INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Manual for Curricular Affairs is to provide guidelines and policies that outline faculty and student involvement in the educational activities of McGovern Medical School at UTHealth (MMS). These guidelines operate within the administrative structure of the State Coordinating Board, the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System, the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston and McGovern Medical School at UTHealth.

Mission of McGovern Medical School

To educate a diverse body of future physicians and biomedical scientists for a career dedicated to the highest ideals of their profession; to provide outstanding patient-centered care; and to conduct innovative research that benefits the health and well-being of the population of Texas and beyond.

Core Values

- Deliver compassionate patient care focusing on effectiveness, quality, safety, and service
- Provide a competency-based curriculum emphasizing integrity and professionalism
- Embrace a culture of lifelong learning, evidence based practice, open-inquiry, and scholarship
- Cultivate professional and respectful communication
- Foster a diverse and inclusive learning community
- Support the health and well-being of students, faculty and staff
- Promote interprofessional collaboration
- Support leadership and innovation in teaching, research, and service
- Advocate for excellent care for the underserved and for the reduction of health care disparities

Competencies and Program Objectives

McGovern Medical School has adopted six (6) competencies and 57 program objectives. The Curriculum Committee reviews and approves the competencies and program objectives each year. The curriculum objectives of all courses, modules and clerkships should be consonant with the overall medical education program competencies and objectives. Students must achieve all competencies and objectives prior to graduation.

The competencies and program objectives can be accessed at:

https://med.uth.edu/oep/medical-education/core-competencies/

1 Note that the term course when used in this manual refers to courses and or modules.
CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Charge and Membership Responsibilities

According to the Faculty By-Laws, the Curriculum Committee is charged by the Dean to provide oversight of the medical education program, including the design, management, integration, evaluation, and enhancement of a coherent and coordinated medical curriculum. The Curriculum Committee is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate and shall inform the Faculty Senate of changes to the overall educational program and shall recommend curricular changes to the Dean. The Curriculum Committee Chair presents an annual report of committee activities to the Faculty Senate. The ranking Dean for Educational Programs shall be a member of the committee without voting privilege.

The Committee on Committees is responsible for generating a slate of standing committee members, drawn from the general faculty who have indicated interest in serving on the Curriculum Committee, for review and approval by the Dean. Following the guidelines of the Faculty Senate, the duration of service by members shall not exceed six (6) consecutive years except at the specific request of the Dean. Insofar as possible, one-third of the membership of the committee shall be new to the committee in any given year. The pattern of appointment shall preserve continuity of committee membership.

Unless otherwise noted, the committee operates under Robert’s Rules of Order.

The voting membership of the Curriculum Committee shall be composed of the Chair, Vice Chair, ex-officio members and active members (faculty and students) at the time of election or re-election to the Curriculum Committee. A quorum will be a majority plus one of the voting members.

Committee members should attend at least 50% of the meetings each fiscal year, not including excused absences made by the Chair for specific members upon request. A member who has not met the above defined attendance requirement shall be removed from committee membership at the discretion of the Chair and shall be replaced by an eligible faculty member in the regular appointment cycle. This faculty member shall complete the remaining term of office of the member he/she is replacing.

Student representatives from each year of the curriculum are standing members of the Curriculum Committee. Student representatives are selected by the respective student body.

In addition to the attendance requirement, members should review materials and participate fully in committee discussions. Committee members are required to serve on the various subcommittees to conduct the work of the Curriculum Committee.

Structure

The Curriculum Committee is responsible for establishing the curriculum guidelines, which include the organization and review of all courses, and approval of substantive changes in course, module and clerkship curricula. The Curriculum Committee develops and administers the policies contained in this manual.
The Curriculum Committee has six subcommittees:

1. Policy Review Subcommittee
2. Pre-Clerkship Education Subcommittee
3. Clinical Education Subcommittee
   a. Comprehensive Clinical Competency Examination Steering Committee
   b. Career Focus Tracks Steering Committee
4. Pre-Clerkship Evaluation Subcommittee
5. Clerkship and Advanced Clinical Education Evaluation Subcommittee
6. Continuous Accreditation Review and Quality Improvement (CARQI) Subcommittee

These subcommittees function at the direction of the Curriculum Committee to review and oversee aspects of the medical education program. Each subcommittee reports directly to the Curriculum Committee on a regular basis.

