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| <b>Name of Policy:</b> <b>College of Medicine and Life Sciences: Grading policy for required clinical clerkships</b>             |                                   |  |                                             |
| <b>Policy Number:</b> 3364-81-04-013-06                                                                                          |                                   | <b>Revision date:</b><br>October 20, 2025                                           |                                             |
| <b>Approving Officer:</b> Dean, College of Medicine & Life Sciences                                                              |                                   | <b>Original effective date:</b><br>June 24, 2013                                    |                                             |
| <b>Responsible Agent:</b> Senior Associate Dean, Associate Dean for Clinical Undergraduate Medical Education and Student Affairs |                                   |                                                                                     |                                             |
| <b>Scope:</b> College of Medicine M.D. Program                                                                                   |                                   |                                                                                     |                                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                         | New policy proposal               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                                                 | Minor/technical revision of existing policy |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                                         | Major revision of existing policy | <input type="checkbox"/>                                                            | Reaffirmation of existing policy            |

(A) Policy statement

All \*required clinical clerkships (listed below) in the curriculum of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences will use the grading policy as outlined in this document.

*\*The seven required clerkships are Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Surgery.*

(B) Purpose of policy

This policy and procedure are designed to provide a standardized mechanism for calculating final grades in the required clerkships of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences.

(C) Scope

Grading in the required third-year clerkships.

(D) Grade components

3 domains contribute to the final clerkship grade:

1. Assessment of clinical performance
2. Performance on the NBME subject exam
3. Departmental education program points

There are five grading categories for the clerkship: HONORS, HIGH PASS, PASS, FAIL, and DEFER. The clerkship grade determination is based on the composite performance of the student in each of the above categories (see E (1))

1. **Assessment of clinical performance:** Preceptors will assess a student's clinical performance using the COMLS clinical competency assessment form. This assessment captures a student's performance in the following competencies: Professionalism (PB), Interpersonal Communication Skills (IPC), Patient Care (PC), Practice-Based Learning and Improvement (PBL), and Systems-Based Practice (SBP). A grade of honors, high pass, pass, or fail will be generated for each competency.
  - a. Students must obtain a passing grade in all the above competencies to pass the clerkship.
  - b. 5-time categories are based on hours of direct contact a preceptor has with a student:
    - i. No contact (< 1 hour)
    - ii. Limited (1-4 hours)
    - iii. Moderate (5-10 hours)
    - iv. Substantial (11-40 hours)
    - v. Extensive (> 40 hours)
  - c. To be a candidate for **HONORS** in the clerkship, a student must receive a pass grade in professionalism. Professionalism includes honesty, integrity, ethics, respect for all healthcare team members, and sensitivity to each patient's identity and cultural background.
  - d. If a student fails the Patient Care competency, the final grade in the clerkship is a **FAIL** and the student must repeat the entire clerkship.
  - e. If a student fails PROFESSIONALISM, IPC, or PBL, the clerkship grade recorded on the transcript is **DEFER** until the following remediation occurs:
    - i. Professionalism – the student will be considered for a Professionalism Behavior Report, based on information gathered by the clerkship director; any student receiving a Professional Behavior report will be referred to the Student Conduct and Ethics Committee for review and a remediation plan. Upon completion of a successful course of remediation, the Student Conduct and Ethics Committee will inform the Clerkship Director and the student's grade will be changed from **DEFER** to **PASS**.
    - ii. IPC OR PBL fail remediation will be determined at the discretion of the clerkship director. Upon successful completion of remediation, the **DEFER** grade will be changed to **PASS**.
    - iii. SBP assessment will result in a grade of at least PASS (a FAIL grade is not possible)
  - f. Process for calculating the grade for clinical performance
    - i. Each preceptor's assessment will be weighted based on the amount of time the student spent with the preceptor: extensive (16x), substantial (8x), moderate (4x), limited (2x), and no contact (not counted).
    - ii. Except for the professionalism category, the median of the aggregate weighting from each preceptor for each question will be generated. The

composite grade for each competency will be generated based on the median profile for each element.

- iii. For professionalism grade, any “no” response from an evaluator on either question will result in a “fail” grade for this competency.
- g. A clinical performance profile will be generated for the student’s clinical performance. This profile will list the grade for each of the 5 competencies as well as the composite grade for clinical performance (see table in syllabi). Fail in one competency for assessment of clinical performance will result in the following
  - i. Professionalism → deferred grade until remediation is completed as outlined in policy [3364-81-04-017-01](#) with a final grade of PASS.
  - ii. IPC, PBL → a deferred grade that will be changed to a pass after successful remediation as determined by the clerkship director with a final grade of PASS.
  - iii. Patient care → FAIL for the clerkship. The student must repeat the entire clerkship.
  - iv. Students cannot fail systems-based practice.

## 2. Departmental Education Program (20-point total)

The allocation of these points will be as designated in each discipline's annually approved and updated syllabus. The point allocation will include OSCE performance and specific educational activities that comprise the department educational program. The specifics on non OSCE activities are defined by each clerkship. If a student does not meet the minimum threshold for a **PASS**, the student will receive a grade of **DEFER**. This grade will be assigned until remediation is completed. **PASS** is the highest grade that can be achieved after a **DEFER** grade.

A student will be permitted an opportunity (as described in the syllabus) to remediate any failed component(s) of the Departmental Educational Program. This remediation must be completed in a timely manner appropriate to the student's schedule, but no later than one year from the first attempt. If the student achieves a passing score after the allotted remediation, the grade of **DEFER** will be changed to a grade of **PASS** for the clerkship (assuming the other components of the grade have been at the passing level). **PASS** is the highest grade that can be achieved after a **DEFER** grade has been assigned for an initial failure of the Departmental Educational Program.

