Policy/Process/Procedure Name: NBME Policy for Preclerkship Courses

MSEC/ADMIN Number: MSEC-1212-12

Approving Officer: Kenneth Olive, MD / MSEC Chair
Ramsey McGowen, PhD / MSEC Chair

Agent(s) Responsible for Implementation: M1/M2 Course Directors

Original Approval Date: 12/18/12
Effective Date(s): Spring 2013; 2016-2017 AY

Originator Name/Committee: Institutional Outcomes Subcommittee

New Policy/Process/Procedure Proposal

Revision of Existing Policy/Process/Procedure

Revision Date(s): 7/21/15; 7/19/16

LCME Required Policy/Procedure/Process: Yes [ ] No [X]

LCME Element(s) Number and Description:

[Also include the LCME Element number in (B) Purpose of Policy/Procedure/Process statement below.]

Exemption(s) to Policy through MSEC Action (9/19/17 & 6/12/18): waive the existing preclerkship NBME grade policy during the first year of curriculum change for each curricular year. The percentage of the course grade determined by the NBME subject exams for M1 and M2 courses was set at a minimum of 10% during the first year of curriculum change. The effective date for M1 courses is November 1, 2017 and extended through May 10, 2019. The effective date for M2 courses is July 9, 2018 through March 29, 2019.

Exemption to Policy through MSEC Action 7/10/2018: Requirement for a score of “100” on the Pharmacology NBME from the current 90th percentile to the 95th percentile. The minimum requirement for passing the NBME would remain at the 10th percentile and the grade component weight would remain at 20%.

All policies/processes/procedures will be reviewed during the MSEC Evaluation of the Curriculum as a Whole unless an earlier review is identified.

Administrative Review Date(s): 7/13/2020

(A.) Policy/Process/Procedure Statement:
Updated 7/19/2016 Statement: This policy is effective with Academic Year 2016-2017. MSEC approved use of the NBME score conversion tables (provides the percent correct associated with various scaled scores) that would allow a linear regression (curve) to be used to give scores above the previously set 90th percentile and scores below the previously set 10th percentile. Course directors will have the discretion as to whether they cap scores at 100% or give higher scores. Course Syllabi should contain the specific course grade scale.

(B.) Purpose of Policy/Process/Procedure:
Updated Purpose 7/19/2016: To enable course directors to identify grade components for the NBME scores above the 90th percentile and below the 10th percentile.

(C.) Scope (applies to):
Updated Scope 7/19/2016: Preclerkship courses utilizing NBME subject exams.

(D.) Process/Procedure:
Updated Process/Procedure 7/19/2016:
The process/procedure of this policy continues to contain three (3) parts.
a. If a NBME Subject exam is available, it will be used.

b. Standard percentage of grade: The NBME exam should comprise the same percentage of the total grade as a major sectional exam in the course.
c. Preclerkship courses will determine a NBME course grade by using a regression analysis of the NBME subject exam score where the 90th percentile equals a grade of 100% and the 10th percentile equals a grade of 70%. Using the NBME score conversion table a “curve” can be determined and applied, i.e., if the 90th percentile for a given exam is associated with a percent correct score of 85%, then a “curve” of 15 points has been applied to assign a grade of 100%.

Course director will have discretion on whether to cap course grades from the NBME at 100 or allow grades to exceed 100, based on extending the regression curve to scores higher than the 90th percentile.

For scores below the 10th percentile, the NBME score conversion table will be used to determine the percent correct associated with a scaled score of 1. The “curve” score will be added to the percent correct to establish a grade for a scaled score of 1. A regression will be performed between this and the 10th percentile grade to establish grades for the intermediate scaled scores.

Course directors can petition Academic Affairs for a modification of this policy if specific circumstances lead a course director to conclude it is educationally inappropriate (e.g., if the NBME exam content and course content differ significantly).
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