The charge for each subcommittee is as follows:

The **Policy Review Subcommittee** reviews and discusses proposed policies and procedures prior to presentation to the Curriculum Committee for formal approval and implementation.

The **Pre-Clerkship Education Subcommittee** previews all courses and modules, prior to the delivery of content, including adherence to the Pre-Clerkship contact hours policy, the academic workload policy, review of pedagogical methods used; and coordination of educational content with other modules, the problem-based learning curriculum, and the longitudinal themes.

The **Clinical Education Subcommittee** provides oversight of the medical student required clinical experiences, including adherence to the duty hours policy, review and approval of required clinical and procedural/skills experiences, completion by students of required clinical and procedural experiences, and appropriate supervision by full-time faculty.

The **Pre-Clerkship Evaluation Subcommittee** reviews the Pre-Clerkship courses and modules annually and makes recommendations on adjustments required in future delivery. Subcommittee reports are presented to the Curriculum Committee for discussion and final approval of action items.

The **Clerkship and Advanced Clinical Education Evaluation Subcommittee** reviews the clerkships and required advanced clinical selectives annually and makes recommendations on adjustments required in future delivery. Subcommittee reports are presented to the Curriculum Committee for discussion and final approval of action items.

The **Continuous Accreditation Review and Quality Improvement (CARQI) Subcommittee** provides ongoing monitoring to assure medical school compliance with LCME Accreditation Elements and engages in continuous quality improvement activities to enhance medical education programmatic quality.

**Subcommittee Composition**
The Curriculum Committee Chair will appoint members to the various subcommittees. Each Subcommittee will consist of a Chair, a minimum of two Faculty; a Ph.D. educator; a Curriculum Coordinator; and student representatives.

**MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The MD program consists of three major phases: Integrated Medical Science, Required Clerkships, and Career Focus Tracks. A map of the curriculum can be accessed at:

https://med.uth.edu/oep/medical-education/curriculum/.

**Integrated Medical Science**

The Integrated Medical Science (Pre-Clerkship) phase consists of the Foundations of Medical Science, the organ-system modules, and the Doctoring courses.

The Foundations of Medicine course occurs during the first semester. This course has two themes. The first is the review of cellular mechanisms that are necessary for understanding disease processes. The second is the review of structure and function necessary to perform and interpret the physical exam. The principles learned during the Foundations of Medicine are applied to diseases of specific organ systems within the organ-system modules.

The organ-system modules are as follows: Hematology and Introduction to Pathology, Cardiovascular System, Renal System, Pulmonary System, Gastrointestinal System, Nervous System and Behavior, Endocrine System, Reproductive System, and the Musculoskeletal System and Dermatology.

The Doctoring Courses focus on History and Physical Examination Skills during the first semester and introduce a longitudinal preceptor experience during the second and third semesters. Thus, students acquire substantial clinical experience before their required clerkship rotations.

**Longitudinal Themes**

There are five longitudinal themes within the Integrated Medical Science period. These themes are as follows: clinical skills, population health, ethics and professionalism, evidence-based medicine, and systems of care/health systems science.

**Scheduling**

The Integrated Medical Science courses will follow the official UTHealth Science Center at Houston calendar: https://www.uth.edu/calendar

The Office of Educational Programs (OEP) is responsible for creating, maintaining and updating the official course schedule for the Integrated Medical Science courses: https://one45.uth.tmc.edu/app/cal/

The Curriculum Committee reviews and approves the final course schedule for each semester and will monitor compliance with the guidelines in Appendix 1.
Transition to Clerkships

This course prepares students for the clerkships and advanced clinical education experiences of the medical education program. This course is composed of required sessions including large group and skills sessions.

