CMED faculty members will be considered intramural, all others will be considered extramural.

**Self-Initiated Elective:** An elective designed to meet a specific educational need for which a current elective either does not exist or is still under development. Self-initiated electives can be intramural or extramural. An application form needs to be submitted to the Office of Medical Education at least 30 days in advance that includes objectives, instructional and assessment methodology, and supervision. A communication from the supervising preceptor and host institution indicating acceptance of the student is also required. Self-initiated electives are subject to the approval of the Associate Dean, Distributed Campuses or designee.

**POLICY:**

Elective clerkships (*intramural and extramural*) afford students exposure to a breadth of medical specialities and sub-specialities and an opportunity to further their education and experience in these areas. They also play an important role in the residency selection process for medical students. To this end, the College of Medicine will provide the opportunity for students to complete clinical and non-clinical elective clerkships, subject to the following:

1. All students are required to complete 24 weeks of elective clerkships.
2. Year 3-4 students may not take more than 8 weeks of elective rotations with a focus in any one particular or identical specialty or sub-specialty area.
3. Students are required to take at least 4 weeks of patient care electives in both the medical and the surgical disciplines.
4. Elective clerkships are scheduled in the curriculum for 4 weeks. However, students may take two- (2) week electives within the 4-week timeframe, 2 week elective and 2 week vacation block, provided they have been approved in advance.
5. Year 3-4 students may not take more than twelve (12) weeks of out-of-system elective rotations. All out-of-system electives must be approved by the Associate Dean, Distributed Campuses or designee and offered through an LCME accredited medical school.
6. All out-of-system domestic electives must be approved by the Office of Medical Education at least 30 days in advance of the start date.
7. Students interested in taking clinical electives at international sites should discuss this with the Office of Medical Education as soon as possible, as considerable preparation is required. All out-of-system international electives must be vetted and approved by the Global Health Elective Committee (GHEC) and the Associate Dean, Distributed
Campuses or designee at least 60 days in advance of start date. International electives are also subject to approval by the CMU Office of Study Abroad.

8. Students may begin to fulfill their elective rotation requirements any time after completion of the first year if they meet the pre-requisites of that elective rotation.

9. Research electives can be taken in 4-week blocks, but may take place consecutively in cases where there is time available such as for the year 1 and 2 students (e.g. 2x 4 weeks over the summer period).

10. Students may engage in shadowing experiences but these experiences do not replace elective rotations to fulfill the graduation requirements.

PROCEDURES:

Student application for an elective clerkship:

1. Applications and placements for intramural elective clerkships will be managed through the CMED Office of Medical Education.

2. Students are required to discuss prospective intramural and extramural elective selections with their faculty advisor prior to application. Advisors will encourage students to use their electives to pursue a broad range of interests in addition to their chosen specialty.

3. Applications for extramural domestic elective clerkships are available through the respective institution’s medical education office or through the AAMC Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS). Participation in extramural electives is a privilege and MUST BE APPROVED by the Associate Dean, Distributed Campuses or designee at least 30 days prior to the clerkship start date.

4. Students wishing to participate in an extramural international elective should contact the Global Health Elective Committee (GHEC) for assistance. Participation in extramural international electives is a privilege and MUST BE VETTED AND APPROVED by the GHEC and the Associate Dean, Distributed Campuses at least 60 days prior to the clerkship start date. In addition, all extramural electives are subject to the approval of the CMU Office of Study Abroad.

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