Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) & Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) Policy

Educational Program Committee Approved: February 18, 2004
Educational Program Committee Last Revised: June 5, 2019

STEP 1

All students are required to pass Step 1 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) at the national passing level prior to progressing in the third-year curriculum. The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that students entering the clinical phase have adequate basic science preparation to be successful in the clinical courses and eventually to be licensed. The exam is scheduled during May and June following successful completion of the second-year curriculum and an 8-week study period. Below are the specific requirements in place to ensure all students are adequately prepared for Step 1 success:

a) All M2 students must submit at least one NBME practice exam score during the 8-week study period for Step 1. This practice exam must be taken timed (and not on tutor-mode) to be usable to track student progress. Non-timed exam scores will not be accepted. This score and screenshot of the score should be emailed to the Learning Specialist.

b) The first NBME practice score must be submitted by May 15th at the latest.

c) All students who have not reached the required score* by May 15th are required to meet with the Learning Specialist for study planning.

d) All students scoring at or above the required score on an NBME self-assessment will be required to take Step 1 prior to the start of M3 orientation.

e) Students not meeting the required score by mid-June will be reviewed for permission to go into the 1-credit hour Directed Studies course and to delay the start of their clerkships.**

f) If at the end of the 4- to 8-week Directed Studies period, students still unable to reach the required score on an NBME self-assessment will be required to take a formal Leave of Absence (LOA) signed by the Dean to study for and complete the exam. Amount of time allowed for directed studies will be determined by the first clerkship on which students are scheduled to start.

g) Students entering Directed Studies must take Step 1 prior to entering clerkships.

h) Students taking a LOA may be required to return any loan disbursements that they received at the start of third year. Due to this and other significant financial aid implications, all students who take a LOA must meet with and discuss their situation with the Financial Aid office prior to making a decision.

i) Students who take a LOA must have a passing score on Step 1 to be re-enrolled in school and to return to clerkships in 3rd year.

*(The required score on the NBME self-assessment may change over time due to possible changes in the passing score and is decided yearly by the Student Progress Committee and announced to students prior to the study period).
**Importantly, there are significant scheduling, financial, and possible residency matching concerns with delaying Step 1. The timeline and process above have been created in order to help students stay on track to start M3 on time.**

Students failing Step 1 on their first attempt will be given the option of completing their current rotation or withdrawing immediately. Students may resume their third-year curriculum only after receiving a passing score for Step 1.

**STEP 2 CS and STEP 2 CK**

All students are required to pass Step 2 CS and Step 2 CK of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) at the national passing level during their fourth year and before receiving the Doctor of Medicine Degree. The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that students finishing their medical education have adequate basic and clinical science preparation to be successful in a residency program and eventually to be licensed. Students must attempt both the Step 2 CS and Step 2 CK exams before December 31 of their fourth year. Any exceptions must be approved by the deans of Student Affairs.

**Retake Process**

When the scores are received, students who did not pass Step 1, Step 2 CK or Step 2 CS exam will meet individually with members of the Student Affairs Office staff to assess their individual needs and to develop a plan to retake the exam. A student will be permitted up to three (3) attempts within a twelve (12) month period. The 12-month period will begin with the date of their first attempt. Failure to secure a passing score by the end of the 12-month period will result in referral to the Student Promotions Committee with the recommendation for dismissal.

**Policy History**

Approved: February 18, 2004
Step 2 CS, Approved March 4, 2009 (for Class of 2011)
Revised: March 17, 2010
Revised: April 7, 2010
Revised: November 2010
Revised: January 5, 2011
Clarified: July 20, 2011
Reviewed: February 6, 2013
Revised: March 5, 2014
Revised: June 5, 2019