FOURTH YEAR CLERKSHIP EXAM AND GRADING POLICY, ACADEMIC YEAR 2012-2013

Student grades for required clerkships are calculated using the following:
- Scores from NBME subject examinations or COM clerkship-specific examinations;
- Ratings from clinical assessments by the clerkship faculty;
- Comments and affirmations by the clerkship director;
- Satisfactory completion of patient log expectations (see individual clerkship syllabi for expectations);
- Satisfactory completion of required projects and activities, (see individual clerkship syllabi); and,
- Patient and staff evaluations.

Clerkship Grade Considerations:

Student NBME subject exam percentile scores are determined using the NBME Academic Year Norms for Examinee Performance tables available at the beginning of the academic year. The same norms are used throughout the academic year. All NBME percentile scores are reported to the Education Directors by the Office of Curriculum Development and Evaluation.

Percentile scores for NBME subject exams following the Advanced Internal Medicine Clerkship shall be referenced to national norms from the same quarter during which the clerkship was taken. In the event that a rotation straddles two quarters equally, the scores shall be referenced to norms from the earlier of the quarters in which 50% or more of the rotation was completed.

Scores for the NBME subject exam following the Advanced Family Medicine Clerkship shall be referenced to the single set of preliminary norms for students taking the Family Medicine Core and Chronic Care Modular exams.

The Education Director in the appropriate discipline is responsible for reviewing all student assessments and assigning all clerkship grades according to the Grading Standards for Required Clerkships (below).

If extenuating circumstances exist, the Education Director may request a deviation from these Grading Standards by presenting the reason for the proposed deviation to the assembled Education Directors. This group will decide whether or not the requested deviation from the Grading Standards will be allowed.

Grading Standards for Required Clerkships:

FSU COM has adopted the following Honors/Pass/Fail grading system and a uniform policy governing the assignment of grades to students completing required clerkships.
When the criteria refer to the “end of the clerkship,” this means 5:00 PM, local time, on the final Friday of the clerkship (unless an extension has been previously approved by the Education Director).

**Honors Criteria:**

A student will be given an “Honors” grade if the “Honors Criteria” listed below are met:  
1) Receives a “yes” rating in all 6 subcategories of the clerkship assessment form pertaining to “Professionalism” and “Ethical Standards”; **AND**  
2) Receives at least 10 “excellent” ratings in the remaining 17 subcategories on the clerkship faculty assessment form; **AND**  
3) Has no more than 2 ratings of “satisfactory” and no ratings of either “marginal” or “poor”; **AND**  
4) Receives a narrative summary by the clerkship director documenting excellent performance and satisfactory completion of clerkship competencies/objectives by the end of the clerkship; **AND**  
5) Scores at or above the 75th percentile for NBME shelf exam reference scores by students completing clerkships of comparable length at a similar time in the academic year; **OR** scores at or above a pre-determined Honors-level on the Geriatrics or Emergency Medicine exam; **AND**  
6) Satisfactorily completes and submits required clerkship projects and activities by the end of the clerkship; **AND**  
7) Satisfactorily completes patient log expectations by the end of the clerkship; **AND**  
8) Receives satisfactory patient and staff evaluations.

Note: Education Directors may assign an “Honors” grade to high-performing clerkship students that meet either (but not both) of the following:  
A. Student satisfies all of the “Honors” criteria listed above, but receives only 9 “excellent” ratings in the remaining 17 subcategories on the clerkship faculty assessment form, **OR**  
B. Student satisfies all of the “Honors” criteria listed above, but receives an NBME shelf exam score at or above the 72nd percentile when referenced to students completing clerkships of comparable length at a similar time in the academic year, or scores not lower than 96% of the pre-determined Honors level on the Geriatrics or Emergency Medicine exam.

**Pass Criteria:**

A student will receive a “Pass” grade if all of the “Pass Criteria” listed below are met:  
1) Receives a “yes” rating in all 6 subcategories on the clerkship faculty assessment form pertaining to “Professionalism” and “Ethical Standards”; **AND**  
2) Has no subcategories rated as “poor,” and no more than two subcategories rated as “marginal”; **AND**  
3) Receives a narrative summary by the clerkship director documenting satisfactory performance and satisfactory completion of clerkship competencies/objectives by the end of the clerkship; **AND**  
4) Scores at or above the 10th percentile for NBME shelf exam reference scores by
students completing clerkships of comparable length at a similar time in the academic year; OR scores at or above a pre-determined minimum passing score on the Geriatrics or Emergency Medicine exam; AND
5) Satisfactorily completes and submits required clerkship projects and activities by the end of the clerkship; AND
6) Satisfactorily completes patient log expectations by the end of the clerkship; AND
7) Receives satisfactory patient and staff evaluations

**Fail Criteria:**

A student is at risk for a grade of “Fail” if any of the “Fail Criteria” listed below are met:

1) Receives a “no” rating in any of the 6 subcategories of the clerkship faculty assessment form pertaining to “Professionalism” and “Ethical Standards”; OR
2) Receives three (3) or more ratings of “marginal” in the remaining 17 subcategories on the clerkship faculty assessment form; OR
3) Receives a rating of “poor” in any remaining subcategory; OR
4) Receives a narrative summary by the clerkship director documenting unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet clerkship competencies/objectives by the end of the clerkship; OR
5) Scores below the 10th percentile of students completing clerkships of comparable length at a similar time in the academic year on the retake of his/her NBME specialty subject exam; OR scores below a predetermined minimum passing score on the retake of the Geriatrics or Emergency Medicine exam; OR
6) Does not satisfactorily complete or submit required clerkship projects and activities by the end of the clerkship; OR
7) Does not satisfactorily complete patient log expectations by the end of the clerkship; OR
8) Does not receive satisfactory patient and staff evaluations

