

David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA
Grading Policy for the Clinical Years 2021-2022

Clinical Rotation Grading Policy

Core Clerkships Grading Policy and Rubric

NBME Grading Tables

MS4 Grading Policy

1. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

1.1 This policy describes the procedure for assigning final clerkship grades for DGSOM medical students that was implemented in May 2016. The DGSOM Faculty Executive Committee adopted a 4-tier grading system (Honors/High Pass/Pass/Fail) to replace the pre-existing Pass/Fail system. This initiative was student driven, with the intent to better represent individual student clinical performance. The system evaluates students objectively, using criterion-based standards. An evaluation method to ensure fairness and transparency was developed and was applied in a uniform manner across all clinical clerkships. These graded assessments of clinical performance more accurately reflect a student's clinical abilities, and aid in the overall assessment of DGSOM students when compared with medical students nationwide. For the Academic Year 2020-2021, the 4-tier grading system for the core required clerkships was paused due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the educational experience and replaced with a Credit/No Credit grading system. This was extended an additional year for all core clerkships completed in the May 2021-March 2022 academic year. Grading of 4th year electives remains unchanged as described below. An Overall Clerkship Grade is reported on each student's transcript.

1.2 The policy is updated annually at the beginning of each academic year and applies to all students completing clerkships/electives within that year.

2. OVERALL GRADES FOR CORE CLINICAL CLERKSHIPS.

2.1 The third year Core Clinical Clerkships include Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Surgery. For each Core Clinical Clerkship, the possible grades are: Credit, No Credit, or Incomplete. Grades are submitted to the Student Affairs Office and available for student review within six weeks of clerkship completion. If an Overall Clerkship Grade is not assigned due to unresolved activities or requirements at the six-week mark, "Incomplete" is the assigned grade. A final clerkship grade is revised once clerkship requirements are met or the time to meet those requirements expires.

2.2 For the Core Clinical Clerkships, an Overall Clerkship Grade of Credit or No Credit is assigned. In order to receive a grade of Credit, students must complete all clerkship requirements and achieve the minimum passing standard for both clinical performance and for the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) Shelf Exam.

3. CLINICAL GRADE CONTRIBUTION.

3.1 The Clinical Grade is calculated and reviewed by each Core Clerkship Chair in collaboration with the Clerkship Grading Committee. The Clerkship Chair and Grading Committee use a rubric tallying 13 possible evaluations of clinical skills for the third-year core clerkships.

3.2 The Clinical Skills on the DGSOM-UCLA Clerkship Evaluation Form include:

- (1) History Taking
- (2) Physical Examination
- (3) Fund of Knowledge
- (4) Differential Diagnosis Development
- (5) Treatment Plan Generation
- (6) Medical Record Documentation
- (7) Oral Presentations
- (8) Communication with Patients and Families
- (9) Communication with the Interprofessional Team
- (10) Humanism
- (11) Integrity and Work Ethic
- (12) Commitment to Learning
- (13) System-based Practice

3.3 Each clinical skill is rated using criterion-based anchors along **four** levels of performance. For each clinical skill, the evaluator will choose the descriptor amongst the four possible options that best describes the student's performance. If an evaluation of a clinical skill is not possible due to lack of observation, the evaluator should select "Unable to Evaluate/Insufficient Contact." Each Clerkship Site Director will produce a summative evaluation as well as a composite narrative.

3.4 The Clerkship Chair in collaboration with the Clerkship Grading Committee assigns a Clinical Performance Grade by calculating a Total Evaluation Score from a compilation of the individual evaluations of clinical skills received, which is a percentage value of the total score possible. Because the number of clinical skills assessed may vary by clerkship, each Total Evaluation Score is calculated as a percentage. If a student receives evaluations for all 13 clinical

skills, the denominator for the percentage calculation is 13; if only 9 competencies are assessed, the denominator is 9. Each Evaluation Score will then be calculated as a ratio against the highest score possible – the highest score possible being that which would be arrived at if all clinical skills were scored at the highest level. For example, if 9 items are submitted, the maximum score is 36 (4 X 9); for all 13 clinical skills, 52 (4 X 13). Each student is evaluated by descriptive anchors and these are assigned a value on a scale 1-4. A null value is assigned for designations of "insufficient contact or unable to comment" for any of the clinical skills. Based on review of the total evaluation scores and the evaluator comments, the Clerkship Chairs have ultimate oversight of the final grades assigned for each clerkship.

