

# Common Clerkship Policies

AY 2016-17

## Office of Medical Education Contacts for Years Three and Four (MS3s and MS4s)

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### Disability Support Services

TTUHSC El Paso is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities to students with documented disabilities (e.g. mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical). To ensure access to educational opportunities in the clinical setting, please contact Tammy Salazar, Ph.D., with Disability Support Services to engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations in the classroom and clinical settings. Or for more information, email [disabilitysupport.elp@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:disabilitysupport.elp@ttuhsc.edu) or [elpaso.ttuhsc.edu/student-services/dss](http://elpaso.ttuhsc.edu/student-services/dss).

## Attendance Policy

Attendance at clinical and didactic activities is mandatory. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action, potentially including a requirement to repeat the clinical block or rotation. Students have been allotted institutional holidays as stated in the student handbook and academic calendar.

Students assigned to rotations at William Beaumont Army Medical Center (WBAMC) will be excused from duty on institutional holidays. However, students will be expected to work on military training days that do not coincide with institutional holidays. If the clinic the student is assigned to is closed, the student will be assigned duties on campus for the day.

Students are required to attend both the first and last days of every rotation. The only excused absences will be for interviews, illnesses (with a doctor's note), or documented family emergency. Students will not be excused for away or international rotations.

Absences are excused at the discretion of the clerkship/course director. Commonly excused absences include:

- Illness
- Family Emergency
- Death in the Family
- Religious Holidays (please see the Religious Holy Days Policy in the Student Affairs Handbook)
- Presenting at a National Conference
- Interviews for Residency (MS4s only)

### >Absences in the Third Year

During the third year, a student is expected to attend all clinical and didactic activities. If s/he plans to be absent for any activity, advance approval must be obtained from the clerkship director. If the clerkship director determines that a student's absence compromises his/her ability to attain the necessary competencies, the student may be required to make up days or complete alternative assignments. If a student is required to make up time, this must be completed during unscheduled time and the hours worked must be in compliance with the duty hour policy.

If a student is absent for more than four days per block or 12 days during third year, the absences will be assessed by the associate dean for student affairs. Excessive absences could be a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and may be forwarded to the Grading and Promotions Committee (GPC).

In the event of an emergency that results in an absence from clerkship duties, the student must notify the clerkship coordinator and the Office of Student Affairs, as noted above, as soon as possible.

### >Absences in the Fourth Year

In the fourth year, a student may have no more than **three** excused absences in a four-week block without having to make up that time. **However**, if the clerkship/course director determines that the student's absence(s) compromised his/her ability to attain the necessary competencies, the student may be required to make up days or assignments, regardless of the number of days missed. It is also at the discretion of the clerkship/course director to give the student an alternative assignment to satisfy all or

part of the make-up time. If a student is required to make up time, this must be completed during unscheduled time and the hours worked must be in compliance with the duty hour policy.

If a student is absent for more than six days in a semester during the fourth year, the absences will be assessed by the associate dean for student affairs. Excessive absences could be a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and may be forwarded to the GPC.

### >Notification of Absences (Third and Fourth Years)

When a student is going to be absent, s/he is required to notify:

- 1) The clerkship coordinator **before** the beginning of the shift. Acceptable forms of notification are email (preferred), phone calls, and text messages. **Please refer to the individual clerkship syllabus for clerkship-specific contact requirements**
- 2) The Office of Student Affairs by emailing [plfabsence@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:plfabsence@ttuhsc.edu).

### >Documentation of Absences (Third and Fourth Years)

If a student is absent:

- **Orientation day - Orientation** is a *graded activity*. Therefore, a doctor's note on the health care provider's letterhead or prescription paper is required if a student wishes to be excused from orientation. The absence is subject to the institution's Missed Graded Activities Policy. Please see the [Student Affairs Handbook](#) for more information.
- **More than two consecutive days of illness** - A doctor's note on the health care provider's letterhead or prescription paper is required.
- **Presenting at a national conference** – When presenting at a national conference, a copy of the invitation to present and a travel itinerary are required.
- **Residency interviews** - When interviewing for residency (MS4s only), a copy of the invitation to interview and a travel itinerary are required.

### >Remediation

Students who miss a National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) exam **must make arrangements with the Office of Medical Education** to make up the exam on the next scheduled exam date.

MS3 students who must **remediate** an NBME exam will need to complete the exam before beginning their MS4 coursework. The schedule for the remediation exam must be approved by the associate dean for student affairs.

MS4 students who must **make up** an NBME exam will take the exam on the next scheduled exam date, even if it falls during vacation time. Students who are required to make up days will take the exam on the next available date following the make-up day. Students may delay the exam if the next exam date falls during another clerkship with a required NBME. Exceptions will also be made for approved away rotations.