In clerkships that use multiple clerkship faculty members to evaluate the student, please consult the clerkship syllabus for an explanation of how the ratings of these different evaluators are weighted or considered. In general, the evaluation of the student’s clinical performance is weighted based on the time spent with a faculty member. If another method of weighting or consideration is used, this should be explained in the clerkship syllabus. NOTE: A rating of “no” in any of the 6 subcategories pertaining to “professionalism” or “ethical standards” by even one faculty member may justify a failing grade.
Criteria for a temporary grade of “IR” (“IR”=Incomplete, pending Remediation)

1. Initial failure of NBME subject exam or Geriatrics or Emergency Medicine exam:

A student who fails the initial NBME subject exam or fails to achieve a minimum passing score on the initial Geriatrics or Emergency Medicine, but performs at a satisfactory level in all other aspects of the clerkship, will receive an initial clerkship grade of “IR.”

The student will be given one opportunity to retake the examination to achieve a passing score. This retake must occur within 90 days from the date the student is notified that he/she has failed the initial subject examination, unless a different time-frame has been previously approved by the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee.

The student and regional campus dean will together determine the date of the re-take subject examination. Re-take exams will be preferentially scheduled on the dates other clerkships are ending and other students are being tested at the regional campus.

Students who retake the subject exam must achieve a score at or above the 10th percentile for the NBME subject exam reference scores by students taking the exam at a similar time in the academic year. The date of the retake exam—and not the dates of the clerkship—will establish which set of NBME norms are used. Students who retake the exam during or following the fourth quarter of their third year curriculum will have their scores referenced to fourth quarter scores.

If a passing score is achieved on the retake examination, the initial “IR” grade will be changed to a grade of “Pass.” A student who fails the initial exam cannot achieve an “Honors” grade regardless of the score on the retake exam.

If a student does not pass the retake examination or fails to retake the examination within the allotted time, the original “IR” grade will be changed to a grade of “Fail.”

2. Failure to successfully complete one or more remediable clerkship objectives/competencies by the end of the clerkship:

Students are expected to achieve all clerkship competencies/objectives by the end of the clerkship. The education director and/or the clerkship director will monitor and affirm that all clerkship competencies/objectives have been satisfactorily completed before assigning a “Pass” grade.

An Education Director may assign an initial clerkship grade of “IR” to a student who successfully completes most grading criteria for an “Honors” or “Pass” grade, but fails to satisfactorily complete one or more remediable clerkship objectives/competencies. Students who receive an initial clerkship grade of “IR” will be reported to the Student Evaluation & Promotion Committee (SEPC).
The Education Director will determine the structure, content and evaluation of remediation activities, and will work with the Clerkship Director and/or the Regional Campus Dean to implement these. **Remediation of this objective/competency failure must be successfully completed within 30 days from the time the student is notified that he/she has received an “IR” grade for failing to complete the clerkship objectives/competencies.**

If successful remediation of the clerkship objectives/competencies occurs within the 30 day window, the initial “IR” grade will be changed to a grade of “Pass.” A student who receives an initial “IR” grade cannot achieve an “Honors” grade regardless of his/her NBME subject exam scores or clinical evaluation from the Clerkship Faculty.

If a student does not successfully remediate the clerkship objectives/competencies within the 30 day window, the original “IR” grade will be changed to a grade of “Fail.”

**Any student receiving a grade of “Fail” will be referred to the Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC).**

**Other situations that potentially may impact a student’s grade:**

1. **Students who fail to meet patient log expectations for required clerkships:**

   Failure to comply with patient log expectations may result in the student receiving a temporary “IR” grade or in the lowering of the student’s clerkship grade by the Education Director. In cases of blatant noncompliance, noncompliance with patient log expectations may result in a student’s failing the clerkship. All entries into the patient log for a clerkship must be completed by the end of the clerkship.

2. **Students who receive poor evaluations by patients or staff:**

   Consistently low evaluations by either patients or staff may result in a lowering of the student’s clerkship grade by the Education Director, and in extreme cases may result in a student’s failing the clerkship.

**Promotion and Graduation:**

A student must receive a “Pass” or “Honors” grade for all required third-year clerkships in order to be eligible for promotion to the fourth year.

A student must receive a “Pass” or “Honors” grade for all fourth-year required clerkships and electives to be eligible to graduate from FSU COM.
GRADING POLICY FOR FOURTH YEAR ELECTIVES:

Similar to the grading of all required clerkships, the FSU COM has adopted an Honors/Pass/Fail grading system for all electives completed by 3rd and 4th year students.

All grades for elective rotations completed by students during the third or fourth year will be assigned by the Regional Campus Deans.

For all “internal” FSU COM electives, the “Evaluation of Student Performance: Elective Rotation” form (version 2011-2012) will be utilized. When this form is completed and returned, the student will be graded by applying these guidelines:

HONORS: The student is eligible for an HONORS grade when:
- The student is rated at a 5 level in both knowledge AND professionalism; AND
- The student receives more ratings of 5 than 4; AND
- The student receives no rating less than 4.

FAIL: The student is at risk of a FAIL grade when:
- The student receives a rating of 2 or less in professionalism; OR
- The student receives a rating of 2 or less in two or more categories.

PASS: The student is eligible for a PASS grade when the ratings fall in between the guidelines for HONORS and FAIL.

The Regional Campus Deans will also take the evaluator’s narrative comments into consideration when assigning the final grade. If compelling, these comments can move a grade up or down one level.