

Policy Name:	USMLE Step 1 Eligibility Policy
Original Approval Date:	8/27/21
Approving Officer/Committee:	Medical Curriculum Committee
Revision Dates:	10/21/22; 3/22/2023
Related LCME Element(s) (if any):	

A. **Policy** - In order to support the success of medical students on the USMLE Step 1 examination, all second-year medical students will take a National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) Customized Exam in January and the NBME Comprehensive Basic Science Exam as outlined in the Integrative Process and Basic Science Review Course syllabus.

B. **Purpose** - The intent of these examinations is to familiarize the students with the USMLE Step 1 Examination process by practicing a timed, proctored abbreviated version of the USMLE Step 1. The questions will be similar in type, length, and timing of questions. The scores will not be used as a formal grade, but will allow students to assess their current study plans and test taking skills.

C. **Procedure/Process:**

**NBME Customized Exam**

In January, all MSII students will take a NBME Customized Exam. The exam will be scheduled for the first day of the MSII Spring Semester. It will consist of a 3.5 hour, 140-question exam covering the courses taken during the fall semester. The breakdown of the exam is as follows:

- Neurology/Behavioral Sciences
- Heme/Lymph System
- Cardiovascular System
- Renal and Urinary System
- Respiratory System

Students scoring 1 standard deviation below the class average will have mandatory academic counseling session with a learning specialist to develop a structured learning plan.

**Integrative Process and Basic Science Review Course**

At the end of the MS II year, students will be enrolled in Integrative Process and Basic Science Review Course (IPBSRC) to prepare for USMLE Step 1. The Office of Academic Affairs will establish a specific deadline date and publicized to all MSII students.

**Any MSII student that does not take USMLE Step 1 by the deadline date will not be registered for the Fall term.**

**NBME Comprehensive Basic Science Exam (CBSE)**

All MSII students will take the NBME Comprehensive Basic Science Exam as scheduled and as outlined in the IPBSRC course syllabus.

**First Attempt of CBSE**

Students who earn an **equated percent correct score of 58% or greater** on their first attempt will be supported by the LSUHSC-Shreveport School of Medicine for USMLE Step 1 enrollment.

Students who earn an **equated percent correct score of 57% or less** on their first CBSE attempt will

be required to:

- Meet with the learning specialist and develop a structured learning plan.
- Have their Step 1 study timeline reviewed and approved by the Academic Success Council.
- Retake the CBSE after 3 additional weeks of intentional Step 1 preparation.

### **Second Attempt of CBSE**

Students who earn **an equated percent correct score of 65% or greater** on their second attempt will be supported by the LSUHSC-Shreveport School of Medicine for USMLE Step 1 enrollment.

- **A student who has shown readiness to sit for Step 1 cannot postpone any required clerkships.**
- Students who earn an **equated percent correct score of 64% or less** on their second attempt will be required to:
  - Meet with the Academic Success Council (ASC) to discuss a revised Step 1 study timeline.
  - Based on a student's performance on the second CBSE and his/her completion of the structured learning plan requirements, the ASC will make recommendations on continued preparation, utilization of academic resources, and readiness for USMLE Step 1.

**The recommendations of the Academic Success Council are not binding; the final decision regarding academic preparedness and readiness to take Step 1 rest with the individual student.**

### **MSIII Promotion & Advancement Requirements**

Students satisfactorily completing all MS II requirements are eligible to begin the MS III year upon completion of MSIII Orientation. **To remain enrolled and to advance in the MSIII Curriculum, students must receive a passing score on USMLE Step 1.**

### **Failure on First Attempt of USMLE Step 1**

A student who receives a failing score on Step 1 on their first attempt must immediately stop their current clerkship and meet with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs or designee. The student will receive a grade of Incomplete in the Integrated Process and Basic Science Review Course (IPBSRC); once a USMLE Step 1 passing score has been reported, the grade of Incomplete in the Integrated Process and Basic Science Review Course (IPBSRC) will be converted to a Pass. The student must select one of the following options:

#### **1. SPECIAL TOPICS COURSE**

Be enrolled in a Special Topics course for 6 credit hours for the fall semester and prepare to retake USMLE Step 1 prior the deadline established by Academic Affairs. The student will still be officially enrolled in coursework and will therefore be responsible for paying all required tuition and fees as a part-time student. Students should contact the Financial Aid Office to verify current and future aid eligibility.

Students who receive a passing score on USMLE Step 1 on their second attempt during the fall semester will be eligible to resume their MS III year in January. Students who are not enrolled in MSIII curriculum for one semester **will not** graduate with their current class.

#### **2. LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Request a Leave of Absence prepare to retake USMLE Step 1. A leave of absence may be requested for one semester or one academic year. The student must take Step 1 of the

USMLE prior to the deadline established by Academic Affairs to ensure that the result will be received prior to the start of the next semester/academic year. The student will not be officially enrolled for the semester and may be eligible for a refund or partial refund of the required tuition and fees. The Leave of Absence will be reported on the student's Medical Student Performance Evaluation (Dean's Letter).

Students who receive a passing score on USMLE Step 1 on their second attempt during the fall semester will be eligible to resume their MS III year in January. Students who are not enrolled in MSIII curriculum for one semester or longer will not graduate with their current class.

Students who receive a passing score on USMLE Step 1 on their second attempt during the spring semester will be eligible to resume their MS III year in July.

#### **Failure on Second Attempt of USMLE Step 1**

Students will be placed on an administrative leave of absence after a second failure on USMLE Step 1. They will remain on an administrative leave of absence until readiness for a third attempt at Step 1 has been verified by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (or designee) and the Learning Specialist.

#### **Failure After Third Attempt of USMLE Step 1**

A student who fails the third attempt at Step 1 will meet the criteria for dismissal from the program. The student will be placed on leave of absence pending decision by the Academic Success Council for dismissal.

#### **Eligibility to Return to MSIII Curriculum**

A passing score on the repeated attempt must be received before a student can return to the MS III year and begin clinical work.

LSUHSC-S must receive a student's passing score on the USMLE Step 1 Exam within one calendar year (12 months) of the date of the student's first attempt.

Students who do not have a passing score reported to LSUHSC-S within one calendar year of the first attempt will be subject to dismissal.

### **D. Revision History -**

#### **1. 10/21/22**

- Added a statement to indicate that the recommendations of the Academic Success Council are not binding; the final decision about exam readiness lies with the student.
- Clarified that students must receive a passing score on Step 1 to remain enrolled in the MS3 curriculum.
- Clarified that students who are not enrolled for one semester or longer will not graduate with their current class.
- Added a statement to indicate that LSUHS must receive a passing USMLE Step 1 score within 12 months of a student's first attempt.

#### **2. 3/22/2023**

- Section C. Procedure/Process section updated to reflect the combined Integrative Process and Basic Science Review Course (IPBSRC) and earlier timing of NBME CBSE as outlined in the IPBSRC course syllabus.