If a student does not pass the Department Educational Program after allotted attempts at remediation, the student's grade of **DEFER** will be changed to a grade of **FAIL** for the clerkship. In order to remediate the failing grade, the student will be required to repeat the clerkship and to pass all three components of the Required Remediation clerkship, i.e., Clinical Competence, Departmental Educational Program, and NBME Subject Exam. A Clerkship Director may exercise his/her prerogative to waive a second attempt at the NBME Subject Exam if it was successfully passed during the required clerkship.

### 3. **The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) Subject Examination for the clerkship.**

Students must achieve a minimum passing score on the NBME Subject Examination to complete the clerkship. The minimum passing score on the NBME Subject Exams for each core clinical discipline will be determined annually by the Clinical Curriculum Committee and the Executive Curriculum Committee before the start of the clerkship year. Failure to achieve the minimum score on a test will result in a grade of **DEFER** for that clerkship. A second attempt to complete the NBME Subject Examination must be completed in a timely manner but no later than one year from the first attempt. If the student achieves the minimum passing score on the second attempt, the grade of **DEFER** will be changed to a grade of **PASS**. **PASS** is the highest grade that can be achieved after a **DEFER** grade due to an initial failure to achieve the minimum passing score on the NBME Subject Examination.

A second failure of the NBME Subject Examination will result in the grade of **DEFER** being changed to a grade of **FAIL** for the clerkship. To remediate the failing grade, the student will be required to take a Required Remediation clerkship (length of time is based on the duration of the clerkship), and to pass all three components of the Required Remediation clerkship, i.e., Clinical Competence, Departmental Educational Program, and NBME Subject Examination. In some cases, a Clerkship Director may exercise his/her prerogative to waive a second attempt at certain components of the Departmental Educational Program (e.g., an OSCE) if it was successfully passed during the required clerkship.

### **(E) Final Grade Determination**

The final grade is based on the student's composite performance in the 3 domains as articulated in the clerkship syllabus

1. A **DEFER** grade in the clerkship requires the student to take corrective action to remediate the grade component that has resulted in **DEFER**:
  - a. Fail in Professionalism OR PBL OR IPC
  - b. NBME subject exam score less than designated passing percentile
  - c. Less than passing threshold for department education point components or aggregate grade.

After successful remediation as described above in section (D), the student's transcript grade will be changed to a **PASS**.

2. A **FAIL** grade in the clerkship requires the student to repeat the clerkship in its

entirety. A **FAIL** grade can result from a CCA FAIL (Patient care), NBME subject exam failure after two attempts or failure to remediate the department educational points (individual component or aggregate grade) after allotted remediation attempts. The student will be required to complete a Required Remediation clerkship (length of time is based on the duration of the clerkship), and to pass all three components of the Required Remediation clerkship, i.e., Clinical Competence, Departmental Educational Program, and NBME Subject Examination. In some cases, a Clerkship Director may exercise his/her prerogative to waive a second attempt at certain components of the Departmental Educational Program (e.g., an OSCE) if it was successfully passed during the required clerkship.

3. Grade of **Incomplete**: Failure to complete any portion of the clerkship or its evaluation exercises will lead to a grade of **Incomplete (I)**. A grade of **Incomplete** will be submitted by a Clerkship Director when a student has not been able to complete the required course work within the required time of the clerkship. The student must meet with the clerkship director in concert with the Associate Dean for Clinical Undergraduate Medical Education to develop a plan, including a timeline (generally not to exceed six months), to complete the required clerkship work. The timeline plan will require approval by the Academic Progress Committee after review and approval by the Clerkship Director, and or Associate Dean for Clinical Undergraduate Medical Education, the student, and the Associate or Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.

4. Students will be removed from their required clerkship schedule after appropriate due process if they earn any combination of two grades of Incomplete or Defer and will be reviewed by the Academic Progress Committee.

5. Final Grade Submission: The final grade for each student will be submitted to the Registrar no later than 42 days after the end of each required clerkship.

6. If a student performs at an honors level for clinical performance and departmental points, a designation of “**clinical excellence**” will be noted in the MSPE narrative for the relevant clerkship.

NOTE: The presence of an **Incomplete**, **Fail**, or **Defer** grade on a student’s academic record will prevent the student from participating in an “away clerkship” until the **Incomplete**, or **Deferred** has been removed from the student’s academic record.

**Approved by:**

/s/

Imran Ali, M.D  
Dean, College of Medicine  
and Life Sciences  
Vice Provost for Health Education

10/20/25

Date

*Review/Revision Completed by:*

Clinical Curriculum Committee Executive  
Curriculum Committee Associate Dean for  
Clinical Undergraduate Medical Education  
Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs  
Associate Dean for Foundational Science  
Curriculum  
Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical  
Education

**Policies Superseded by This Policy:**

*This policy formerly was named: Medical  
Student Evaluation in the Four-Year  
Curriculum:  
Required Clinical Clerkship 04-013-01B*

**Original effective date:** 08/25/1985

**Review/Revision Date:**

|          |          |
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| 08/25/86 | 06/01/07 |
| 08/13/87 | 02/01/08 |
| 08/22/89 | 07/27/10 |
| 08/15/90 | 07/26/11 |
| 11/19/91 | 03/26/13 |
| 02/24/94 | 06/24/13 |
| 07/01/95 | 06/16/15 |
| 08/01/96 | 10/10/18 |
| 08/17/00 | 10/6/22  |
| 08/17/01 | 07/26/23 |
| 03/18/03 | 12/21/23 |
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**Next review date:** October 20, 2028