

CLERKSHIP EXAM AND GRADING POLICY, ACADEMIC YEAR 2013-2014

The Education Director in the appropriate discipline is responsible for reviewing all student assessments (summarized below) and assigning clerkship grades according to the process outlined in this document.

Assessment of student by Clerkship Faculty: At the end of the clerkship, the Clerkship Faculty member(s) complete a summary assessment of the student's performance. This assessment covers professional behavior, clinical performance, medical knowledge and achievement of both institutional and clerkship-specific competencies. These assessments are analyzed by the Education Director.

Clerkship Director's summary: At the end of the clerkship, the Clerkship Director completes a summary assessment of the student's performance. This assessment covers professional behavior, medical knowledge, compliance with all documentation requirements and achievement of both institutional and clerkship-specific competencies. These assessments are analyzed by the Education Director.

NBME Clinical Subject Examination and/or COM Geriatrics exam: At the end of the clerkship, each student takes the appropriate NBME Clinical Subject Examination or the COM Geriatrics exam.

The NBME Clinical Subject Examination Norms for Examinee Performance tables available at the beginning of the academic year will be used throughout that entire academic year. All NBME percentile scores are reported by the Office of Medical Education. The quartile is determined by the total number of weeks completed in all clerkships, and not by the calendar.

COM Geriatrics exam scores warranting consideration for "honors" and "failing" clerkship grades will be identified in the Geriatrics syllabus.

Assessment of documentation requirements and required projects/activities:

The Clerkship Director is responsible for reporting and the Education Director is responsible for confirming that all documentation requirements for the clerkship have been completed by the student.

The clerkship syllabus will clearly identify: 1) all required projects and activities to be completed during the clerkship; 2) when those projects and activities should be completed; 3) performance expectations/criteria for evaluation of the projects and activities; and, 4) by whom these projects and activities will be evaluated.

Demonstration of clerkship-specific competencies:

The clerkship syllabus will clearly identify: 1) the clerkship-specific competencies that students are expected to demonstrate; 2) when the assessment of those competencies will occur; 3) how those competencies will be evaluated, including performance

expectations/criteria for evaluation; and, 4) who will determine whether the student has achieved the expected competency.

Competency-based clinical assessment differs from traditional clinical assessments in that competency-based assessment references observed student behaviors to expected **behavioral milestones**. Since students develop new and more sophisticated clinical behaviors as they progress through the required clerkships, the acquisition of these expected behavioral milestones should be seen as developmental and cumulative. Simply stated, the expected clinical behaviors of students at the beginning of third year, midway through third year and at the end of third year are different.

Clerkship Grading Criteria:

FSU COM has established that students will receive a final grade of “honors” “pass” or “fail” for their performance on the clerkships and has adopted the following criteria for assigning clerkship grades. Note: The “end of the clerkship,” occurs at 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 receive a grade of “Honors” if the Education Director determines that each of the following has been achieved during the clerkship:

- 1) Consistently demonstrates professional behavior throughout the clerkship; **AND**
- 2) Consistently demonstrates a high level (or, improvement to that high level) of clinical skills during the clerkship; **AND**
- 3) Consistently demonstrates a high level (or, improvement to excellent) of content knowledge in the discipline during the clerkship; **AND**
- 4) Scores at or above the 75th percentile for NBME shelf exam reference scores obtained by students completing clerkships at a similar time in their clinical training; **OR** scores at or above a pre-determined Honors-level on the COM Geriatrics exam; **AND**
- 5) Completes and submits all required clerkship projects and activities on schedule and achieves the performance expectations for “honors” stated in the syllabus); **AND**
- 6) Demonstrates all required clerkship-specific competencies; **AND**
- 7) Satisfactorily completes patient log expectations by the end of the clerkship; **AND**
- 8) Receives satisfactory patient and staff evaluations.

Pass Criteria:

A student will receive a grade of “Pass” if the Education Director determines that each of the following has been achieved during the clerkship:

- 1) Consistently demonstrates professional behavior throughout the clerkship; **AND**
- 2) Consistently demonstrates an acceptable level (or, improvement to acceptable level) of clinical skills during the clerkship; **AND**

- 3) Consistently demonstrates an acceptable level (or, improvement to acceptable level) of content knowledge in the discipline during the clerkship; **AND**
- 4) Scores at or above the 10th percentile for NBME shelf exam reference scores obtained by students completing clerkships at a similar time in their clinical training; **OR** scores at or above a pre-determined Pass-level on the COM Geriatrics exam; **AND**
- 5) Completes and submits all required clerkship projects and activities on schedule, and achieves the performance expectations for “pass” stated in the syllabus; **AND**
- 6) Demonstrates all required clerkship-specific competencies; **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 to receive a grade of “Fail” if the Education Director determines that he/she:

- 1) Demonstrates unprofessional behavior during the clerkship; **OR**
- 2) Demonstrates an unacceptable level (or, fails to improve clinical skills to an acceptable level) of clinical skills by the end of the clerkship); **OR**
- 3) Demonstrates an unacceptable level (or, fails to improve to a satisfactory level) of content knowledge by the end of the clerkship; **OR**
- 4) Scores below the 10th percentile for NBME Clinical Subject Examination retake using reference scores obtained by students completing clerkships at a similar time in their clinical training; **OR** scores below a pre-determined Pass level on retake of the COM Geriatrics exam; **OR**
- 5) Fails to complete and submit all required clerkship projects and activities on schedule **OR** demonstrates an unacceptable level of project performance; **OR**,
- 6) Fails to achieve required clerkship-specific competencies; **OR**,
- 7) Fails to complete patient log expectations by the end of the clerkship; **OR**
- 8) Receives unsatisfactory patient and staff evaluations.

