Student Assessment and Grading

Assessments are measurements of student performance conducted using instruments such as written exams or observational checklists. Evaluations are comprehensive summaries of student performance measured against a performance standard. Grades are assigned based on data collected from both assessments and summative evaluations.

A wide variety of assessment types are used to measure students’ academic and professional performance in relation to the Emory University School of Medicine Student Physician Activities (SPAs) and are incorporated into grades for courses and clerkships. In addition to written exams and academic papers, instructor observational assessments are often used during small group work, during patient care on clerkships, for elective courses, and in research labs. Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs) are a regular and vital element of student assessment.

Grading Scales

S/U

“S” indicates satisfactory work; Pass
“U” indicates unsatisfactory work and carries no academic credit; Fail

A grade of “U” carries no academic credit. A student cannot be promoted to the next phase of the curriculum with a grade of “U” on their transcript. Any student who receives a “U” will, at a minimum, have to successfully remediate the course, and may be susceptible to additional actions such as probation or dismissal, as determined by the Progress and Promotions Committee.

A -- F

The letter grades “A” through “F” indicate the quality of a student’s performance as measured by various assessment instruments and processes: modifiers of ‘plus’ or ‘minus’ with letter grades are also used. Letter grades are derived from a comprehensive, summative evaluation of a student’s achievement, both academically and professionally. Grades are assigned based on published criteria.

- “A” indicates exceptional performance
- “B” indicates good performance with no identified weaknesses “C” indicates acceptable performance with improvement needed
- “D” indicates unacceptable performance on at least one criterion and no academic credit is awarded
- “F” indicates unacceptable performance on multiple criteria and no academic credit is awarded

A student cannot be promoted to the next phase of the curriculum with a grade of “D” or “F” on their transcript. Any student who receives a “D” or “F” will, at a minimum, have to repeat the clerkship, and the student will be susceptible to additional actions such as probation or dismissal, as determined by the Progress and Promotions Committee. Any
repetition of coursework must be completed as soon as possible after the grade of “D” or “F” has been submitted.

**IP and I**

“IP” indicates ‘in-progress’ course work. Final transcripts cannot carry grades of “IP.” “I” indicates incomplete course work.

The grade of “I” will be assigned to students who have been unable to complete the requirements of the course/clerkship due to absences approved by the dean’s office. The grade of “I” is appropriate only when enough work has been completed at an acceptable level of performance such that the student can complete the remaining work without repeating the entire course/clerkship.

If a student receives a grade of “I,” the remaining work must be completed within a reasonable time, as determined by Associate Dean for Clinical Education, or the grade of “I” will automatically convert to an “F.” The grade of “I” cannot be assigned for unsatisfactory work. The grade of “I” is to be viewed as a non-prejudicial entry on the student’s record.

**W**

“W” indicates withdrawal from course or clerkship without penalty “WF” indicates withdrawal failing

“WU” indicates unsatisfactory withdrawal

**Grading in the Foundations Phase**

In the Foundations Phase of the curriculum, grades “S” or “U” are assigned to students for each module. When appropriate, students may also be assigned the grades of “I,” “IP,” “W,” “WF,” or “WU.”

Students may not progress to the Application Phase of the curriculum without receiving a final grade of “S” in all Foundations courses. Although Anatomy is not a separately graded course, students must reach a satisfactory standard of performance in the portion of each end-of-module-exam devoted to Anatomy. In addition, students must reach a satisfactory standard of overall performance in Anatomy as determined by a combination of the initial scores for each anatomy section of the module exams that include anatomy.

**Grading in the Application, Discovery, and Translation Phases**

In the Application, Discovery, and required clerkship portion of the Translation Phases of the curriculum, grades “A+” through “F” are assigned to students. For electives taken during in the Translation Phase, grades of “S” or “U” are assigned. When appropriate, students may also be assigned the grades of “I,” “IP,” “W,” “WF,” or “WU.”

If a student fails any aspect of a clerkship that is required to pass the clerkship, the student will receive a failing grade (“D” or “F”) for the clerkship and be required to
repeat the clerkship in its entirety. The student will be re-enrolled in the clerkship and a second grade will be issued after repetition of the clerkship; however, the “D” or “F” grade earned after completing the clerkship for the first time will remain on the student’s official transcript.

**Completion of Clerkship Requirements**

All clerkship requirements, as defined by the individual clerkship directors, must be completed by 5pm on the final day of the rotation, including but not limited to patient logs in OASIS and direct observation forms. Students who fail to complete clerkship requirements on time will be subjected to penalties outlined by the clerkship directors and may result in a grade deduction or a failing grade for the clerkship.

**Last modified:** 7/20/2017