POLICY NAME:  Deferment of USMLE Step 1

Responsible Party:  Office of Medical Education

Applies to:  □ Faculty  ■ Students  □ Residents  □ Staff  □ Administration

Approval Date:  08/17/2016, Curriculum Committee

■ Policy  □ Procedure

POLICY:

Per College of Medicine policy “Failure of USMLE Step 1 Examination”, students are required to take USMLE Step 1 prior to promotion to Year 3. In certain circumstances, students may request to defer the writing of the USMLE Step 1 examination. Deferment requires administrative approval from the following individuals:

- Senior Associate Dean, Academic Affairs
- Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
- Associate Dean, Clinical Education

Students requesting deferment will be required to submit application through the Office of Student Affairs. The student will be required to provide rationale for the request. Types of requests considered include personal or family medical condition, death of a close relative, academic performance that is not predicative of a passing score on USMLE Step 1, or failure to complete requirements for promotion to Year 3.

In addition, students who have failed their initial Step 1 attempt and wish to remain enrolled in Med997E, Directed Independent Study in Medicine for a period exceeding 8 weeks, will be required to follow the procedures outlined below.
PROCEDURES:

APPLICATION FOR DEFERMENT

1. The Office of Medical Education (OME), through the continual monitoring of assessment of student performance on course examinations, and the NBME Comprehensive Basic Science Examination, identifies students at risk of failing the USMLE Step 1 examination.
2. Students identified as academically at risk, or those with compelling personal reasons to defer the writing of the examination will submit an “Application for Deferment of USMLE Step 1.”
3. Depending on the situation, deferment periods of four weeks, eight weeks, six months, or one year can be requested.
4. For students applying for deferment after an initial Step 1 failure, only deferment periods of six months or 1 year will be considered.
5. All students requesting deferment will be required to meet with the Office of Student Affairs.
6. Students requesting deferment will also be required to meet with the Associate Dean, Clinical Education to discuss potential impact of deferment on Year 3 scheduling, electives, residency application process, and graduation date.
7. Some students who are not determined to be at-risk may be interested in studying for a longer period of time in order to obtain a better score on the Step 1 examination. In these cases:
   a. Students will not be considered for deferment for a 4 or 8 week period
8. Students may be considered for 6 months or 1 year. This, however, has implications on graduation and residency dates. All applications for deferment are subject to approval by the following individuals:
   • Senior Associate Dean, Academic Affairs
   • Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
   • Associate Dean, Clinical Education
   A report of the decision regarding the request for deferral shall be provided in a timely manner to the student requesting deferral, with a copy provided to Chair of the Student performance and conduct committee (SPCC).

APPROVED DEFERMENT

1. Students approved for deferment must enroll in MED997E Directed Independent Study in Medicine” for the duration of the deferment period. During this elective, the student will prepare for and take Step 1.
2. Students granted a deferral MUST meet with the Director, Academic Success to develop an Individualized Study Plan (ISP).
3. Students that defer Step 1 for a period greater than 8 weeks will be required to RECORD A PASSING SCORE on Step 1 PRIOR to starting M3 clerkships.
4. Any student who receives deferment after an initial Step 1 Failure will be required to record a passing score on Step 1 PRIOR to resuming M3 clerkships.
5. Failure to achieve a passing score on the USMLE Step 1 Examination following an approved deferment will follow the College of Medicine Policy, “Failure of USMLE Step 1 Examination.”

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Initial approval, Curriculum Committee

College of Medicine reserves the right to make exceptions, modify or eliminate this policy and or its content. This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures or guidelines relative to this subject.