Graduation Requirements for the MD Degree

Student Physician Activities (SPAs)

The Emory University School of Medicine Curriculum Committee has stated the outcomes of the MD program in terms of the activities characteristic of a physician that students will learn and do. These “Student Physician Activities” define what students should be able to perform prior to graduation.

1. Take a patient-centered history (focused and complete)
2. Perform a physical examination (focused and comprehensive) and recognize normal and abnormal findings
3. Apply principles of medical science to interpret clinical information
4. Apply principles of medical science to patient care to develop a problem list, working diagnosis, etiologic evaluation, and management plan
5. Develop a patient care plan
6. Perform technical procedures * (see Graduation Procedures List)
7. Communicate with patients and their support system regarding their care
8. Participate in difficult conversations with patients and their families
9. Document patient findings and treatment plans
10. Explain clinical decisions using scientific reasoning
11. Use electronic medical records
12. Formulate questions and search the literature to resolve knowledge gaps
13. Contribute to generalizable medical knowledge
14. Apply best evidence to the care of individual patients
15. Recognize and address ethical dilemmas
16. Protect patient information
17. Fulfill the professional role of a physician
18. Manage time
19. Be a leader
20. Use feedback to improve one’s own practices
21. Demonstrate trustworthiness to patients, colleagues, and other healthcare personnel
22. Treat patients while understanding own biases
23. Treat patients without regard to personal advantage
24. Work in inter-professional teams
25. Identify personal limitations and seek assistance as needed
26. Teach peers and team members
27. Serve the community
28. Contribute to healthcare quality and safety initiatives

* Graduation Procedures List

Before graduation, all medical students should be able to:

1. Adherence to universal precautions
2. Putting on gloves and gowns using sterile technique
3. Basic life support (as evidence by completion of a BLS course)
4. Use of an automatic external defibrillator
5. Drawing venous blood

Academic Requirements

The judgment of the faculty as to the fitness of a student for the MD degree is based not only upon scholastic achievement, but also upon evidence of the student’s character and professionalism. Each student must be approved for graduation by the Dean and the School of Medicine Council of Chairs.

To be eligible to receive the degree of Doctor of Medicine from Emory University School of Medicine, students must:

1. Have attained satisfactory standing in all courses and clerkships required for the degree and mastered the 28 Emory University School of Medicine SPAs;
2. Have taken and successfully passed Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Knowledge and Step 2 Clinical Skills of the USMLE;
3. Have completed all academic requirements of the MD degree within no more than six academic years from the date of matriculation.

End of Phase Required Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)

As a requirement of the longitudinal Essentials of Patient Care course, students must successfully pass the “End of Foundations OSCE” and the “End of Application OSCE”. Failure of passing either OSCE requires appropriate remediation and subsequent passing of the OSCE in order to pass the course.

Financial Obligations

It is a requirement for graduation that all financial obligations to the University shall have been satisfied. Students with an unpaid balance on their student accounts may have a hold placed on their diploma and transcripts until the balance is paid in full.

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