

National Standardized Examinations

National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) Subject Exams

NBME Subject Examinations are an important part of the educational process, evaluating the performance of a large, representative group of examinees at the same stage of training. These exams are used throughout the curriculum as one part of the evaluation process. Students are required to take NBME Subject Examinations at scheduled times and locations. Those students granted accommodations for testing must present them to Ms. Sherice Allen-Henry, Assistant Director of Medical Education Programs Management, a letter from the Office of Disability Services each semester outlining the student's specific accommodations.

Individual arrangements will be made for the student at each exam in accordance with the specified accommodations.

To prevent additional charges, exam orders must be placed at least 22 days prior to the testing date. Therefore, it is important for the Office of Medical Education and Student Affairs (OMESA) to know well in advance the number of students scheduled to test at every exam. Unexcused absences from NBME exams will result in the student being charged for any additional costs associated with rescheduling of the examination.

For NBME examinations, students **MUST** test during the exam time (and date) supported by the medical school. A published exam schedule is available through the student portal.

To ensure the security of NBME materials and compliance with testing regulations, all NBME subject exams must be administered by trained proctors in an NBME-approved testing site. The School of Medicine Building is the only approved testing site for Emory medical students.

Arriving Late for an NBME Exam or Missing Examinations

It is considered part of professional behavior and the responsibility of the student to arrive on time for scheduled examinations with their Emory cards.

Emory designates a Chief Proctor for NBME exams. It is the responsibility of the Chief Proctor and his or her designees to assure that NBME exams are given in strict accordance with NBME policy. As per this policy, a student may be admitted to a testing room up to 30 minutes after the exam has started, provided the student's name is on the check-in roster and the Chief Proctor approves the late start. Students arriving late for an exam will be expected to end the exam at the same time as other examinees; no extra time will be allotted to compensate for their tardiness.

For any student who is more than 30 minutes late for the exam, the NBME must be contacted by the Chief Proctor to seek approval for taking the examination. The Chief Proctor and his or her designees are not required to allow any student to start an exam late if doing so will be excessively disruptive to the other students.

United States Medical Licensing Examinations (USMLE)

The USMLE is an examination series with four complementary steps, the first three of which are graduation requirements for Emory University School of Medicine. Students must successfully pass Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Knowledge, and Step 2 Clinical Skills in order to graduate from Emory University School of Medicine.

USMLE Step 1

In addition to successful performance during the Foundations Phase, students must also earn a passing score, as set by the USMLE, on Step 1 examination of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) prior to beginning the Application Phase of the Emory University School of Medicine curriculum. With written permission from the Executive Associate Dean, a student may begin the Applications Phase after having taken the USMLE Step 1 before the test score has been released by the USLME.

USMLE Step 1 must be taken by February 1st following completion of the Foundations phase. Prior to taking USMLE Step 1, all academic requirements of the Foundations Phase, including any necessary remediation, must be completed. For students who do not meet these deadlines, the School cannot guarantee Application, Discovery and Translation schedules that will permit the student to graduate at the expected time. Any delay in taking USMLE Step 1 must be approved in writing by the Executive Associate Dean for Medical Education and Student Affairs or his/her designee. Students who do not meet these deadlines for completion of academic requirements and for taking and passing USMLE Step 1 may be referred to the Progress and Promotions Committee for action.

The following guidelines have been adopted regarding failure to pass the first administration of Step 1 of the USMLE.

A student whose overall academic record warrants promotion, but whose failing Step 1 score is 15 points or less below the passing level has two options to gain promotion into the clinical years:

- Option A - permits re-taking the test at the next available administration. Once the examination has been retaken, the student may begin clinical work. If a passing score is achieved, the student will continue the Application Phase; if a passing score is not achieved, the student will cease Application Phase course work and be allowed to retake the examination a 3rd time. It is highly encouraged that such students engage in an intense review of the basic sciences and consider auditing courses prior to re-taking the examination for the third and final time.
- Option B - grants a year's time during which time the student is encouraged to obtain remedial help and engage in an intense review of the basic sciences, with retake of the examination by February 1st of the following year. If the test is passed at that time, the student then enters the Applications Phase.

A student whose failing score is more than 15 points below the passing level is generally required to take a leave of absence to prepare for retaking the test the

following year. Such students may appeal to the Executive Associate Dean for Medical Education and Student Affairs and request an earlier re- take if extenuating circumstances can be shown.

A student who fails USMLE Step 1 on the second administration will be given a third and final opportunity to successfully pass Step 1. A student who has three unsuccessful attempts to pass Step 1 of the USMLE will be considered for dismissal.

USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK)

Students are encouraged to take Step 2 CK as soon as feasible after the Application Phase. At the latest however, students must take Step 2 CK by October 31st of their senior year. Passing Step 2 CK is a requirement for graduation. Students will have no more than 3 attempts to pass USMLE Step 2 CK. A student who has three unsuccessful attempts to pass Step 2 CK of the USMLE will be considered for dismissal.

USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS)

Students must take Step 2 CS by July 31st of the senior year (only exception is MD/ PhD students – deadline is October 31st). Students must schedule their exam date by the preceding March 31st in order to ensure an exam date by the July 31st deadline. Passing Step 2 CS is a requirement for graduation. Students will have no more than 3 attempts to pass USMLE Step 2 CS. A student who has three unsuccessful attempts to pass Step 2 CS of the USMLE will be considered for dismissal.

Due to extraordinary circumstances, administration of USMLE Step 2 CS has been suspended temporarily. The EUSOM graduating class of 2021 has been exempted from this requirement. Additional exemptions or changes to this policy may be necessitated by future USMLE/NBME decisions.

Last modified: 7/8/2020