

Article 6 Assessment and Documentation of Student Achievement

Section 6.01 General Guidelines

(1) Evaluation System. The curriculum goals in Article 3 encompass a broad set of competencies. Therefore, the assessment strategies in our curriculum must be creatively tailored to be congruent with those goals.

(2) Academic Records. The Registrar's Office within the Office of Student Affairs permanently maintains an official academic record on each student registered in the School of Medicine. The School of Medicine fully complies with all appropriate University policies as well as federal and state legislation regarding these records.

Section 6.02 Student Assessment

(1) Assessment methods

(a) Student assessment within the School of Medicine includes, but is not limited to written, oral, and performance based assessments.

(2) Accommodations in the assessment process

(a) The School of Medicine adheres to University policies to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and other relevant state and federal laws concerning accommodations for students with disabilities. The Office of Student Affairs works in conjunction with the University's disability support programs, to identify and implement approved accommodations for students with disabilities.

(b) The Office of Student Affairs is the only office that can approve the rescheduling of an assessment.

(c) Students are expected to attend all assessments when scheduled. Under extraordinary circumstances a student may request permission from the Office of Student Affairs to reschedule an assessment. Students should use their best professional judgment to determine what constitutes extraordinary circumstances.

(d) A student request to reschedule an assessment in the pre-clinical years requires at least seven calendar days prior notice to the Office of Student Affairs. In the case of sudden illness or other emergencies, the Office of Student Affairs must be notified as soon as possible to request permission to reschedule an assessment.

- (e) In MS1/MS2, a make-up assessment should be given on only one day within seven calendar days of the originally scheduled assessment.
- (f) In the clinical years, students must request permission to reschedule an assessment from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. In most cases, this request must be submitted at least seven days prior to the assessment. In the case of sudden illness or other emergency, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs must be notified as soon as possible in order to reschedule an assessment.
- (g) Failure to comply with the process described in 6.02(2) may result in failure of the assessment. This determination is made by the course director in consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

(3) Students will have content related feedback available for all internal examinations within a reasonable time.

6.03 Documentation of Student Assessment in MS1

(1) MS1 End-of-Course Grades

- (a) Course directors report grades promptly to the Office of Student Affairs for all students in a course according to the following grading system:

Permanent grades: Pass (P), Fail (F), Condition/Pass (CO/P), Condition/Fail (CO/F), Credit by Examination (BE).

Temporary grades: Condition (CO), Incomplete (IN).

*See Notes and Procedures (3), p. 9 *infra*.

- (b) The Registrar may assign Administrative Grades: No Grade (NG), Withdrawn (W). NG is a temporary grade and W is a permanent grade.

- (c) The Curriculum Management and Policy Committee must approve any course seeking to use an alternative grading scale (e.g. Pass/Fail).

(2) Grades Defined

- (a) Pass (P) means a student's performance was entirely satisfactory.
- (b) Fail (F) means a student's performance was unsatisfactory.
 - i. A failing grade is determined by the Course Director.
 - ii. Assessment may be criterion or norm referenced.
 - iii. A failing grade is generally accepted to be a grade of less than 70% that is more than two standard deviations below the mean, but may vary depending on the circumstances of the course and decision of the Course Director.

- iv. The standard or any deviation from the standard should be communicated to students at the beginning of the course (See 4.01(3)).
- (c) Condition (CO) should be used in cases where a student's performance in the course suggests that he or she should be able to pass a re-examination after a brief independent review of the course material.
- i. A CO grade should be cleared within 3 weeks of the end of the course. At the discretion of the Course Director, this time may be extended to no more than 4 weeks after the end of the semester.
 - ii. Failure to clear a CO within this time frame will result in a CO/F for the course.
 - iii. A CO must be cleared by a passing performance on an evaluation instrument equivalent in scope and difficulty to the original evaluation instrument.
 - iv. There is no requirement for a formal review session to be provided by the faculty for a student who receives a CO grade.
 - v. Students passing the above evaluations will have a grade of CO/P. Students failing the reevaluation will receive CO/F.
- (d) Incomplete (IN) signifies that the student has not met all requirements for a course for compelling reasons such as family or medical emergencies.
- i. To ensure consistency in the way in which IN grades are used, no grade of IN will be assigned without the approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
 - ii. An IN must be converted to a permanent grade 4-weeks after the completion of the semester in which the IN was assigned.
- (e) No Grade (NG) is reserved for administrative reasons where a final grade cannot be given.
- (f) Withdrawn (W) is reserved for cases where the student withdraws from a course.
- (g) Credit By Examination (BE). The use of BE is reserved for course credit awarded by examination. The option for credit by examination in place of a full course may be extended by the course director to students with an advanced degree in a discipline related to a pre-clinical course. The course director may issue a BE after an appropriate examination or reviewing the student's credentials.

