

Graduation Requirements for the MD Degree

Student Physician Activities (SPAs)

The learning outcomes for the Emory University School of Medicine MD program are stated in terms of the activities that a physician performs, called Student Physician Activities (SPA). This list of 28 SPAs defines what EUSOM students will learn over the course of their medical school career and will be required to demonstrate prior to graduation.

1. Take a patient-centered history (focused and complete)
2. Perform a physical examination (standard and “core and cluster”) and recognize normal and abnormal findings
3. Demonstrate understanding of relevant scientific principles of medicine
4. Prioritize a differential diagnosis based on clinical reasoning
5. Develop a patient care plan
6. Perform technical procedures * (see Graduation Technical 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 and present patient findings and treatment plans
10. Explain the scientific principles of medicine as applied to differential diagnoses and patient care plans
11. Use electronic medical records
12. Formulate clinical questions and search the literature for evidence that enhances patient care
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 unique professional role of a physician in society
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 interprofessional 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 Technical Procedures List

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 to receive the MD degree is based not only upon scholastic achievement, but also upon demonstration of the attitudes and behaviors expected of a medical professional. 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;
2. have mastered the 28 EUSOM SPAs and have successfully completed all of the required activities and assessments related to the SPAs;
3. have taken and successfully passed Step 1 and Step 2 Clinical Knowledge of the USMLE;
4. have completed all academic requirements of the MD degree within no more than six academic years from the date of matriculation.

Financial Obligations for Graduation

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.

Last modified: 7/8/2021