3.5 The Total Evaluation Score is then used to arrive at the Clinical Performance Grade.

Table 2:

| TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE | CLINICAL PERFORMANCE GRADE |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| ≥ 48% | Pass |
| <48% | Fail |

In addition to having a Total Evaluation Score of 48% as above, to pass the clinical course, the student must meet a minimum performance standard in all 6 ACGME Competencies. The 6 ACGME Competencies are listed below, along with the percentage of total available points required to PASS.

- Patient Care (Clinical Skills 1 and 2) – 50%
- Clinical Knowledge (Clinical Skills 3, 4 and 5) –33%
- Interpersonal Skills (Clinical Skills 6, 7, 8 and 9) – 50%
- Professionalism (Clinical Skills 10 and 11) – 50%
- Practice-Based Learning (Clinical Skill 12) – 50%
- Systems-Based Practice (Clinical Skill 13)– 25%

3.6 Student evaluation forms will be assigned to residents, fellows, attendings, and at times, other licensed health professional faculty as follows:

- (1) Clerkship Site Coordinators will obtain the list of residents, fellows, and attendings (and other licensed health professional faculty if applicable) with whom students

have worked. When clinical service structure allows, the site coordinators will confirm the list of supervising physicians using the student schedules and resident, fellow and attending schedules. When discrepancies exist, the site coordinator will contact the supervising physician to confirm the appropriateness for evaluation.

(2) Supervising physicians who have had sufficient contact to fairly evaluate student performance on at least one clinical skill will be expected to complete individual evaluations.

(3) A composite of all individual evaluations submitted will be utilized in assessing student performance, with collaboration between Site Directors and Clerkship Chairs in assigning the final clinical performance grade.

(4) A narrative assessment of each student's performance is compiled utilizing the individual comments provided by evaluators, and the most representative descriptions will be incorporated into the MSPE at the discretion of the clerkship leadership.

3.7 Students are alerted by email when a clerkship grade has been finalized and submitted to the Dean's Office. Students who feel there is an error in their clinical grade may request a review of their summary evaluation with the Clerkship Chair to better understand the grade assigned. This request must be submitted in writing to the Clerkship Chair within 14 days of grade submission. Grades may not be revised by completing additional work with the exception of an incomplete.

4. FINAL EXAMINATION (NBME) GRADE.

4.1 The NBME Shelf Exam minimum passing standard is set based on annual national percentile exam reports for each required clerkship. The percentile score is: Pass $\geq 5^{\text{th}}$ percentile and Fail: $< 5^{\text{th}}$ percentile.

| Percentile Rank | SHELF EXAM GRADE |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>$> 5\%$</u> | Pass |
| $< 5\%$ | Fail |

4.2 Percentile data is obtained from annual reports from the NBME for each of the seven clinical subject (shelf) exams. The scores corresponding to the percentile nearest (but above or equal) to the 5th percentile are identified at the beginning of each academic year.

4.3 NBME shelf exam retake is only permitted in the case of exam failure, and must be approved by the Year 3 Academic Performance Committee (APC) and/or the Committee on Academic Standing, Progress and Promotion (CASPP).

4.4 The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) ensures that each reported subject examination score is an accurate reflection of the responses for an examinee. This is based on reliable scoring and reporting techniques backed by a variety of quality control and verification procedures by the NBME. Given the above, DGSOM does not submit requests to the NBME for score re-checks on behalf of students.

5. THIRD YEAR COURSEWORK THAT IS PASS/FAIL.

5.1 Third year clinical experiences that are graded PASS/FAIL include the following: Third-year electives, Longitudinal Preceptorship (and equivalent coursework for the CDU/UCLA Medical Education program), Radiology, Research electives, and System Based Healthcare (SBHC) (and equivalent coursework for the CDU/UCLA Medical Education program), The grade reported on the transcript is P or F .

- (1) Third-year Electives: For students who participate in a third elective the UCLA Clinical Grading Rubric is used for student evaluation (see Table 2 in 3.5 above). The narrative from this evaluation is included in the student's MSPE.
- (2) Longitudinal Preceptorship: A narrative evaluation is submitted at the completion of the preceptorship, and is included in the student's MSPE.
- (3) Research: For students who participate in a research elective during their third or fourth year, research mentors complete a separate research specific evaluation tool. The narrative from this evaluation is included in the student's MSPE
- (4) System Based Healthcare (SBHC): SBHC provides each student with a narrative evaluation. This narrative is included in the student's MSPE.

Radiology: Students also take a written radiology examination during each core clerkship. These scores are compiled upon completion of the third year to arrive at a final radiology examination grade. This grade does not appear on transcripts.