6.04 Documentation of Student Assessment in MS2

(1) MS2 End-of-Course Grades

- (a) Course directors report grades promptly to the Office of Student Affairs for all students in a course according to the following grading system:

Permanent grades: Honors (H), Pass (P), Fail (F), Condition/Pass (CO/P), Condition/Fail (CO/F), Credit by Examination (BE).

Temporary grades: Condition (CO), Incomplete (IN).

(b) The Registrar may assign Administrative Grades: No Grade (NG), Withdrawn (W). NG is a temporary grade and W is a permanent grade.

(c) The Curriculum Management and Policy Committee must approve any course seeking to use an alternative grading scale (e.g. Pass/Fail).

(2) Grades Defined

(h) Honors (H) is meant to distinguish those who have achieved particular merit in a course.

- i. For norm referenced courses: Honors should be awarded to approximately the top 15% of the class. Some flexibility is appropriate in cases in which multiple students achieve the stated cutoff.
- ii. Criterion referenced courses: Honors should be awarded to students who have achieved a predetermined level of performance.
- iii. In some courses an additional project (paper or activity) will be required. This must be clearly described in the syllabus.

(i) Pass (P) means a student's performance was entirely satisfactory.

(j) Fail (F) means a student's performance was unsatisfactory.

- i. A failing grade is determined by the Course Director.
- ii. Assessment may be criterion or norm referenced.
- iii. A failing grade is generally accepted to be a grade of less than 70% that is more than two standard deviations below the mean, but may vary depending on the circumstances of the course and decision of the Course Director.
- iv. The standard or any deviation from the standard should be communicated to students at the beginning of the course (See 4.01(3)).

(k) Condition (CO) should be used in cases where a student's performance in the course suggests that he or she should be able to pass a re-examination after a brief independent review of the course material.

- i. A CO grade should be cleared within 3 weeks of the end of the course. At the discretion of the Course Director, this time may be extended to no more than 4 weeks after the end of the semester.
- ii. Failure to clear a CO within this time frame will result in a CO/F for the course.

- iii. A CO must be cleared by a passing performance on an evaluation instrument equivalent in scope and difficulty to the original evaluation instrument.
 - iv. There is no requirement for a formal review session to be provided by the faculty for a student who receives a CO grade.
 - v. Students passing the above evaluations will have a grade of CO/P. Students failing the reevaluation will receive CO/F.
- (l) Incomplete (IN) signifies that the student has not met all requirements for a course for compelling reasons such as family or medical emergencies.
- i. To ensure consistency in the way in which IN grades are used, no grade of IN will be assigned without the approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
 - ii. An IN must be converted to a permanent grade 4-weeks after the completion of the semester in which the IN was assigned.
- (m) No Grade (NG) is reserved for administrative reasons where a final grade cannot be given.
- (n) Withdrawn (W) is reserved for cases where the student withdraws from a course.
- (o) Credit By Examination (BE). The use of BE is reserved for course credit awarded by examination. The option for credit by examination in place of a full course may be extended by the course director to students with an advanced degree in a discipline related to a pre-clinical course. The course director may issue a BE after an appropriate examination or reviewing the student's credentials.

