

**SUNY Downstate Medical Center
Graduate Medical Education**

GME POLICY ON PROGRAM EXPERIMENTATION AND INNOVATION

Purpose: GME Programs at SUNY Downstate Medical Center are expected to comply with all standards, rules and regulations as may be established by regulatory or accrediting agencies or the sponsoring institution. SUNY Downstate, in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities as a GME Program Sponsoring Institution, must approve and monitor all program activities which deviate from established standards, rules and regulations.

Scope: All graduate medical education programs conducted by any Department of the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center and all residents and/or fellows enrolled in or appointed to those programs.

Definitions:

GME Program: A structured educational experience in graduate medical education designed to conform to the Program Requirements of a particular specialty/subspecialty

Residents and Fellows: Any physician in an accredited graduate medical education program, including interns, residents, and fellows.

Experimentation and Innovation: Experimentation initiated at the program level which may involve an individual program, a group of residents (e.g., PGY1 residents) or an individual resident (e.g., chief resident) resulting in substantial departure from approved program requirements.

GME Committee: a committee of the sponsoring institution which provides oversight of sponsored GME programs.

Policy:

Requests for experimentation or innovative projects that may deviate from the institutional, common and/or specialty specific program requirements must be approved in advance by the GME Committee (GMEC) of SUNY Downstate Medical Center. Only after review and approval by GMEC will such projects be approved by the Associate Dean for GME/Designated Institutional Officer and be submitted to the respective Residency Review Committee of the ACGME for ACGME approval.

In preparing requests, the program director must follow Procedures for Approving Proposals for Experimentation or Innovative Projects outlined below. Once an ACGME Review Committee approves a project, SUNY Downstate, as the sponsoring institution, and the individual program(s) are jointly responsible for the quality of education offered to residents for the duration of such a project. The SUNY Downstate GMEC will regularly review the progress of such projects and the impact on the resident's training experience. This review will occur no less frequently than on an annual basis as part of the Program's Annual Report to GMEC.

Procedure:

Innovations are initiated at the program level and may involve an individual program, a group of residents (e.g., PGY1 residents) or an individual resident (e.g., chief resident).

Such projects differ from ACGME-approved pilot projects, which are initiated by the Review Committee and affect several programs. Programs may also be involved in non-ACGME-approved pilots or innovative projects (e.g., initiated and supported by the institution or grant agency) but these are not subject to documentation, monitoring or review by the GMEC or the ACGME Review Committee as long as deviations from requirements do not occur as part of the project.

Procedures for requesting approval of experimental or innovative projects by the GMEC follow the same procedures outlined by the ACGME for the Review Committee's approval. Procedures for approving proposals, including eligibility criteria, proposal content, and monitoring, are available from the ACGME website: [Proposal for Program Experimentation and Innovation](#). The program director should complete the [Program Experimentation and Innovative Projects Proposal Form](#) and supply all of the requested information. The project proposal form must then be submitted to the GMEC Executive Subcommittee. Additional consultation may be requested by the Executive Subcommittee and include the Resident Affairs Subcommittee, Internal Review Subcommittee or other committees, bodies, offices or individuals within SUNY Downstate or outside agencies. Upon approval of the proposal by the Executive Subcommittee, the proposal must be submitted and presented to the GME Committee for approval. Upon approval by the GMEC, the DIO must sign the proposal indicating review and approval of the sponsoring institution's GMEC. Proposals should not exceed five pages in length. Additional documents should be attached as numbered appendices. One copy of the proposal should be sent via standard mail to the executive director to the appropriate ACGME Review Committee.

Proposals which include requests for a waiver/suspension of Common Program or Institutional Requirements require ACGME approval; the proposal will be reviewed by ACGME prior to consideration by the Review Committee. This process may delay the response time from the Review Committee. Program directors should estimate six-nine months for a decision from the Review Committee. The Review Committee executive director will provide official notification to the program director and DIO of the Review Committee's decision, which will include the duration of the approval (will not exceed the next accreditation review) and the method of monitoring (e.g., progress reports, updates) by the Review Committee. Reviews and decisions will be made following policy approval. (See [ACGME Policies and Procedures: II.D. Procedures for Approving Proposals for Experimentation and Innovative Projects](#).)

Approved projects for experimentation and innovation in GME must remain under regular monitoring of the quality of education provided to residents for the duration of the project. Such monitoring is conducted by the GMEC and its subcommittees. Programs will be expected to regularly provide progress reports to GMEC and requesting subcommittees. Failure to comply with this requirement or any other aspect of this policy and procedure can result in revocation of consent for the project. In addition, any adverse or deleterious impact on the quality of education provided to residents or the safety or quality of care of patients can result in revocation of consent and authorization for the project.

Original policy completed on 5/13/2011.

Reviewed and approved by GMEC 5/18/11. Effective immediately upon approval.