6. OVERALL GRADES FOR FOURTH YEAR CLINICAL ELECTIVES AT DGSOM-UCLA.

6.1 Fourth year clinical rotations (400 level, 300 level and 200 level with the exception of global health) are graded using the 4-tier Clinical Grade system of Honors/ High Pass/ Pass and Fail. The UCLA Clinical Grading Rubric will be used to arrive at the Clinical Performance Grade as follows:

| TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE | CLINICAL PERFORMANCE GRADE |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 88-100% | Honors |
| 75-87% | High Pass |
| 48-74% | Pass |
| <48% | Fail |

As no written examinations are administered for fourth year electives, the Clinical Performance Grade will be the Overall Grade for designated fourth year elective rotations. Students must also meet the same minimum competencies as described in section 3.5 above for third year core clinical clerkships to pass graded fourth year electives.

6.2 Beginning May 2019, to achieve a Clinical Performance Grade of **High-Pass** in a 4th year clinical rotation, in addition to a total summative evaluation score of 75-87%, there can be no Clinical Skill evaluated at criterion level 1 on the summative evaluation, *and* the student must achieve a criterion level 3 or 4 in *each applicable* Professionalism Competency (Clinical Skills 10 and 11) as evaluated on the summative grade.

6.3 Beginning May 2019, to achieve a Clinical Performance Grade of **Honors** in a 4th year clinical rotation, in addition to a total summative evaluation score of $\geq 88\%$, there can be no Clinical Skill evaluated at criterion level 1 or 2 on the summative evaluation, *and* the student must achieve a criterion level 4 in *each applicable* Professionalism Competency (Clinical Skills 10 and 11) as evaluated on the summative grade.

Based on review of the total evaluation scores and the evaluator comments, the Course Chair(s) have ultimate oversight of the final grades assigned for each course.

6.4 Students are alerted by email when an elective course grade has been finalized and submitted to the Dean's Office. Students who feel there is an error in their clinical grade may request a review of their summary evaluation with the Course Chair to better understand the grade assigned. This request must be submitted in writing to the Course Chair within 14 days of grade submission. Grades may not be revised by completing additional work with the exception of an incomplete.

7. CLINICAL EXPERIENCES IN FOURTH YEAR THAT ARE PASS/FAIL.

7.1 The following courses are graded Pass/Fail: Global Health, Research and 100 level non-clinical electives. The transcript will indicate a grade of P or F.

7.2 Students on away electives may be evaluated with the host institution's evaluation system or with the **DGSOM Elective Evaluation Form**. The DGSOM transcript will report the grade as P or F. The MSPE will include the evaluation narrative if submitted by the deadline for evaluations to be included in the MSPE.

Appendix 1
NBME Tables for grading Academic Year 2021-2022:
 Based on National Percentile Rank 2019-2020

Table 1: Family Medicine

| Score | Percentile Rank | GRADE |
|-----------|----------------------|-------|
| ≥ 65 | $\geq 5^{\text{th}}$ | Pass |
| < 65 | $< 5^{\text{th}}$ | Fail |

Table 2: Internal Medicine

| Score | Percentile Rank | GRADE |
|-----------|----------------------|-------|
| ≥ 59 | $\geq 5^{\text{th}}$ | Pass |
| < 59 | $< 5^{\text{th}}$ | Fail |

Table 3: Neurology

| Score | Percentile Rank | GRADE |
|-----------|----------------------|-------|
| ≥ 66 | $\geq 5^{\text{th}}$ | Pass |
| < 66 | $< 5^{\text{th}}$ | Fail |

Table 4: Obstetrics & Gynecology

| Score | Percentile Rank | GRADE |
|-----------|----------------------|-------|
| ≥ 65 | $\geq 5^{\text{th}}$ | Pass |
| < 65 | $< 5^{\text{th}}$ | Fail |

Table 5: Pediatrics

| Score | Percentile Rank | GRADE |
|-----------|----------------------|-------|
| ≥ 64 | $\geq 5^{\text{th}}$ | Pass |
| < 64 | $< 5^{\text{th}}$ | Fail |

Table 6: Psychiatry

| Score | Percentile Rank | GRADE |
|-------|-----------------|-------|
|-------|-----------------|-------|

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------|-------------|
| ≥ 72 | $\geq 5^{\text{th}}$ | Pass |
| < 72 | $< 5^{\text{th}}$ | Fail |

Table 7: Surgery

| Score | Percentile Rank | GRADE |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------|
| ≥ 60 | $\geq 5^{\text{th}}$ | Pass |
| < 60 | $< 5^{\text{th}}$ | Fail |