6.05 Documentation of Student Assessment in MS3/MS4

(1) MS3/MS4 End-of-Course Grades

(a) Course directors report grades promptly to the Office of Student Affairs for all students in a course according to the following grading system:

Permanent grades: Honors (H), High Pass (HP), Pass (P), Fail (F),
 Condition/Pass (CO/P), Condition/Fail (CO/F).
 Temporary grades: Condition (CO), Incomplete (IN).

(b) The Registrar may assign Administrative Grades: No Grade (NG),
 Withdrawn (W).

(c) Any course seeking permission to use a different grading scale must be approved by the Curriculum Management and Policy Committee (e.g. Pass/Fail).

(2) Grades Defined

- (a) Honors (H) is meant to distinguish those who have achieved particular merit in a course. For norm referenced courses: Honors should be awarded to approximately the top 25% of the class.
- (b) High Pass (HP) is awarded when a student's performance was beyond satisfactory, but less than Honors level work.
- (c) Pass (P) means that a student's performance was entirely satisfactory.
- (d) Fail (F) means unsatisfactory performance.
- (e) Condition (CO) is intended for students who demonstrate circumscribed academic deficiencies that can be remediated within a short period of time.
 - i. All students receiving a condition grade must schedule a meeting with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to develop a binding plan for remediation that may require withdrawing from clinical course work.
 - ii. Students failing to comply with the binding plan for remediation will receive a CO/F. Students completing the binding plan for remediation will receive a CO/P.
- (f) Incomplete (IN) signifies that the student has not met all requirements for a course for compelling reasons such as family or medical emergencies.
 - i. To ensure consistency in the way in which IN grades are used, no grade of IN will be assigned without the approval of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. A student must schedule a meeting with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs to develop a binding plan to resolve the IN.
 - ii. An IN will be converted to a permanent grade within the timeframe of the specified plan.
- (g) No Grade (NG) is reserved for administrative reasons where a final grade cannot be given.
- (h) Withdrawn (W) is reserved for cases where the student withdraws from a course.

6.06 Honors for the Year

- (1) No Honors for the Year is awarded in MS1.
- (2) Honors for the Year in MS2 is given to students who score in approximately the top fifteen percent of their class based on a total weighted score, and as determined by the Student Promotions Committee.

- (3) Honors for the Year in MS3/MS4 is given to students who score in approximately the top twenty-five percent of their class based on a total weighted score, and as determined by the Student Promotions Committee.
- (4) For MS2, the total weighted score is calculated using the following formula:
(percentage of contact hours x score) = total weighted score
- (5) For MS3/MS4, the total weighted score for each course is determined by the following formula: (credit hours x grade) = total weighted score. (H=100, HP=75, P=50, CO's and F=0)
- (6) For MS2, MS3, and MS4, the sum of total weighted scores/total credit hours is then calculated for each student to determine if he/she qualifies for a year-end grade of Pass or Honors.

Approved by CMPC February 10, 2005
Approved by Dean Golden March 8, 2005

6.07 Notes and Procedures:

(1) Examination Policy for Pre-Clinical Medical Student Courses

- (a) Beginning August 2005, all written midterm and final examinations will be administered electronically to students in the first two years of the UNC School of Medicine curriculum. Students will be required to bring their personal laptop computers (uniform model will have been specified by the School before matriculation).
- (b) Each student is responsible to ensure that his/her laptop is in good working order. This includes the following:
 - Running University-supported anti-virus and spyware programs at least 4-5 days before an exam;
 - Making sure that they can connect to the Internet;
 - Arriving at the exam 15-20 minutes early to resolve any computer problems;
 - Plugging their laptops into a power outlet while taking an exam (i.e., bringing a charged battery, but not relying on it);
 - Plugging the network cable into the network port before turning on the laptop;
 - Making sure that the wireless connection is disabled;
 - Making sure that cookies are enabled;
 - Making sure that the IE browser language is set to US, English;
 - Waiting until the scheduled exam time to log in.

