

TITLE OF POLICY

Combined and Additional Degree Program Policy

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish School of Medicine oversight of additional degrees. The policy also outlines eligibility, the recommended timeline for completion, and credit hour application to Medical Degree for each type of degree.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE

Office of Student Affairs reviews the policy on an as-needed basis and Education Committee approves it.

LCME REFERENCE(S)

N/A

HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES

Approved by Education Committee June, 2024

Approved by Education Committee May, 2021

Approved by Education Committee February, 2017

DEFINITION(S):

Combined degree program: A combined degree program is one in which a student applies to both programs with a single application process.

Additional degree program: An extra degree program requires two distinct application processes.

POLICY

Combined and Additional Degree Overview

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs oversees all additional and combined degree programs. All additional and combined degree programs will require a leave of absence for graduate studies (see Leave of Absence Policy). Students who do not have a passing Step 1 score posted on or before December 31 are placed on administrative leave until a passing score for Step 1 is achieved. This is true of combined or additional degree students, including MD/PhD students, MD/MPH students, or students wishing to pursue a research leave of absence. The Office of Student Affairs governs the leave structure of all combined and additional degree programs. Students who pursue an additional degree often (but not always) graduate with a different cohort from the cohort in which they entered Foundation Phase.

The Medical Sciences Training Program (MSTP) MD/PhD Combined Program

The program allows for the clinical study of medicine combined with graduate education and doctoral research in any of a wide variety of disciplines.

Schedule

The Foundation Phase is completed in the first year and a half of the program.

- The summer before the first year of the program is used to expose students to potential research areas.
- The summer after the first 10 months of Foundation Phase and before the next Fall semester begins is further used to expose students to potential research areas.
- After completing the Foundation Phase, students may be registered for the Application Phase during the spring semester before starting graduate school in the fall semester.
- The final two years of the program are devoted to clinical medicine.

Application of Credit Hours to Medical Degree

- Students may receive up to 18 credit hours of elective credit toward the MD degree.
- Students who enroll in the MTEC 499 0: MD-PhD Longitudinal Clinical Elective will be given 6 hours of credit towards Individualization Phase.
- Students are exempt from the Science of Medicine (SOM) selective but must replace it with an elective of equivalent credit hours.

Additional Degree: Master of Public Health (MPH)

Medical students may enroll in the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree program in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Eligibility

- The academic records of students applying to the MPH must have a letter of support from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs at UNC School of Medicine.
- Students with histories of either academic or professional difficulty may not be approved to take a leave from the MD program to pursue an MPH.

Schedule

- Students must complete both the Foundation Phase and Application Phase before enrolling in the Gillings School. Students also typically complete some portion of the Individualization Phase before starting an MPH program to be on track for the residency match when they return from their LOA (leave of absence).
- The accepted MPH will follow the UNC graduate school timeline in terms of the start (Fall semester) and completion (Summer Session I). Students should expect to start at the end of August and wrap up the MPH in late June/early July (to be an August graduate).

Application of Credit Hours to Medical Degree

- Students who complete an MPH through the Gillings School may receive six credit hours of elective credit toward the MD degree for graduate school courses that are relevant to the MD if they complete their MPH degree by August of the Individualization Phase.
- Students who complete their MPH requirements by August of the Individualization Phase are not required to take the Social Health Systems 5 (SHS5) selective course or the Science of

Medicine (SOM) selective course and must replace them with an elective of their choice that equals the same number of credit hours. These replacement electives must be taken in the final semester.

The MD/MBA Additional Degree Program

Medical students may enroll in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program in the UNC KenanFlagler Business School.

Eligibility

- Students seeking admission to the MD/MBA Program will need to take either the GMAT or the GRE, or apply for a testing waiver.

Schedule

- Students must complete the Foundation Phase and Application Phase before enrolling in the MBA Program. Students also typically complete the first four months of the Individualization Phase before starting the MBA to be eligible for the residency match.
- Students are enrolled in the Kenan-Flagler Business School during their fourth year.
- Students are enrolled in the SOM and in the Kenan-Flagler Business School during their fifth year.

Application of Credit Hours to Medical Degree

- Students in the MD/MBA Program may receive 12 credit hours of elective credit toward the MD degree for medically relevant graduate school courses completed during their time in medical school.
- Students in the MD/MBA, who participate in the healthcare concentration, are exempt from Social Health Systems 5 Selective and must replace it with an elective of their choice that equals the same number of credit hours.

The MD Degree Program for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMFS) residents

Eligibility

- Dental students may apply to the OMFS residency. During their residency, they earn an MD over 18 months. (see [The UNC SOM Medical Student Transfer Policy](#))

Application of Credit Hours to Medical Degree

- OMFS residents may receive 12 hours of elective credits towards the MD degree.
- OMFS residents complete the same curriculum as Application Phase Students and then complete an accelerated curriculum during Individualization Phase which includes the requirements of Critical Care, Acting Internship, SOM/SHS5, and Electives.
- OMFS residents are not required to take the Transition to Residency Course,

Other Additional Degree Programs

Medical students may work toward joint degrees in medicine and another graduate or professional school, including programs at other universities.

Eligibility

- The School of Medicine allows medical students to seek approval to complete a graduate program in any area that is relevant to medicine, including but not limited to MD/MA or MD/JD degree combinations.
- Students must obtain approval in advance from the Office of Student Affairs to enroll in an additional degree program.

Application of Credit Hours to Medical Degree

- Students in additional degree programs may receive elective credit towards the MD degree if they have completed their additional degree requirements by August of the year prior to MD graduation. Students will need to have completed medically relevant graduate school courses in graduate degree programs.
- Students with additional degrees during medical school who believe they meet exemptions for SHS 5 or SOM should submit a request to Curricular Affairs and Student Affairs **by the deadline indicated in course communications** via Qualtrics:
 - [Science of Medicine](#)
 - [Social and Health Systems 5](#)
- Students earning additional degrees during medical school who believe they meet the requirements for elective credit requirements based on these degrees should reach out to Student Affairs. Student Affairs will facilitate a conversation with Curricular Affairs and course directors.