Required Clerkships

The required clerkships include family medicine, geriatrics, internal medicine, neurology, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry, and surgery. The goal of the clerkships is to provide broad exposure to the major disciplines of medicine. The Curriculum Committee may review and modify timing of individual clerkships to provide this.

After the clerkships, the students take the Comprehensive Clinical Competency Examination.

Career Focus Tracks

The final phase of the medical education program consists of the Career Focus tracks. The goal of the Career Focus tracks is to provide career mentoring and guidance. There are four tracks: primary care, acute care, academic career, and applied anatomy. During the tracks, the students complete three required advanced clinical selectives: ambulatory care, advanced patient care, and critical care. Additionally, the career focus tracks incorporate 7 four-week electives tailored to the students’ intended career path.

Transition to Residency

The course occurs in the spring of the fourth year and prepares students for residency. This course is composed of required sessions and workshops and skill sessions that are self-selected by the students.
OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Scholarly Concentrations

The Scholarly Concentrations Program enriches the student experience through learning and participating in scholarly activities specific to an interdisciplinary health-related topic. All concentrations are thematic, interdisciplinary, longitudinal, and experiential, with guided faculty mentoring and structured group seminars/courses/journal clubs, etc. Additionally, all students in concentrations conduct an independent scholarly project. Students who successfully complete the concentration requirements receive a certificate of completion and recognition at graduation.

Dual Degree Programs

There are five dual degree opportunities for students. The dual degrees are as follows:

- MD/PhD
- MD/MPH (4 or 5-yr program)
- MD/MBA
- MD/OMFS (Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery)
- MD/Masters in Biomedical Informatics

Peer Tutoring Program

A Peer Tutoring Program is offered for students involved in the Pre-Clerkship phase of the curriculum. Second and fourth year medical students provide tutoring in all the courses taken in the first two years. This service is available at no cost and a student may request a tutor for any reason. Student tutors are paid at an hourly rate.

Summer Programs

1. Pre-Entry Program

The Pre-Entry Program is an intensive four-week program taught by full-time faculty and offered to a subset of students prior to their matriculation to the first year of medical school. The program includes course content in anatomy, biochemistry, histology, immunology, microbiology, and physiology/neuroscience. Students are also introduced to study skills. The noncredit program is designed to assist students prepare for the academic rigors of the medical school curriculum. Invitations are sent to students who might benefit from the program. Students may also request consideration for participation in this program. Rising MS2 students assist faculty and serve as tutors for students participating in the program.

2. Summer Research Program

Basic science and clinical research are essential components of the overall mission of McGovern Medical School. The Medical School offers a Summer Research Program, which provides an intensive, hands-on, 10-week, 40 hrs/week research experience for medical students during the summer after their first year.
The program fosters development of scientific reasoning and other research skills.

Students work closely with faculty mentors of their choice on research projects developed and organized individually for each student. At the end of the research project, students write an abstract on which they are first author. These abstracts are published and posted on the program’s website. In addition, the students develop a research poster which is presented at the annual Medical School Research Forum and Webber Prize Competition held in the fall.

**Extracurricular Electives**

Extracurricular Electives are opportunities for students to enhance their education. These are non-credit courses where students can explore topics that may be of interest. Extra-Curricular Electives are approved by the Curriculum Committee every year.

**Review of Other Educational Activities**

The Curriculum Committee reviews the above educational activities at regular intervals. Where appropriate for the program, evaluation reports will include a description of the curriculum, information about the number of students enrolled in the program; the number completing the degree(s)/elective(s); student evaluations of the program; and a description of the overall curriculum.
ROLE OF STUDENTS IN CURRICULUM OVERSIGHT

The Office of Educational Programs provides mechanisms for student input regarding their educational experiences at MMS. These include student surveys, focus groups, evaluations of the teaching faculty, and end of course evaluations. Such feedback is used by the Curriculum Committee to improve the structure and content of the educational program.