- (c) Each student must ensure that software installed for on-line exams remains functional and that no other software installed on their machines interferes with it. Students must arrange for resolution of any hardware or software problems by OIS at least 3 business days before a scheduled exam. Time required to retrieve a forgotten laptop or to reinstall or update software will be deducted from the time allotted for the exam.
- (d) Students must visibly wear their student picture ID badges. Prior to the commencement of the exam all personal items should be secured under the students' seats with only the following items available to them on their desks: scratch paper (provided at every available entrance), pencil/pen, laptop computer, power cable, and Ethernet cable. Following the completion of their exam, exiting students are required to dispose of their scratch paper in available bins at every entrance/exit. Use of any other electronic devices will not be allowed during exams. Examples of prohibited devices are cell phones, iPods, personal digital assistants, and headphones.
- (e) In order to maintain the proper testing environment for students who are still working on the exam, students who have completed the exam must vacate the area until the prescribed examination time has elapsed. This includes the exam room itself and surrounding hallways.

Approved by CMPC December 8, 2005

Revised by CMPC September 14, 2006

(2) Grade Submission Policy

- (a) The LCME Standards specify that “an important element of the system of evaluation should be to ensure the timeliness with which students are informed about their final performance in the course/clerkship,” and that final grades should be available to students “within 4 to 6 weeks of the end of a course or clerkship” (ED-30).
- (b) In light of the UNC School of Medicine’s belief in the importance of summative and formative evaluation in the training of medical students, and in accordance with the LCME standards, it is proposed that, effective fall of 2005:
 - i. Grades for all courses and clerkships will be submitted to the registrar no later than 6 weeks after the end of the course or clerkship or 4 weeks after the shelf test grades are reported;
 - ii. The Registrar will notify Committee Co-Chairs of any grades still outstanding at the 6 week time point;
 - iii. Committee Co-Chairs will forward notice of outstanding grades to Course Directors, who may forward requests for an extension of the grade reporting timeline to the CMPC;

- iv. A list of courses and clerkships with outstanding grades and any explanations or requests for extension will be presented to the CMPC every 12 weeks as a standing agenda item;
- v. Extensions of the grade reporting timeline may be granted at the discretion of the CMPC;
- vi. Course directors whose courses are found to be out of compliance with the UNC SOM grade submission policy will be notified in writing by the CMPC with copies to the department chair and the vice dean of the SOM;
- vii. This policy will be publicized to School of Medicine students.

approved at 7.28.05 CMPC

Revised April 13, 2005

Revised August 11, 2005

Revised December 14, 2005

(3) MS1 Grades and Other Honors

- a) No numerical grades will be recorded in MS 1.
- b) MS 1 grades will not be considered when determining eligibility for other honors and awards (such as AOA).

(4) Schedule of Assessment Preparation in AIMS

The AIMS Task Force has developed the following schedule, which is hereby adopted for preparing assessments.

- o In consultation with course faculty and OED staff, each course director develops a draft exam that draws upon existing test items in AIMS where appropriate. This is an opportunity to improve the exam with the support of an expert. The nature of that support will be determined in collaboration with each course director, but might include consultation on the results of the previous year's exam, review of new questions, and discussion of how best to exploit the capabilities of AIMS. Each course director maintains final authority over test design and item inclusion.
- o In 2006-2007, the goal is to submit a test draft to the OED no less than 1 week before the test begins, with the goal of having the test finalized 3 business days before it is administered. The goal in future years will be to finalize the first draft 2 weeks before the course begins. With prior arrangement with the OED, no more than 15% of the exam may be submitted less than 1 week before its administration to accommodate emergent content. This plan must be made with OED at least 2 weeks before the exam in question.
- o The draft exam should be shared with all appropriate teaching faculty in the course with an explanation of which test items represent the content that faculty are accountable for teaching. Faculty are invited to collaborate with course directors in modifying those items or creating new test items.

- That collaboration results in a final version of the test, which the course director submits to the OED no later than three business days before the exam administration.
- This structure helps course directors hold faculty accountable for teaching objectives and invites their structured input well before item entry in AIMS takes place. It supports both course directors and faculty in their function of ensuring that instruction fulfills course objectives.

Please see complete AIMS Task Force Working Document [here](#).

Approved by CMPC September 28, 2006