

POLICY TITLE: <i>Electives Policy</i>	APPROVAL DATE: <i>July 3, 2019</i> <i>Revised June 4, 2020</i> <i>Revised June 3, 2021</i> <i>Revised March 3, 2022</i>
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: <i>Office of Medical Education</i> & <i>Office of Student Affairs</i>	APPLIES TO: <i>M3 and M4 Students</i>

POLICY STATEMENT

PURPOSE

The University of Cincinnati College of Medicine (UCCOM) offers electives to medical students to broaden and balance the overall educational development of each student while enhancing learning in preparation for residency as well as an opportunity for career exploration and appreciation for medical specialties. This policy outlines the types of electives that are available at each academic level and the associated enrollment requirements. All electives must be approved by the Education Program Committee.

Pre-Clerkship

Longitudinal Electives

Provides medical students the opportunity to take an elective offered for two or four weeks credit that spans across several months and in many instances more than a single academic year starting during the pre-clerkship phase in the M1 or M2 year. Credit for completion of these electives is applied during the fourth year. While students may apply for consideration to more than one longitudinal elective, students are restricted to enrolling in only ONE longitudinal elective. Students may apply to any longitudinal elective regardless of class rank. However, if a student experiences academic difficulty at any time while enrolled in the elective, consideration of withdrawal will be discussed with the elective director, student, and possibly advisor in the office of student affairs.

Longitudinal electives may include activities in the third and/or fourth year and, therefore, can be taken concurrently with any type of elective including acting internship (AI), intensive clinical experiences (ICE), general elective or part-time elective.

M3 Electives

Third Year Specialty Electives*

During the third year of medical school, students are required to choose two specialty electives each lasting two weeks. The emphasis for these electives is for career exploration. These electives are interspersed during the third year and are selected by way of a lottery system permitting students to rank order of preference. See Appendix A

Deferment of this requirement will be rare and granted only under exceptional circumstances such as the following: (1) to allow military (Health Professions Scholarship Program) students to do their required active duty or (2) extenuating personal/academic circumstances. The office of Student Affairs will review all requests. The student

will replace the deferred weeks of M3 specialty clerkships/electives with an equivalent number of additional weeks of M4 electives that must be completed to meet graduation requirements.

Specialty Electives Offered:

- Anesthesiology
- Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit
- Clinical Oncology
- Dermatology
- Emergency Medicine
- Geriatric Medicine
- Medical Intensive Care Unit
- Ophthalmology
- Otolaryngology
- Pathology
- Radiology
- Urology

M4 Electives*

The fourth year is designed to provide medical students with more independence and responsibility in terms of patient care to ensure that they have met the overarching program objectives of UCCOM.

1. Students must complete all required third year clerkships prior to starting any fourth year electives.
 - a. Exception: Students with unique circumstances may be permitted to take an M4 elective prior to completing third year clerkships. Students must select from a pre-approved list of electives and obtain permission from their advisor in the Office of Student Affairs.
2. Students must complete a total of 28 weeks of elective credit. Specifically, all students must take a defined number of weeks within each elective grouping:
 - a. A total of 4 weeks of a Specialty Acting Internship
 - b. A total of 12 weeks of Intensive Clinical Experience
 - c. A total of 12 weeks of General Electives
 - d. During the spring semester of the M4 year, students must complete a minimum of 4 of the required 28 elective weeks in (2) 2-week or (1) 4-week elective that provides the student with the responsibility of actively providing direct patient care for a minimum of 20 hrs/week.
 - e. An additional 12 weeks is considered unscheduled or flex time, which is time to be used for interviews, vacations, or other personal use.

Elective Type	Duration	Total Weeks
Specialty Acting Internship (AI)	Four Week block	4 weeks
Intensive Clinical Experience (ICE)	Two or Four Week block	12 weeks
General Electives	Two or Four week block	12 weeks
	Total	28 weeks
*12 weeks unscheduled/flex time		

3. Electives are offered for two weeks OR four weeks total credit. The time to complete the total number of hours can be offered as full time which is 40 hours per week or part time which would be less than 40 hours per week.
 - a. Two weeks = 80 hours
 - b. Four weeks = 160 hours
4. Refer to the absence policy for blackout dates and attendance issues.

5. To drop a course, students should submit a request at least four weeks prior to the start date in order to automatically withdraw to avoid a formal approval process. If the drop request is submitted less than 30 days, the drop request must go through a formal approval process with the department.
6. To add a course, students should submit a request four weeks prior to the start date for consideration for approval. If the add request is submitted less than 30 days prior to the start date, the add request must go through a formal approval process with the department. Requests submitted less than 30 days may not necessarily be approved due to the short-time frame and onboarding process.
7. The same elective cannot be taken twice unless it is an away or research elective.

