

## **I. POLICY**

Clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading

## **II. PURPOSE**

This policy outlines the elements of domain based grading used in the clerkship phase of medical education. It also details the criteria in each domain for each grade and subsequent promotion to the next clerkship.

## **III. RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE**

The Curriculum Policy Subcommittee will review and update annually with input from the Clerkship Education Committee. Any changes to grading structure and associated assessments must be reviewed by the Director of Assessment and Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education. Final approval will be obtained from the Medical Education Committee annually prior to the start of the academic year.

## **IV. ACCREDITATION REFERENCES**

LCME 9.5	Narrative Assessment
LCME 9.6	Setting Standards
LCME 9.7	Formative Feedback
LCME 9.8	Fair and Timely Summative Assessment
SACSCOC 12.3	Student Rights
SACSCOC 12.4	Student Complaints

## **V. DESCRIPTION**

### **M3 Grading System**

The four domains of the M3 grading system include the following:

Medical Knowledge is comprised of one summative, multiple choice NBME subject exam. This component of the grading system is intended to both assess student's basic knowledge and to prepare them for the USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge examination.

Clinical Evaluation is comprised of clinical evaluations by faculty and residents.

- Clinical evaluations should only be completed by individuals who have a faculty or resident appointment (PGY-2 or higher) in the department specific to the clerkship assigned.
  - For example, if a student is on an Internal Medicine rotation, only internists may complete the evaluation.
  - Visiting interns and visiting residents may not complete scored clinical evaluations, but may provide written comments for the student.

- The number of evaluations a student receives may vary based on a variety of factors. At least one graded evaluation is required to calculate the clinical evaluation grade. However, more evaluations are preferred.
- Clinical evaluations (individual preceptor or committee) must be based on at least three days of working with the student to contribute to the grade.
- Evaluators who worked with students for fewer than three days may provide written comments using a different form.

Applied Learning, as determined by each clerkship.

- Is assessed based on competency.
- Each clerkship will have at least one assignment in this domain, but more than one is preferred.
- Clerkships will have no more than five assignments in this domain.
- The student is required to achieve minimum competency (69.5%) on each assignment in the Applied Learning domain to pass.
- If a student receives a score that is below passing for an assignment, they are required to repeat the assignment.
  - If the repeated assignment is successful, the student's grade for that assignment is changed to 69.5%, as the student has now shown proficiency. The student will receive a "pass" for this domain.
  - If the repeated assignment is unsuccessful, the student will receive the highest earned score for the assignment and a "fail" for this domain.
- Pass/Fail assignments should make up no more than 15% of this domain.

Professionalism follows the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy.

Formative, required completion-based formative activities may be administered in a clerkship and is considered part of professionalism.

Clerkship directors communicate regularly during the clerkship with the appropriate faculty and residents at each site to:

1. Discuss student progress.
2. Document the progress of each student.
3. Identify problem areas.
4. Plan supplementary strategies, if necessary.
5. Assess the effectiveness of supplementation.
6. Ensure active student participation in the above process.

Each clerkship director will provide formative mid-clerkship feedback to the student that documents student performance and enumerates any improvements necessary to achieve satisfactory performance by the end of the clerkship.

Preceptors and residents are not required to provide comments in clinical evaluations unless the student received less than a “pass” for a specific criterion or based on the overall score. As a result, students are expected to proactively seek feedback during the clerkship. If the clerkship concludes and the student would like written feedback to enhance their development, they may complete an academic appeal form within 14 days of receiving their evaluation. If the evaluator provides comments, they will be shared with the student and added to the summative comments section of the evaluation. The clerkship director will determine if comments will be included in the final Medical Student Performance Evaluation.

#### Makeup and Missed Assignments

For planned leave, every effort should be made by the student to complete assignments prior to leave.

Students with an unexcused absence or missing assignment relating to assessment in the domains of Medical Knowledge, Clinical Evaluation or Applied Learning are required to complete the academic activities and will also be reported as outlined in the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy.

An assignment is considered late if it is not completed by the deadline; it is considered missing if it is not completed by 5pm on the final day of the clerkship. If a student turns in a missing assignment within 2 weeks of being notified, they are eligible to earn full credit in the Applied Learning domain, however point(s) will be deducted in the Professionalism domain (for more information, see the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy). If a student has not turned in the assignment within 2 weeks of being notified, their grade will turn into a “0,” unless granted a waiver by Student Affairs.

