

How do I create a new Elective for the BUSM:

Thank you for your interest in creating an elective for the Boston University School of Medicine. Below are some basics about the process and tips for creating an elective.

- 1) Ensure whether your elective is “Clinical” or “Non-clinical”?
 - a. A “Clinical” elective is one that is centered primarily on direct patient contact.
 - b. A “Non-clinical” elective is one that has minimal or no patient contact, and instead encompasses a different type of educational experience. This can include research, scholarly activity, education, QI/QA, entrepreneurship, and many others.

- 2) Now that you have categorized your elective and picked out the correct template, we have templates on the ECS website ([click HERE to return to the ECS page](#)).
 - a. If you have an idea for an elective that does not fit an existing template, or you have questions, please contact the [ECS administrator](#) and [ECS Chair](#).

- 3) Use the template to create your curriculum. While the templates are specific about what should be contained in each section, there are additional tips listed below.

- 4) Submit your elective to the ECS administrator and ECS Chair

- 5) What happens next:
 - a. The ECS Chair will do a preliminary review of your elective
 - b. Your elective will be added to the agenda for the next meeting for review by the ECS
 - i. The ECS meets monthly, with few exceptions.
 - ii. We make every attempt to have your elective reviewed at the next upcoming meeting, to try and expedite your elective’s review and approval.
 - iii. This is subject to the overall agenda for each month’s meeting and when your elective is submitted relative to the meeting schedule.
 - c. The ECS members will review and give recommendations on your elective, and you will receive feedback on your proposal, including any edits.
 - i. We make every effort to reduce the time to approval by seeking edits from the ECS members, providing this to you, but giving “conditional approval” pending your review and acceptance of the suggested edits.

- ii. We may return this to you to edit further and resubmit if there are sufficient questions that cannot be addressed through relatively minor edits of your proposal. This will be sent to you as well after the meeting.
- d. Once approved, with any edits, your elective will:
 - i. Be assigned a course number by the Registrar
 - ii. Have a BUSM evaluation form attached to this elective, and you will be asked to confirm which form is appropriate for your course
 - iii. Entered into e*Value for grading and tracking purposes

Here are some additional tips and instructions on writing the different sections, that can answer some additional questions about the process and the templates.

- 1) Title:
 - a. Pick a title that accurately and succinctly describes your elective. Using keywords that may set your elective apart and make it unique is welcome.
- 2) Goals and Summary
 - a. These are the expected educational outcomes from the elective, stated in broad terms, in one or two sentences.
 - b. The purpose of the elective. An easy way to do this is to start with the sentence, “This elective is for the BUSM student to” and then lead into a paragraph containing no more than 150 words. This should briefly summarize the rotation for any prospective student and will be used in the course description.
 - c. This is typically put on the registrar’s website, so it should give a quick glimpse of the rotation, where the student will have the ability to get additional information if this piques their interest
 - d. Another way to look at this section is that it is a short “advertisement” of your rotation to catch a student’s attention with a succinct description of the content
- 3) Description of elective:
 - a. This should contain sufficient detail to convey to students what the elective is about and what they will experience.
 - b. It is a detailed expansion of the Goals and Summary, which
 - c. Write this as a paragraph that describes where the elective takes place and who the proposed mentor will be.
 - i. For Clinical Electives**
 1. Be thorough about the experience. Make sure that the student knows what and where their experience will be. Be as specific as possible, as this will help define the

learning that will occur, the responsibilities of the student, and oversight for the activity.

ii. **For Research Electives:**

1. How the proposed project will be finalized prior to starting the research activities may commence at minimum by the time the elective is planned. [Please note that the BUSM requires that research projects should be conceived, protocols written, and approval given by the appropriate regulatory board (IRB or IUCAC) at least 8 weeks prior to the research block. If this is not possible (or cannot be completed), then the student should not be allowed to sign up for your research elective.]
2. How a timeline for the project will be defined, including having regular faculty contact (minimum once every week), plan for dissemination of findings (e.g. preparation of abstract, presentation of data, manuscript preparation and submission), and other benchmarks for the rotation.
3. There must be a deliverable product at the end of the rotation, which should be defined as part of the rotation description (e.g. manuscript, manuscript outline, project summary, presentation at local/national/international meeting, or other deliverable appropriate for the rotation)

iii. Electives at BUSM must meet the Minimum Standard for time spent in activities directly related to the elective.

