

**Policy Number: 301.1027.100**

**Policy Revision Date: 2022-02-22**

**Policy Category: Academic**

**Policy Owner: Academic Affairs**

**Policy Audience: Student Council/Academic Affairs**

### 1. Definitions:

**Clinical Elective** – Experience focused on clinical knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences for direct patient care.

**Non-clinical Elective** – Experience focused on aspects of medicine not directly involving patient care. Examples may include, but are not limited to, ethics, business, legal issues, education, social issues, research, and equity/inclusion/diversity.

### 2. Medical Curriculum Committee Review: 2/22/2022

### 3. Introduction / Purpose:

#### Policy Statement:

The Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine has implemented the Policy on Elective Opportunities to ensure compliance with LCME standard 6 element 5.

**6.5 Elective Opportunities:** *The faculty of a medical school ensure that the medical curriculum includes elective opportunities that supplement required learning experiences and that permit medical students to gain exposure to and deepen their understanding of medical specialties reflecting their career interests and to pursue their individual academic interests.*

### 4. Governance and Enforcement:

Medical Curriculum Committee

### 5. Policy:

#### General Information on Electives

Students will choose a wide variety of specialties for their residencies after graduation. It is the school of medicine's responsibility to ensure that each student is prepared with the appropriate knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors for success

in their chosen field. While there is value in focused and concentrated experiences in one area of practice, it is also critical that all students draw from a range of specialty areas, practice types, clinical settings, and approaches to medicine in their preparation for residency.

### **Duration:**

The basic unit of elective blocks will be two weeks, and any elective may represent multiples of this basic unit, including two-, four-, six-week, or longer electives as appropriate to meet objectives.

Some electives, both within the institution and extramural, may fall outside this duration, such as 1- or 3-week rotations, and will require review and approval by the Undergraduate Medical Education lead for the specialty.

### **Elective Advising:**

A variety of specialty and professional elective experiences will be encouraged, with appropriate depth of experience ensured in areas that are relevant to the student's professional development.

For Phase 1 students considering the Independent Research Elective course, which allows them to gain research knowledge and skills through an immersive, mentored research experience during their first or second year of medical school should seek advising from their research mentor and the Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship.

Phase 2 and Phase 3 students meet with their education specialist, regional assistant dean of student affairs, career coach, and specialty advisor for elective advising and schedule development in line with the student's academic and career goals.

### **Phase 1 Non-clinical Electives:**

The Independent Research Elective course allows medical students to gain research knowledge and skills through an immersive, mentored research experience during their first or second year of medical school. The research must be conducted under the supervision of a GCSOM/Geisinger/Guthrie/AtlantiCare faculty member or an external mentor with Course Director approval. Independent research electives are offered in the fall and spring semesters and up to 20 weeks in duration.

A student must be in good academic standing to be enrolled in a Phase 1/M1 or M2 elective. Students that are remediating have to consult with the Committee on Academic and Professional Standards (CAPS) prior to participating in a Phase 1/ M1 or M2 elective.

## **Phase 2 Electives**

No formal electives offered in the Phase 2 component. Students have selective opportunities in subspecialty areas and will work with their RES to schedule these.

## **Phase 3 Electives:**

- Total Number of Elective Weeks: As outlined in the Phase3/M4 Handbook
- Phase 3 Electives may be selected from:
  - Electives in the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine (GCSOM) Course Bulletin;
  - Course Catalog from other LCME-accredited Medical Schools;
  - Courses required during active-duty service for those students with Military obligations;
  - One-time electives designed by student and mentor, these electives must be approved by the Undergraduate Medical Education Lead for the specialty in which the rotation occurs;
  - Clinical Rotations Abroad, students must select from among VSLO approved rotations or already approved Geisinger Health Systems coordinated rotations (such as those organized through the residency programs which students may join). After selection in VSLO, the international clinical rotation is reviewed for approval by the course director for global experiences.

## **6. Key Stakeholders:**

Students/Academic Affairs