



☒ Policy ☐ SOP ☐ Memorandum

Audience: ☒ Students ☐ Faculty and Staff ☐ Both

- Approved by: Curriculum and Examination Committee
- Date Created: 8/1/2018
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- Review Department: Registrar

Supplemental Policy on Eligibility and Progression to USMLE Step 1

This policy applies only to students who have completed their MD5 coursework before May 2025. Please read the main Progression Policy document for full details on individual steps and requirements that may not be fully outlined here.

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the requirements students must meet to progress from the Basic Sciences to the Clinical Sciences program by successfully passing the USMLE Step 1 examination. This policy applies only to students who have completed their MD5 coursework before May 2025. It defines the eligibility criteria, exam requirements, and consequences for students who do not meet progression standards.

2. Eligibility for USMLE Step 1

Students become eligible to take the USMLE Step 1 upon successful completion of five (5) semesters of Basic Sciences and after meeting the required pre-requisite examination standards.

2.1 Required Pre-Requisite Examinations

- NBME Comprehensive Basic Science Exam (CBSE)
 - o Students may attempt the NBME CBSE up to five (5) times.
- Kaplan Step 1 Sim Exam (If NBME CBSE attempts are exceeded)
 - o After exhausting 5 NBME attempts, students may take the Kaplan Sim Exam
 - o Students may attempt the Kaplan Sim Exam up to three (3) times maximum.



3. Next Steps for You!

All students will be divided into two groups:

1. Students who have scored 58+ on their last CBSE attempt after October 1, 2024 but before November 2025.
2. Students who have scored less than 58 on their last CBSE attempt or have not attempted the NBME CBSE since October 1, 2024.

If you belong to the 1st group, you are eligible to proceed to your next pre-qualifying exam directly.

1. If you have NBME CBSE attempts remaining (meaning you have attempted this exam less than 5 times), you may schedule your next NBME CBSE on the SJSM Central portal.
2. If you have already attempted the NBME CBSE 5 or more times, you must take the proctored Kaplan Step 1 Sim Exam. You may also schedule this exam on the SJSM Central portal. This exam will be used as the USMLE Step 1 qualifying exam instead of NBME CBSE, once the student has exhausted the maximum number of NBME CBSE attempts.

- The score requirement on the Kaplan Sim Exam will be a score of 72% and above.
- There are a maximum of three Kaplan exam attempts available in total.

Note that if a student fails the NBME CBSE or Kaplan Sim exam, any subsequent attempt will require them to enroll in the CCRP and meet the CCRP requirements as outlined in the next section.

If you belong to the 2nd group, you will be enrolled in the Core Concept Review Program (CCRP)

Core Concept Review Program (CCRP)

Group 2 Students, who have scored less than 58 on their last CBSE attempt, or have not attempted the NBME CBSE since October 1, 2024 will be automatically registered for the Core Concept Review Program (CCRP).

The CCRP was developed to help students review and reinforce core concepts. Students will remain in CCRP status until they pass USMLE Step 1 and progress to Clinical Rotations or to the Comprehensive Remedial Program.

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777 Busse Hwy, Park Ridge, IL 60068 | Tel: 800-542-1553 | Fax: 847-298-2375

info@mail.sjasm.org | www.sjasm.org



- The CCRP consists of structured counselling sessions, NBME and USMLE -style mock examinations, question formulation exercises, and small group study.
- The start date of enrollment in CCRP for all Group 2 students is September 2025, when CCRP was introduced as part of the SJSM Progression Policy, regardless of how long you have been a student at SJSM, and when you completed the MD5 coursework.
- There is currently no cost to the CCRP.
- Mock CBSE exams are online proctored exams offered on the 3rd Wednesday of every month. This exam consists of 4 blocks of 50 questions each, to be completed in a total of 5 hours and aims to simulate the CBSE Exam.
- Additionally, the Step One Proficiency Exam (SOPE) is also offered on the 2nd Tuesday of every month, which consists of 7 blocks of 40 questions each, to be completed in a total of 8 hours. This exam aims to simulate the USMLE Step 1 Exam. The score of the SOPE does not count against the student if below 70%, but if above 70%, may be used to fulfil CCRP score requirements, thereby offering a fast track to fulfilling CCRP requirements, if necessary.
- CCRP requirements in order to proceed for the next NBME CBSE attempt:
 - One counselling session with assigned USMLE Counsellor at least once a month: Students are not allowed to register for the Mock exam without at least one completed counselling session.
 - At least One (1) Mock CBSE Exam every month
 - Student must achieve two (2) Mock CBSE Examination scores greater than or equal to 70%.
- Students may continue in the CCRP for a maximum of 14 consecutive months, after which they will be progressed to the Comprehensive Remedial Program (See Section 4).
 - Students are mandatorily required to take the mock exams every month. If a student fails to take a mock exam in a given month without prior clearance from CCRP Support Services, student will be considered a No Show.
Missing 3 consecutive mock exams is considered grounds for dismissal from the school.
 - Students are required to be in good financial standing with the school at all times during the CCRP.
 - Students who achieve the required scores of two (2) Mock CBSE Examination scores greater than or equal to 70%, will receive notification from the school that they have been cleared to proceed for the next NBME CBSE attempt.

