

## **Position Description for the Clerkship Administrator**

### ***Introduction***

A professional and productive clerkship administrator should play a major role in the day-to-day administration of a successful medicine clerkship. As Louis N. Pangaro, MD, suggests:

The clerkship director must have:

- 1) An assistant to be a “first contact” liaison with students. This assistant should be approachable and sensitive to a student’s distress.
- 2) Secretarial/clerkship support for the administration of the clerkship appropriate for the number of students, the number of clerkship sites, and the number of grades and reports to be produced. (1)

The administrator should report directly to the clerkship director and be highly knowledgeable about the student program.

The CDIM Administrators Advisory Committee prepared the following position description as a standard for clerkship administrators. The spectrum of responsibilities outlined illustrates the diversity of this position; it cannot be a complete description of the position. The delegation of specific curricular assignments varies widely among schools as well as among departments of internal medicine. However, clerkship directors should expect and require a capable clerkship administrator as a necessity for a successful medicine clerkship.

### ***Qualifications for the Clerkship Administrator***

- Undergraduate degree or equivalent experience.
- At least three years of administrative experience with continually increasing management responsibility.

### ***Essential Skills***

The clerkship administrator must be knowledgeable about the medicine clerkship and other student programs offered by the department of internal medicine; they must demonstrate the following skills:

- Well-developed interpersonal skills, including the ability to deal effectively with all levels of personnel, both within and beyond the university.
- Excellent written communication skills.
- Time management and organizational skills; must demonstrate the ability to prioritize and accurately complete tasks independently.
- Proficient in basic bookkeeping, record maintenance, and report development.
- Excellent technical skills (computers and other office machines).
- Excellent problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- Conflict resolution and negotiating skills.
- Professionalism, discretion, and confidentiality
- Basic understanding of medical and adult education

### ***Primary Responsibilities***

Responsibilities of the clerkship administrator should include, but are not limited to:

- Function as the first-contact liaison to students, faculty, residents, community faculty, sites, and school administration for any issues or questions relating to the clerkship.
- Provide primary support for the clerkship director in matters relating to the clerkship, and function as his/her representative if requested.
- Manage daily operations of the student office and the clerkship, organize and prioritize necessary tasks, initiate changes and resolve issues as they arise.
- Understand thoroughly the curricular goals, policies, and standards of the medicine clerkship, department, and medical school.
- Participate in the grading process and prepare final grades for submission.
- Recruit faculty for clerkship teaching and ensure retention.
- Monitor the student evaluation process and maintain complete and accurate student files.
- Prepare data analysis reports.
- Understand the major responsibilities of other interacting departments (i.e., student affairs, medical education, registrar, area health education center, bursar, or purchasing).
- Know the medical school calendar and courses offered.
- Participate in institutional, departmental, community, or national meetings as ongoing professional development and to remain informed about current academic trends.
- Assist in development of annual reports.

### ***Secondary Responsibilities***

Responsibilities may also include:

- Prepare department letters of recommendation.
- Oversee or support the internal medicine interest group.
- Maintain the student library in the department of internal medicine.
- Prepare clerkship materials .
- Participate in or conduct the clerkship orientation.
- Administer NBME or other required examinations.
- Participate in the preparation of LCME accreditation materials.
- Plan and attend faculty retreats, faculty development sessions, and other meetings and functions.
- Supervise staff members completing work for the medicine clerkship.
- Provide administrative support for other pre-clinical and clinical courses.
- Understand institutional policies and procedures.
- Assist in manuscript development and grant application.
- Schedule and coordinate meetings and conference calls.

### ***Summary***

The CDIM Administrators Advisory Committee recommends clerkship directors use this position description to strengthen support for existing clerkship administrators or to aid in establishing such positions in their program. An effective and productive clerkship director must have a competent administrator to facilitate a successful medicine clerkship.

### ***References***

1. Pangaro LN. Expectations of and for the Medicine Clerkship Director. *AJM*. 1998;105(5):363-365.