During year four, all **remediation** must be completed in time for certification for graduation.

**No special arrangements (additional exam dates/times) will be made.**

### >AY 2016-2017 NBMEs will be administered on the following dates:

- Friday, Jan. 6
- Tuesday, Jan. 24
- Friday, Jan. 27

- Friday, Feb. 3
- Friday, Feb. 24
- Friday, March 24
- Friday, April 21
- Tuesday, May 16
- Friday, May 19
- Friday, May 26
- Friday, June 2
- Friday, June 9

## Clinical Grading Policy

Student clerkship performance is based on the clerkship director's judgment as to whether the student honors, passes, or needs improvement on each of the eight competencies described by the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine (PLFSOM)'s discipline performance rubric. The final clerkship performance assessment is conducted at the end of the rotation based on the student's level of performance at that point in time. Students are not penalized for lower levels of performance early in their rotation. It is expected that over the course of the block, student performance will improve in many or all categories, based on constructive feedback and growing familiarity with the clinical discipline and patient care. In other words, the final assessment is not an average of the student's performance over the entire rotation, but represents his/her final level of achievement.

Possible final grades are honors, pass, fail, and incomplete. There is no cap or quota on the number of students eligible for honors designation. The overall grade is based on the eight competency criteria as described below. No student who is assessed as **"needs improvement"** in any competency on the final clerkship evaluation is eligible for honors.

**A student who fails in the professionalism category may be receive an overall pass or a fail at the discretion of the course director, regardless of his/her score(s) on any other item(s).**

### >Third and Fourth Years

The overall grade is based on assessments in each of the eight competencies:

- **Honors:**
  - Passing score on the NBME exam, if applicable, at the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the first attempt
  - Passing score on the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), if applicable, on the first attempt
  - Honors achieved in a minimum of four of the eight individual competencies on the final clerkship evaluation
  - No individual competency rated as "needs improvement" on the final assessment
- **Pass:**
  - Passing score on the NBME exam, if applicable, at the 6<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the first or second attempt
  - Passing score on the OSCE, if applicable, on the first or second attempt

- A minimum of six of the eight individual competencies rated as pass or better on the final clerkship evaluation
- No more than two individual competencies rated as “needs improvement” on the final clerkship assessment
- Any professionalism concerns are, in the judgment of the course director, not significant enough to warrant a fail on the final clerkship evaluation
- **Fail:**
  - Three or more individual competencies rated as “needs improvement” on the final clerkship assessment
  - Score on the NBME exam, if applicable, below the 6<sup>th</sup> percentile after two attempts
  - Failing score on a final exam (other than the NBME), if applicable, after two attempts
  - Failing score on the OSCE, if applicable, after two attempts
  - Professionalism concerns deemed by the course director to be significant enough to warrant a fail on the final evaluation
- If a student receives a final grade of “needs improvement” in the same competency in three or more clerkships, s/he will be referred to the GPC.
- If a student fails three NBMEs or three OSCEs within the third year, s/he will be referred to the GPC and a notation will be made on the student’s Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

An **incomplete** grade will be assigned any student who has not completed required assignments or examinations or who has not fulfilled all clinical experience obligations, pending completion of the required work.

**Please note:** Each fourth year elective has its own specific grading assessment forms. Possible final grades are honors, pass, and fail. Please refer to the syllabus for each elective for more information on the specific grading policy.

### >Referral to Grading and Promotions Committee

A student will be referred to the GPC if s/he receives an assessment of “needs improvement” in the same competency on three or more final clerkship assessments or if s/he fails a clerkship.

All student progress will be reviewed by the GPC twice per year, considering all coursework, professionalism level, evidence of progressive improvement, and personal circumstances. Performance in other blocks or clerkships will be taken into consideration by the GPC.

For the third year:

If	Then
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The student fails a clerkship a. Failing score on clinical component OR b. Failing score on professional component OR c. Failing score after two attempts at the NBME OR d. Failing score after two attempts at the OSCE	a. One-month remediation in the fourth year in that discipline without receiving elective credit OR b. Repeat of third year OR c. Dismissal
The student fails two clerkships (same definition as above)	a. Remediation* OR b. Repeat of year OR c. Dismissal
The student fails the NBME in three different clerkships (on first attempt)	a. Remediation* OR b. Repeat of the third year OR c. Dismissal
The student fails three clerkships	a. Repeat of third year OR b. Dismissal
The student receives an assessment of “needs improvement” in the same competency on three or more final clerkship assessments	a. Remediation* OR b. Repeat of the third year OR c. Dismissal

\* Remedial work will not be counted as elective time in assessing satisfaction of the conditions for graduation.