Additionally, there are student representatives who communicate directly with the module/course/clerkship directors while the module/course/clerkship is occurring for immediate feedback and improvement of the educational program.

There are student representatives for each year of the curriculum that are standing (voting) members of the Curriculum Committee. Students are key members of the various subcommittees of the Curriculum Committee and provide input about the student experience.
**APPENDIX 1**

*Guidelines for Scheduling Pre-Clerkship Courses and Modules*

a) Each week will adhere to the Pre-Clerkship Contact Hours and Academic Workload Policy.
b) Each week will appropriately integrate the Longitudinal Themes reserving an average of 2-3 hours per week.
c) TBL sessions will occur in Foundations of Medical Science (IMS 1 Fall).
   - TBL M/Tu 9-10am; Fr 9-11am
d) PBL sessions will occur in the systems modules (IMS 1 Spring and IMS 2 Fall).
   - PBL M/W 10am-12pm and 4-6pm
e) Each clinical skills/simulation exercise may require 1 hour of related introductory lecture. Each skills/simulation session requires at least 4 afternoon sessions.
f) Guided problem solving sessions and/or reviews may be scheduled on Fridays.
g) Formative Assessments are released on Friday at 1pm. Other learning activities can be scheduled during this time as long as guidelines for contact hours are followed.
h) Required online lectures count towards lecture limits
i) Course/module directors should adhere to the following educational principles:
   - Active learning methods
   - 25 total contact hours per week
   - 5 hours per week for students to complete required reading and other preparation for in-class activities
j) These guidelines do not include certain OASA activities such as the McGovern Society meetings.

**Approval, Changes or Revisions of the Final Schedule**

The Curriculum Committee reviews and approves the official semester schedule according to the following timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester / Month</th>
<th>Start Schedule</th>
<th>Preliminary Schedule Due</th>
<th>Curriculum Committee Review</th>
<th>Semester Starts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Semester</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Semester</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The official semester schedule is available here: [https://med.uth.edu/oep/medical-education/student-schedules/](https://med.uth.edu/oep/medical-education/student-schedules/)
- Any changes will be posted on the official one45 course calendar as soon as possible.
- OEP will notify Students, Directors, Coordinators, and Administration of changes to the official schedule through the institution's email system and/or course management system (LMS).

All room scheduling at MMS is coordinated through MS Conference Operations.
APPENDIX 2

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR PRE-CLERKSHIP COURSES/MODULES, CLERKSHIPS, AND ADVANCED CLINICAL EDUCATION SELECTIVES

The **Pre-Clerkship Evaluation Subcommittee** reviews the Pre-Clerkship courses and modules annually and makes recommendations on adjustments required in future delivery. Subcommittee reports are presented to the Curriculum Committee for discussion and final approval of action items.

The **Clerkship and Advanced Clinical Education Evaluation Subcommittee** reviews the clerkships and required advanced clinical selectives annually and makes recommendations on adjustments required in future delivery. Subcommittee reports are presented to the Curriculum Committee for discussion and final approval of action items.

A summary report of each annual review is prepared and presented to the Vice Dean for Educational Programs for any necessary action and is included in the Curriculum Committee’s Annual Report to the Faculty Senate.

**Membership:** The subcommittees will consist of a Chair, a minimum of two Faculty (one basic science and one clinical faculty member); a Ph.D. educator; a Curriculum Coordinator; and students. The Curriculum Committee Chair will appoint members of the subcommittees.

**Pre-Clerkship Evaluation Subcommittee**

This Subcommittee will evaluate all Pre-Clerkship courses/modules. Evaluation reviews will focus on the most recent academic period.