If the Education Director feels that extenuating circumstances exist, he/she may request a deviation from these Grading Criteria by presenting the situation and a suggested alternative grade to the Education Directors. The Education Directors will decide by majority vote if the situation justifies a deviation from these Grading Criteria, and whether the suggested alternative grade is appropriate. For situations discussed by the group, the Education Director should include some documentation of the discussion and/or vote on the Education Director’s Summary.

“Extenuating circumstances” includes the situation where student performance on the clerkship is seen as exemplary, but his/her NBME Clinical Subject exam score is between the 72nd and 75th percentile. In this situation, the Education Director may request that the student receive an “honors” grade. The Education Directors will decide by majority vote whether the request is appropriate. No student who scores below the 72nd percentile on the initial NBME Clinical Subject Exam will receive an “honors” grade for the clerkship.

Students who feel an error occurred in calculating the grade have the right to appeal the grade. Details on grade appeals are located in the Student Handbook.

NOTE: Student behavior that is judged to be egregious or extremely unprofessional (examples: lying, cheating, repeated unexcused absences or tardiness, etc.) may result in the immediate dismissal of the student from the clerkship by the Educational Director or Regional Campus Dean. Students dismissed from a clerkship will be referred to the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee.

Criteria for a temporary grade of “IR” (“IR”=Incomplete, pending Remediation)

1. Initial failure of NBME Clinical Subject Examination or COM Geriatrics exam:

A student who fails the initial NBME Clinical Subject Examination or fails to achieve a minimum passing score on the initial COM Geriatrics exam, but performs at the “pass” 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 should occur within 90 days from the date the student is notified that he/she has failed the Clinical Subject Examination. The date of the Clinical Subject Examination retake is determined by the student and the Regional Campus Dean and must be approved by the Education Director before the retake occurs.

Students who retake the Clinical Subject Examination must achieve a score at or above the 10th percentile for the NBME Clinical Subject Examination reference scores by students taking the exam at a similar time in their training. The number of weeks of completed clerkship experience will be used to establish which set of NBME norms are used.

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, 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 objectives and competencies by the end of the clerkship. The Clerkship Director and the Education Director will monitor and affirm that clerkship objectives and clerkship competencies have been achieved.

In certain situations, a student may achieve most, but not all of the expected objectives and competencies. If in the opinion of the Education Director, the student performance in all other areas of the clerkship has been satisfactory and the student may reasonably be

able to complete the remaining objectives/competencies soon after the end of the clerkship, the Education Director may assign an initial clerkship grade of “IR” to the student in lieu of assigning a grade of “Fail.” Examples of these situations include: 1) A student who is unable to satisfactorily complete and turn in a required project by the deadline as outlined in the syllabus; 2) A student who does not complete patient log expectations by the end of the clerkship; or, 3) A student with a recognized clinical deficit that can be quickly remedied.

Students who receive an initial clerkship grade of “IR” for these non-exam performance reasons should be notified immediately by the Education Director, who will also report this action to the Student Evaluation & Promotion Committee (SEPC).

The Education Director will determine what is necessary to satisfactorily complete clerkship objectives and competencies, and the timeframe for completing them. The Education Director will work with the Clerkship Director and/or the Regional Campus Dean to implement this remediation. Remediation of this “IR” grade must be completed by an agreed-upon date negotiated with the Education Director.

If successful remediation occurs by the agreed-upon date, 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 Clinical Subject Examination scores or clinical evaluation from the Clerkship Faculty.

If a student does not successfully remediate the clerkship objectives/competencies by the agreed upon date, the original “IR” grade will be changed to a grade of “Fail.”

3. Grades in situations due to circumstances beyond student control.

Students who do not complete all clerkship objectives/competencies due to an inability to participate in clerkship activities because of illness, injury, family emergencies, etc., will be given an initial grade of “I.”

When clerkship deficiencies have been resolved and all clerkship objectives/competencies completed, this initial “I” grade may be changed to an “Honors,” “Pass,” or “Fail” grade.

In order to comply with LCME standards for grade reporting, students must be assigned a clerkship grade within 6 weeks from the end of the clerkship. On rare occasion, a key assessment of student performance (Clerkship Faculty assessment of student, NBME Clinical Subject Exam result, etc.) may not be available by the 6 week deadline. In that situation, the student will be given an initial grade of “I.”

When all key assessments are available, this initial “I” grade may be changed to an “Honors,” “Pass,” or “Fail” grade.