*Detailed descriptions and syllabi for each elective are available in the M3/4 Course Offerings on MedOneStop

Specialty Acting Internship – total 4 weeks

Acting Internships (other schools called sub-interns or sub-Is) is a four-week experience for the student to practice being an intern under the careful supervision of an attending physician and senior level resident physician. Acting Interns (AI) are the primary caregiver for these inpatients, performing the history and physical, creating a differential, then writing the orders, and managing the patient's care throughout the hospitalization. The AI also participates in call, cross coverage, and patient care transitions just like any other first year resident. Students will choose from a specialty/discipline of their choice: surgery, pediatrics, family medicine, anesthesiology, obstetrics, gynecology, neurology, psychiatry, emergency medicine or internal medicine. AIs must be completed in Cincinnati.

Intensive Clinical Experience (ICE) – total 12 weeks

Defined as intensive, substantial, direct patient care experience providing more than 20 hours of direct clinical/patient care experience and responsibility; cannot be primarily shadowing or in a didactic setting. Designed to teach medical students the importance of actively participating in the care of a patient and the health care team. Students spend 50% of the rotation in face-to-face patient interactions while serving as a member of the medical team. Four of the 12 weeks of ICE must be taken in Cincinnati.

General Electives –total 12 weeks

Provides medical students with an opportunity to broaden and balance their educational experience in preparation for intern year.

Part-time Electives

Provides fourth year medical students the opportunity to take an elective offered for two or four weeks credit with fulfillment of required time to obtain credit spanning from one month to several months of the entire M4 academic year. Part-time electives provide medical students with an opportunity for flexible working hours, nonconsecutive working days, and the ability to overlap with a qualifying elective. These electives allow students to be productive during interview season months.

- Students may overlap a part-time elective with an elective that allows overlap as noted on the M4 Course Availability schedule page in MedOneStop.
- Students may not miss any components of one elective in order to complete requirements of overlapping elective.
- Part-time electives cannot be overlapped with an AI or ICE credit electives.
- Students may take a maximum of 2 electives per M4 rotation i.e full-time plus part-time or two part-time provided the electives permit overlap as noted on the M4 Course Availability schedule page in MedOneStop.

Extended Electives

Provides fourth year medical students the opportunity to take an elective offered for two or four weeks credit with fulfillment of required time to obtain credit spanning across the entire M4 academic year only. Extended electives are considered a subset of part-time electives which also offer medical students an opportunity for flexible working hours and nonconsecutive working days with the unique ability to overlap to overlap with any elective including Acting Internship (AI) and Intensive Clinical Experiences (ICE).

- Students may not miss any components of one elective in order to complete requirements of the extended elective.

- Exception: Students may take a maximum of 3 electives per M4 rotation if the third elective is an extended elective i.e full-time plus part-time plus extended or two part-time plus extended provided the electives permit overlap as noted on the M4 Course Availability schedule page in MedOneStop.

Away/Extramural Electives

Students may choose to do away electives for a variety of reasons: encouraged by some specialties (e.g. emergency medicine, orthopedics) or personal desire to investigate institutions. No more than 16 weeks of electives can be completed as away electives. Acting internships are not accepted as an away elective. Additionally, four weeks of ICE credit must be completed at UC. Students are not permitted to concurrently take an online elective with an away elective.

Before applying for an away rotation, students must meet with their advisor in the Office of Student Affairs to obtain approval from the College of Medicine to confirm the student is in good academic standing and the elective opportunity meets the needs of the individual student's education.

The elective must ultimately be approved by the UCCOM commensurate department insuring it provides an adequate learning experience.

- Apply via AAMC Visiting Student Application System (VSAS) or if offered outside VSAS must be with a LCME accredited medical school
- Away elective dates will often not match UC elective dates
 - Recommendation: Use flex time until you are back on UCCOM rotation schedule
- Forward acceptance to commensurate UCCOM department as soon as accepted
 - Request ICE - credit, if applicable, by sharing syllabus or elective description with commensurate UCCOM approving department.
 - Students may not receive retroactive credit. All arrangements for an elective experience must be submitted for approval before the elective begins. Once approved by the UCCOM commensurate department they will add the elective to the student's schedule.
- Download evaluation form from MedOneStop and give it to your preceptor. Return the completed form to the UCCOM approving department.

International electives offered through UC may be approved for ICE credit if ICE criteria are met. International electives not offered through UC may be used for general elective credit but cannot satisfy the ICE requirement.

Virtual Away Electives

Purpose: The University of Cincinnati College of Medicine (UCCOM) offers the ability for students to participate in virtual away electives. As a result of COVID 19, institutions created virtual away electives to combat the inaccessibility of away rotations and create a shared, altered approach to help future residency applicants meet the goals of away rotations. In the future, virtual away electives may be another means for students to experience other institutions.

Prerequisite: UCCOM students must have completed all core clerkships.