Reviews will address the following:

- Organization/structure/administration of the course/module including the logical sequencing of the module within the curriculum
- Congruence of module goals and objectives with institutional core competencies and objectives
- System for the evaluation of students
- Relationship of evaluation process to module, year, institutional objectives, and the core competencies
- Appropriateness of the methods of evaluation
- Provision for feedback to students regarding their performance
- Procedures for remediation
- Content for the module (i.e., depth and breadth; currency of information; integration of content with other courses, relevance for clinical practice; redundancies needed for complex topics; and congruence with stated objectives)
- Quality of laboratory experiences (if applicable)
- Quality of alternate learning experiences; TBL, PBL, online assignments, guided problem solving, (if applicable)
- Quality/clarity of learning management system
The Evaluation committee will conduct the review with information contained in but not limited to:

- Interviews with Module, Theme, Discipline Directors and other Key Faculty
- Educational goals and objectives of the course and institution
- Learning Management System (Canvas)
- Student assessment of course/module on AAMC Graduation Survey
- Student Performance on USMLE Step I
- Course/Module Summary Reports
  - Annual Review of Curriculum (ARC)
- Course/Module Evaluation by Student Representative
  - one45
- The Pre-Clerkship Evaluation Subcommittee's report from the previous academic year
  - See reports on Learning Management System (Canvas): MS-Curriculum Committee
- Student feedback on surveys/focus groups/interviews

A member(s) of the Pre-Clerkship Evaluation Subcommittee will meet with the Module, Theme and Discipline Directors during the review process. The reviewer will also meet with students to clarify any information in the report that is not clear and/or to obtain any missing information. The Chair will then compile this information in a report and submit it to the Office of Educational Programs. The Chair of the Pre-Clerkship Evaluation Subcommittee or a designee will present the report to the Curriculum Committee.

**Clerkship and Advanced Clinical Education Evaluation Subcommittee (CACE)**

This Subcommittee will evaluate the clerkships and required advanced clinical selectives. Reviews will focus on the most recent academic period.

Reviews will address the following:

- Organization/structure/administration of the clerkship
- Congruence of clerkship goals and objectives with institutional competencies and program objectives
- System for the evaluation of students
- Relationship of evaluation process to clerkship objectives and core competencies
- Methods of evaluation
- Provision for feedback to students regarding their performance
- Procedures for remediation
● System for monitoring student experiences with patients throughout the clerkship period and process for remediating identified gaps in the types of patients and clinical conditions that a student must encounter on the clerkship (LCME 8.6).
● Content of the clerkship (i.e., depth and breadth; currency of information; integration of content with other clerkships, relevance for clinical practice; redundancies needed for complex topics; and congruence with stated objectives)
● Quality/clarity of syllabus, handouts, and/or web site
● Quality/quantity of didactic sessions
● Policies on grading
● Student performance in course examinations/national examinations
● Quality, quantity and comparability of clinical experiences across sites; in-patient versus ambulatory experiences
● Innovations in teaching and evaluation
● Faculty, student and administrative participation in course
● Educational resources (i.e., space, labs, computers, etc.)
● Adherence to the institutional policy on duty hours for medical students on clinical clerkships/electives/selectives

The evaluation subcommittee will conduct the review with information contained in but not limited to:

● Interviews with Clerkship Directors, Elective Directors and other Key Faculty
● Educational goals and objectives of the clerkship and the institution
● Clerkship syllabus/list of clerkship didactic sessions
● Student assessment of clerkship on AAMC Graduation Survey
● Student Performance on USMLE Step II
● Student-patient encounters and clinical skills logs (One45)
● The Clerkship Director Reports
  o Annual Review of Curriculum (ARC)
● Clerkship/Selective Evaluation by Student Representative
  o one45
● The Evaluation Committee’s Report from the previous academic year
● Student feedback on surveys/focus groups

A member(s) of the CACE Evaluation Subcommittee will meet with the Clerkship/Advanced Clinical Education Directors during the review process. The reviewer will also meet with students to clarify any information in the report that is not clear and/or to obtain any missing information. The Chair will then compile this information in a report and submit it to the Office of Educational Programs. The Chair of the Evaluation Subcommittee or a designee will present the report to the Curriculum Committee.