#### **Grading and Promotion Committee Review for Year 4**

- i. Failure of a required or elective experience in the fourth year – review by the GPC for remediation, repeat of the year or dismissal.
- ii. Failure of more than one block in year 4 – review for remediation, repeat of the year or dismissal.
- iii. Failure of Step 2 CK or CS on the first attempt – no review required by the GPC, but the student must log a pass of CK and CS by May 1 in order to graduate in May.
- iv. Failure of Step 2 CK or CS on the second attempt – assessment by the GPC for possible remediation and delay of graduation.
- v. Failure of Step 2 CK or CS on the third attempt - Dismissal.

### **Op-Log Policy**

1. Students are required to complete Op-Log entries for **all** patients with whom they have direct, hands-on clinical contact, e.g., taking all, or significant part of the patient’s history, conducting a physical examination, performing or assisting with a diagnostic or treatment procedure, writing orders, participating in treatment decisions, etc. Student will also be expected to complete Op-Log entries for patients seen with an attending or resident where clinical teaching or learning through observation is an explicit goal of the encounter.
2. Students will document each problem/diagnosis s/he addresses at the time of the encounter, e.g., if a patient has any of the following diagnoses listed on his/her record: DM type 2, hypertension,

or osteoarthritis, but the student must only address the OA during the encounter; the OA is the only problem that would be recorded in his/her Op-Log for that encounter.

3. **Students are expected to record their encounters in Op-Log at least once a week.** Regardless of where the assessment falls in the week, students must have their Op-Log recordings up-to-date at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled mid-clerkship block for every formative assessment and by 5 p.m. the Monday of NBME week. For hospitalized patients, a student will complete an entry at the time of the patient's discharge or whenever the student's responsibility for caring for a patient ends.
4. **Timely, complete, and accurate clinical encounter Op-Log entries will be a key component of the clerkship assessment. Students who do not meet expectations in the documentation of their clinical experiences will not be eligible for honors designation.**
5. Students will not document "incidental" patient encounters. Each clerkship will operationally define incidental encounters for its own purposes. Routine follow-up visits with hospitalized patients do not need to be documented in Op-Log (see #3 above).
6. Students are expected to document a minimum number of encounters per clerkship. Please note that these are minimum expectations, and as such, a student may not qualify for honors if s/he only meets the minimum expectation (honors designation indicates a student went above and beyond).
7. Deliberate falsification of Op-Log entries is an honor code violation.

## COMMON REQUIREMENTS

### >Year 3

#### 1. End-of-Year 3 OSCE

- a. Background
  - i. Cases are designed to elicit a process of history-taking and physical examination that demonstrates the examiner's ability to list and pursue various plausible diagnoses. Diagnostic reasoning will be evaluated in the note portion of the examination.
- b. Objective
  - i. Ensure competency in history, physical examination and diagnostic reasoning appropriate to the student's level.
- c. Scoring and Grading
  - i. The student will receive two sub-scores:
    1. **Integrated clinical encounter**, which consists of:
      - a. A standardized patient checklist covering key elements of history and physical examination

- b. SOAP note in the standard USMLE format, with a focus on the assessment and plan, and organization of the note

**2. Communication and interpersonal skills**

- a. Uniform checklist across all cases with a focus on fostering the relationship, gathering information, providing information, helping the patient make decisions and supporting emotions
- d. The student must pass each category (integrated clinical encounter and communication) Interpersonal and interpersonal skills) across all six cases.
  - i. **A minimum passing score 75 percent.**
- e. **Remediation**
  - i. If a passing score in either or both categories is not achieved, the student will be required to repeat all stations of the examination.
  - ii. If a passing score on either or both categories is not achieved on the second attempt, the student will be referred for individual remediation.
  - iii. Successful completion of remediation is required to begin year-four coursework.
- f. ALL STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE YEAR 3 BEFORE TAKING USMLE STEP 2 CS.

**>Year 4:**

**1. Comprehensive Clinical Sciences Examination (CCSE)**

- a. Class of 2017: Students are **highly encouraged** to take the CCSE at the beginning of year 4 to determine readiness to take USMLE Step 2 CK.
- b. Class of 2018 and beyond: Students are **required** to take the CCSE at the beginning of year 4 to determine readiness to take USMLE Step 2 CK.
- c. The associate dean for student affairs will discuss with the student if the score is of concern and decide on a plan of action.
- d. ALL STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE YEAR 3 BEFORE TAKING USMLE STEP 2 CK.