Before applying for a virtual away rotation, students should meet with their advisor in the Office of Student Affairs to confirm good academic standing and insure the elective opportunity meets the needs of the individual student's education.

The elective must ultimately be approved by the UCCOM commensurate department/elective director insuring it provides an adequate learning experience. Student must forward acceptance and course syllabus to insure content meets UCCOM criteria.

- Apply via AAMC Visiting Student Application System (VSAS) or if offered outside VSAS must be with a LCME accredited medical school
- Away elective dates will often not match UC elective dates

- Recommendation: Use flex time until you are back on UCCOM rotation schedule
- Only general elective credit will be offered
- Students may not receive retroactive credit. All arrangements for an elective experience must be submitted for approval before the elective begins. Once approved by the UCCOM commensurate department they will add the elective to the student's schedule.
- Download evaluation form from MedOneStop and give it to your preceptor. Return the completed form to the UCCOM approving department.

Virtual Away electives may not be taken with another full time UCCOM elective but can be taken with a part time or longitudinal elective provided work hours do not conflict.

Course length: Maximum 8 weeks of virtual away rotations permitted with a 2 week minimum.

Course Content: Students are expected to participate for a range of 20-40 hours per week.

Student must spend at least 50% of the rotation involved with a clinical component to include concepts such as observation/participation of rounds, office visits via telehealth, surgical procedures via video observation or patient simulations. The course should be designed to teach medical students the importance of actively participating in the care of a patient and the health care team. For the remaining 50% of the rotation, acceptable activities could include case discussions, case presentations, topic specific didactics, journal club, conference attendance, literature review, and case based problems all which should have oversight by faculty and/or residents.

Grading: pass/fail

Updates or Changes to Elective Director/Coordinator Process

In addition to the yearly elective updates requested by the Office of Medical Education, your course may undergo other changes such as a new course director or coordinator.

Communicate any changes to contact information for the course director or coordinator to Lo'Rain Drais (draislc@ucmail.uc.edu) in the Office of Medical Education.

In the event that a current elective course director needs to step down from his/her responsibilities, the following steps must be taken:

- Current elective director writes a formal email/letter of resignation which will include the name of the successor to the Director of Electives (Amy Guiot), Course Coordinator, Department Head, and Lo'Rain Drais.
- Successor writes a formal email/letter accepting the new position to Director of Electives, Course Coordinator, Department Head, and Lo'Rain Drais
- Department Head writes a formal email/letter stating support of the new elective director and confirming department support including allocated time to perform new educational duties.
- Lo'Rais Drais will make the necessary changes/updates to Medonestop and course catalog.

Creating a New Elective Process

1. To create a new elective, the course elective director can directly access the new elective proposal document to download from MedOneStop under the course information tab under course offerings heading. Or contact Lo'Rain Drais (draislc@ucmail.uc.edu or Dr. Amy Guiot (amy.guiot@cchmc.org) directly for the form.
2. Preliminary review of the completed new elective proposal by the Director of Electives, Dr. Amy Guiot, Office of the Medical Education, Lo'Rain Drais, and Office of the Registrar, Barb Gadzinski, will occur within 14 business days. Additional information or clarification may be requested of the course elective director at that

time. This is done by email request.

3. If revisions are necessary, the course elective director will revise and resubmit to Dr. Amy Guiot. Once Dr. Guiot accepts the revision, the elective course director or elective course coordinator must transfer all the elective information from the new elective proposal document into the new elective form accessed in MedOneStop.
4. After approval by the Director of Electives, the elective must be presented to M1/2 curriculum committee if the course is offered over the M1 and/or M2 academic year and/or the M3/4 curriculum committee if the course is offered or given credit during the M3 and/or M4 academic year. The new elective will be added to the agenda for the next M1/2 and/or M3/4 Curriculum Committee meeting.
 - a. The presence of the course elective director will be strongly recommended to answer any questions at the curriculum committee meetings in order to expedite the approval process. If the elective director cannot be present, then Dr. Guiot will present the elective to the committee. If questions arise that would need the elective director response, voting will be delayed until those answers can be obtained. Then the elective will be voted upon by the curriculum committees.
5. Once the M1/2 and/or M3/4 Curriculum Committee approves the elective, the new elective must be approved by Education Program Committee (EPC). An approval email will be sent to the Elective Course Director.
6. Timeline for New Elective Proposals
 - a. Please allow 12 weeks from the time of submission to final approval in timing the offering of the elective.
 - b. For a new elective to be considered for a current academic year, recommend final deadline for approval by October 1st.
 - c. For a new elective to be considered for a subsequent academic year, recommend final deadline for approval by December 1st.
 - d. Proposals may be submitted at any time during the academic year but are not guaranteed to be approved for the current or subsequent academic year for which it is submitted.

RELATED LCME STANDARD

6.5 Elective Opportunities