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The student is required to sign up for the NBME CBSE within 45 days of receiving the notice of clearing the CCRP, failing which the student will have to meet the CCRP requirements once again.

This attempt at the CBSE exam is scheduled by the student to be taken at a Prometric Center during a predetermined testing window. The student schedules the NBME CBSE through SJSM.

o <https://www.sjsmcentral.com/en/prequal-exam-information/>

- If the student achieves the requisite score on the NBME CBSE the student will be eligible to sit for the USMLE Step 1 Exam and the school must receive the Step 1 status verification from ECFMG within 45 days of receiving a passing NBME CBSE score.
- Group 2 Students may continue in the CCRP for a maximum of 12 consecutive months, which ends 30th September 2026, after which they will be progressed to the Comprehensive Remedial Program (See Progression Policy Section 4 for full details).
- If the student fails to achieve the requisite score on the NBME CBSE, they will be required to continue in the CCRP until they achieve the requisite mock CBSE examination scores within the specified time frame, after which they will be moved to the Comprehensive Remedial Program.

4. Examination Progression Rules

Students are allowed a maximum of 5 attempts at the NBME CBSE. When and if they exceed 5 attempts, they will be eligible for the Kaplan Sim exam which currently has a maximum of 3 attempts. The Kaplan Sim exam will be treated as equivalent to the NBME CBSE, as a prequalifying exam for the USMLE. The passing score for the Kaplan exam is 72%.

A student must achieve the same CCRP requirements as they would for the NBME CBSE in order to be allowed to sit for the Kaplan Sim Exam.

If the student achieves the requisite score of 72% or above on the Kaplan Sim Exam, they will be eligible to sit for the USMLE Step 1 Exam and the school must receive the Step 1 status verification from ECFMG within 45 days of receiving a passing Kaplan Sim score.

If the student fails to achieve the requisite score on the Kaplan Sim Exam, they will be required to continue in the CCRP until they achieve the requisite mock CBSE examination scores.

Failure to meet CCRP requirements within the allowed timeframe may result in academic dismissal.

USMLE Step 1 Attempts

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- Students who pass the required prequalifying exam (NBME CBSE or Kaplan Sim) may sit for USMLE Step 1.
- Any student who has failed the USMLE Step 1, is required to register for CCRP and meet the CCRP requirements before being allowed to attempt the next NBME CBSE or Kaplan Sim Exam.
- If the USMLE Step 1 exam has been attempted and failed a second time at any point in the progression, the student will be Academically Dismissed.

5. Academic Dismissal

Academic dismissal will occur under the following circumstances:

1. Failure to meet CCRP requirements within the allowed timeframe.
2. Failure to clear NBME CBSE and Kaplan Sim Exam within the number of permitted attempts (5 NBME + 3 Kaplan).
3. Failure of the USMLE Step 1 on the second attempt.
4. 24 months of inactivity since completion of the MD5 coursework.

6. Advancement to Clinical Sciences

Only students who successfully pass USMLE Step 1 will advance to the Clinical Sciences phase of the MD program.

It is important to understand that the school has a 2-year inactivity policy. This means that any student who is not taking a for-credit course, or who is not enrolled in one of our school administered programs such as USMLE Focus, CCRP or Comprehensive Remedial Program for more than 2 years is subject to academic dismissal from the school. In effect, this means that the student who has completed MD5 coursework has 24 months to pass the USMLE Step 1 and register for their first rotation. If you are nearing this deadline, or if you have already passed the 24 months since your completion of MD5 coursework, and you have not passed the USMLE Step 1, you may appeal to the Examination Committee for an extension of time. The decision of the extension of time is strictly on a case-by-case basis. For more information on this, please email records@mail.sjsm.org or ccrp@mail.sjsm.org.