

Formative Feedback

Policy Statement

The Emory University School of Medicine provides students with formative feedback on their academic performance, based on assessment data, regarding their progress towards achieving course and/or program outcomes. Such formative feedback is delivered in a timely manner that allows sufficient time for self-improvement.

Reason for Policy

Formative feedback to students regarding their educational progress is vital to ensuring that all students are aware of relevant learning outcomes and are informed about their individual progress towards meeting the ultimate educational outcomes. This policy ensures that students are given valid information about their progress towards course/clerkship outcomes and as needed, can take action to avoid falling short of expectations. This policy also ensures that EUSOM meets the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) MD program accreditation requirements.

Policy Text

Formative Feedback during Foundations Phase Courses

Assessment activities for the purpose of generating formative feedback to learners will be provided to students as a component of all courses during the Foundations phase, starting with Human Development. Other than longitudinal courses, the total number of opportunities for formative feedback will be equal to or greater than the number of weeks allocated to the course. Formative feedback opportunities during the Foundations phase will be determined by the course director with guidance from the Foundations subcommittee. They may include but are not limited to in-class review sessions with discussion, online quizzes with explanations to the answers, summary worksheets, and in-class response questions. These opportunities are meant to complement other student activities in the course and should be resources that allow students to self-identify knowledge gaps and help guide students' thinking or behavior to improve subsequent learning and performance.

Formative Feedback during Application and Translation Phase Clerkships

During the Application and Translation phases, it is expected that formative feedback will be provided to students in all required clinical clerkships. Clerkships that are four or more weeks in duration will provide formative feedback by the midpoint of the clerkship. Clerkships less than four weeks in duration will provide formative feedback at an appropriate point during the clerkship. Formative feedback in the Application and Translation phases may include verbal and/or written comments from attending faculty, residents, or course leaders as well as results from written quizzes, OSCEs, or independent learning activities.

Formative Feedback during the Discovery Phase

During the Discovery phase, formative feedback from the designated mentor will be provided to students, at a minimum, by the midpoint of an individual student's Discovery project. Formative feedback in the Discovery phase may include verbal comments and will include written comments from the mentor.

Procedures

The Foundations Subcommittee of the Executive Curriculum Committee will annually review the plan for and execution of formative feedback during each course in the Foundations phase of the curriculum and will ensure that it complies with this policy. Student evaluations of self-assessments will be used in these reviews. An updated formative feedback plan will be required for courses that do not comply with the policy. The Required Clerkships Subcommittee of the Executive Curriculum Committee will annually review the plan and execution of formative feedback during each required clerkship in the Application and Translations phases of the curriculum and will ensure that it complies with this policy. Student evaluations of self-assessments will be used in these reviews. An improvement plan will be required for clerkships that fail to meet the policy. The Discovery and Medical Scholarship Subcommittee of the Executive Curriculum Committee will annually review the formative feedback for the Discovery course and will ensure that it complies with this policy.

Definitions

Formative Feedback: feedback provided to a learner that highlights strengths and areas in need of improvement and informs future learning.

Responsibilities

During the Foundations phase, course directors are responsible for creating and/or identifying opportunities for formative feedback and incorporating those opportunities within their own course. Course directors need to clearly designate formative opportunities in the course syllabus and make these opportunities known to students. During the Application and Translation phases, clerkship directors are responsible for ensuring that students receive structured formative feedback at the midpoint of the clerkship, as required by this policy, informing students of the policy, and monitoring compliance in the clerkship. The clerkship director is also responsible for facilitating and encouraging ad hoc formative feedback opportunities in the workplace. During the Discovery phase, the Discovery course Director is responsible for ensuring that students receive structured formative feedback at least at the midpoint of a student's Discovery project. The Director is also responsible for designing the format and timing of such feedback. The director must also clearly define formative opportunities in the Discovery syllabus and make these opportunities known to students.

Oversight

The Executive Curriculum Committee, via the Foundations, Discovery and Medical Scholarship, and Required Clerkships Subcommittees, ensures compliance with the requirements established by this policy as outlined above in the responsibilities.

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