**2. Procedure Workshop**

- a. This workshop is part of the simulation-based curriculum for fourth-year medical students in general procedural skills; student competency will be assessed in the following areas: bag-valve-mask ventilation, adult and infant intubation, venipuncture, IV line placement, NG tube placement, and male and female bladder catheterization.
- b. All MS4s are required to complete the pre-work and workshop and to achieve a passing score at each station.
- c. MS4sa will attend the workshop either during their sub-internship or critical care rotation.
- d. This is requirement that for all students to be eligible for graduation.



### 3. Critical Care Core Curriculum

- a. This will include a series of online interactive modules with a discussion board that will address core topics in foundational knowledge that apply across critical care settings. Examples of topics addressed include nutritional support in the critical care setting, assisted ventilation and interpretation of arterial blood gases, hemodynamic monitoring, physiology and common causes of shock.
- b. Completion of modules and quizzes and participation in discussion boards is required.
- c. If modules are not completed by the end of the rotation, the student will receive a grade of incomplete until all modules are completed in a satisfactory manner. Failure to complete these modules by an assigned deadline could result in an assessment of professionalism concern.

## Continuing Medical Education (CME) Requirement

The following CME requirement is a prerequisite for graduation.

### >Purpose/Goals of Requirement:

- Expose students to the full continuum of medical education, including CME
- Provide students opportunities to broaden their clinical training by participating in approved Type 1 CME events
- Reinforce the fact that all physicians are expected to be active, life-long learners and to take responsibility for maintaining and expanding their knowledge base

### >Requirement:

- **A minimum of 10 documented Type 1 credits must be completed by March 1 of the student's fourth year**
- Credits must be earned in at least three different disciplines (e.g., internal medicine (IM) and IM sub-specialties, surgery and surgical subspecialties, Ob/Gyn, pediatrics and pediatric sub-specialties, psychiatry, family medicine, etc.)
- At least five of the credits must involve live sessions
- Clerkship-required learning activities that happen to carry CME credit (e.g., the Ob/Gyn Department's lactation curriculum) **will not count** toward meeting the CME requirement **except** for grand rounds sessions approved for Type 1 credit by the CME Office that students are required to attend as part of a rotation.

### >Documentation:

- Student participation in CME-approved events will be documented via medical student sign-in sheets.
- Students are required to provide acceptable documentation (e.g., certificates of completion, transcripts of credit, and/or a photo of the sign-in sheet) to Lourdes Davis in the Office of Medical Education.
- Ms. Davis will update students quarterly about their individual status in meeting this requirement.

## Duty Hour Policy

Preamble: The Paul L. Foster School of Medicine (PLFSOM) has the responsibility to develop and implement work hour policies for medical students, especially those on clinical clerkship rotations, in accordance with LCME Element 8. These policies should promote student health and education.

1. Students should not be scheduled for on-call time or patient care activities in excess of 80 hours per week.
2. Students should not be scheduled for more than 16 continuous hours.
3. Students should have 10 hours free of duty between scheduled duty periods.
4. Students should have at least one day off each week averaged over a one-month period.
5. Students should not have more than six consecutive nights on night float duty.
6. This policy applies to all clerkships/rotations in the third and fourth years at PLFSOM.
7. The clinical departments will determine the frequency of overnight calls, which is not to exceed every fourth night.
8. It is anticipated that student attendance at clerkship seminars, conferences and other didactic sessions will be facilitated by this policy and that provisions in this policy are not the basis for missing these sessions. Requests for excused absences from these sessions should be submitted to the clerkship director or his/her designee(s) on an individual basis.
9. Variances from this policy must be approved by the associate dean for student affairs.

## Reporting Duty Hours

Students must report their duty hours in the online scheduling system within 48 hours of the end of each event. Failure to enter duty hours on more than five occasions in a single clerkship will result in a slight concern notation on the student's professionalism evaluation (completed by the clerkship coordinator).

## Additional Policies

There are a number of policies dictated by the Office of Student Affairs. Students are expected to be familiar with all policies outlined in the Student Affairs Handbook.

(<http://el Paso.ttuhs.c.edu/fostersom/studentaffairs/SAHandbook2014Revised.pdf>), with special attention paid to the following:

- Dress Code
- Needle Stick Policy
- Standards of Behavior in the Learning Environment
- Medical Student Code of Professional and Academic Conduct
- Religious Holy Days
- Missed Graded Activities
- Evaluation Policy

Students are expected to be familiar with policies regarding the Center for Advanced Teaching and Assessment in Clinical Simulation (ATACS) and to abide by these policies when attending sessions in the ATACS Center.