1. This equates to 40 hours/week on average spent in educational activities at minimum.
2. There should be a statement that tells how the minimum standard number of hours per week will be met and tracked in order to ensure that students are spending the apportioned time and effort in the elective.
3. The faculty mentor is not required to keep a log, or other written records, but should set the expectations in the elective about how they will structure the educational activities to ensure students will be fully engaged (e.g. one-on-one meetings, lab meetings, etc).

iv. There should be a plan and statement confirming that regular check-ins with the student's primary contact and/or Course Director will be held, and specify the frequency.

4) Objectives

- a. These are the specific objectives of the rotation. They define what the student will be expected to learn at the conclusion of their elective,

what will be used to assess their performance, what will shape their formative and summative feedback, and ultimately assign a grade for their performance.

- b. These should be reflected in what is discussed in the to what is discussed in the description of the rotation, and accomplished with the help of the Curriculum (described later).
- c. Use a minimum of three objectives
- d. Each objective should be a specific statement of observable learned behaviors, and linked to Medical Education Program Objectives (MEPOS) (see below)
- e. Your objective section should be written with the following preamble, which helps set expectations “By the end of this elective, the BUSM student will be able to: “
- f. MEPOS are the institutional objectives that were developed in response to LCME requirements to encapsulate those fundamental and core educational principles for every medical school. They are built upon How BUCARES rubric. You can find them [HERE](#).
- g. Each objective should have an active verb, the content of the objective, and links to applicable elements of BUCARES. Each template specifies how MEPOS should be linked to the objectives. State your objective, then connect it with the applicable MEPOS item.
- h. In some cases, more than one MEPOS may apply to your objective, and all should be listed.
- i. An example of an objective linked to MEPOS can take look like this: “Synthesize a diagnostic and therapeutic plan for a surgical patient based on the patient assessment and relevant literature (U.4, U.5)”

5) Curriculum

- a. Be specific in what students should expect as learning opportunities and requirements to engage in before and during the elective in order to optimize their learning. This should include Listing of the educational activities such as lectures/conferences, journal clubs, reading assignments, lab meetings etc. as applicable for your elective.
- b. You can start this section by using the sentence fragment, “The curriculum includes...”

6) Evaluation

- a. Based on the learning objectives, how will the student be evaluated? Be as quantitative as possible and specifically outline how this will be done.
- b. Specify which grading system (H/HP/P/F) or (P/F) will be used and the criteria for achieving each grade (be sure that how you determine the grade is linked to your objectives)
- c. The approved BUSM form for your elective will be used, and the specific form will be assigned based on the type of elective you are

creating. We will also confirm this form with you as the Course Director.

- d. Specify who will be responsible for mid-rotation feedback
 - i. This is required for electives that are 4 weeks or longer
 - ii. The review must be done and documented, with any points for improvement relayed.
 - iii. If the student is not on track to meet the objectives and goals of the elective, then the Faculty Mentor and Course Director needs to provide a plan (which may be as short as a statement or longer depending on the needs) on how to get the student back on track.
 - iv. If getting back on track with the elective is not possible, then an alternate plan needs to be defined where the student can meet the elective's objectives and other requirements to receive credit for the rotation.
- e. Specify who will be doing the final summative evaluation (i.e. faculty mentor or the course director).
 - i. Please note that the course director will be responsible for ensuring the grade is submitted, whether the actual evaluation is done by them or the faculty mentor. Grades should be submitted to the Registrar 2 weeks after a student has completed the rotation.
- f. Include the following language in your course evaluation section:
"Grades will be submitted to the Registrar in accord with BUSM policies for grading"

Any additional questions or suggestions on improving the materials and process?
Please contact the [ECS Administrator](#) and [ECS Chair](#).