For more details about excused absences, unexcused absences and any makeup, see the Attendance at Academic Responsibilities Policy. For more information regarding late/missing assignments, see the Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy.

#### **M3 Grading Scale**

Final clerkship grades will be determined by the percent of earned points. A four-tiered grading system is used (i.e., Honors, High Pass, Pass, and Fail). The final clerkship grade is composed of the following domains:

- Honors
  - Medical Knowledge  $\geq 78.0\%$
  - Clinical Evaluation  $\geq 85.5\%$
  - Applied Learning  $\geq 85.5\%$
  - Professionalism 2 of 3 points
- High Pass
  - Medical Knowledge 70.0% - 77.0%
  - Clinical Evaluation 79.5% - 85.4%
  - Applied Learning 79.5% - 85.4%
  - Professionalism 2 of 3 points
- Pass
  - Medical Knowledge 60.0% - 69.0%
  - Clinical Evaluation 69.5% - 79.4%
  - Applied Learning 69.5% - 79.4%
  - Professionalism 1 of 3 points
- Fail
  - Medical Knowledge  $\leq 59.0\%$
  - Clinical Evaluation  $\leq 69.4\%$
  - Applied Learning  $\leq 69.4\%$
  - Professionalism  $\leq 0$  points

#### Reporting of Assignments, Exams, and Final Grade

Final grades must be posted to the Student Information System within six weeks of the final day of the clinical rotation. In the instance of clerkship failures, clerkship directors are responsible for notifying (1) students who fail the clerkship, (2) the Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education, and (3) the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs.

#### Student Promotions through M3 Clerkships

In order to promote out of a clerkship, students must demonstrate minimum proficiency of each of the components of the grading system by achievement of the following:

- Medical Knowledge  $\geq 60.0\%$
- Clinical Evaluation  $\geq 69.5\%$
- Applied Learning  $\geq 69.5\%$  for each assignment
- Professionalism 1 of 3 points

#### **M3 Exam Retest “Bad Day” Policy**

If a student scores  $< 60\%$  on an NBME subject exam, they will be required to retest. If a passing score ( $\geq 60\%$ ) is obtained on the retest, the student’s grade for that exam is changed to a 60% as the student has now shown proficiency. If a student does not pass the retest, they will

receive a Fail. Students who require more than one retest during the clerkship year will be referred to the Student Review and Advisory Committee.

**M3 Remediation Policy**

In the event a student fails a clerkship, the clerkship director(s) shall recommend to both the student and the Student Progress Committee (SPC) an appropriate remediation program. The remediation program may include taking an examination and/or repeating all or a portion of the clerkship. The recommendation is reviewed by the SPC, which makes the final decision regarding the student's academic progress. The SPC uses guidelines outlined in the Standards for Advancement and Graduation Policy regarding promotion of students through the education program at the medical school. At the completion of the approved remedial activity, the student will be given a grade of Pass or Fail. Both grades remain part of the student's record and will be recorded on the transcript (e.g., F/P). For more details see the General Assessment Principles Policy.

**VI. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Appeal and Complaint Procedures Policy  
Attendance of Academic Responsibilities Policy  
Formative Feedback Policy  
General Assessment Principles Policy  
Narrative Feedback Policy  
Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors Policy  
Standards for Advancement and Graduation Policy  
Student Progress Committee Structure and Function

**VII. HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES**

The following list documents policy approvals and updates by oversight authority, date, and summary of changes. This policy is housed on the MD Student Handbook webpage.

- On June 17, 2020, the Medical Education Committee approved the update to separate the policy from the MD Student Handbook, to expand Clinical Evaluation domain, and to include procedures related to feedback, missed and makeup assignments, and "Bad Day" testing policy.
- On December 3, 2020, the Medical Education Committee approved an update to clarify the timeline and procedures for posting final grades.
- On May 27, 2021, the Medical Education Committee approved an update to include that minimum competency must be reached for each assignment in the Applied Learning domain and are given an opportunity to repeat the assignment to reach competency, to limit pass/fail assignments in the Applied Learning domain to no more than 15%, and to define late vs missing assignments and the policy around grading.