

# Elective Credit in Years 3 and 4

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## General Information

**Students must successfully complete a total of 28 weeks of elective credit in order to graduate. For those students in the InterACT Program, a total of 24 weeks is required due to longer clerkship weeks required for the program.**

Students may take clinical electives during the third and fourth years at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, our affiliates, or at off-campus scholarly institutions. Students may also design clinical or research electives or seek out international experiences.

The following guidelines apply to all types of electives:

- Forty hours are required to receive one week of elective credit.
- You are only permitted to take one one-week elective (40 hours completed within a consecutive seven-day time period); you also are permitted one additional one-week elective in the form of a longitudinal elective (40 hours of elective time completed over a period of weeks or months; must be one of the longitudinal electives listed in the Icahn School of Medicine electives catalog). All other electives must fall between two to four weeks in length.
- You cannot take an elective concurrently with a required clerkship. Longitudinal electives may be taken concurrently with another non-required rotation (e.g. another elective) as long as the hours do not conflict.
- The maximum amount of time permitted for research or non-clinical electives is 16 weeks total in Years 3 and 4.
- Elective application forms must be submitted to the Assistant Registrar, with all required signatures, no less than two weeks prior to the desired start date of the elective.
- **No retroactive credit will be granted for an elective.**
- If a student wishes to repeat an elective that has already been taken, it is possible to do so, however, elective credit will not be given for the subsequent course(s).
- Any request for an elective greater than four weeks in length requires additional approval by the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs.
- Preparation for USMLE Step 2 CK is built into the Year 4 schedule with a Step 2 CK Board Review course that, if attended in its entirety, counts as two weeks of elective credit.
- Work completed for remediation (including remediation for Step 1 and/or Step 2) is not eligible for elective credit.

To receive full credit for an elective you must complete each step of the elective process:

1. Select and register for the elective.
2. Complete the elective.
3. Ensure that your mentor/preceptor has submitted an evaluation of your performance.
4. Complete *your* evaluation of the elective.

## Selecting and Registering for an Elective

### Icahn School of Medicine Electives

- Browse the [online electives catalog](#).
- Select the elective for which you wish to apply and click the “Register for Electives” button on the detailed view screen
- You will receive three emails generated from the system during the registration process:
  - An email informing you that you have requested the elective and it is PENDING DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL
  - Next, an email informing you that the department has approved the elective and it is PENDING REGISTRAR APPROVAL
  - A final email informing you that your request to add the elective has been APPROVED BY THE REGISTRAR
  - You must receive the final email to be fully registered for the elective and receive credit; no retroactive credit will be applied.
- Your login is your student e-mail address and your password is your life number. You should change your password once you have successfully logged into the EMS under Account Management.
- You may [access your account anytime online](#)
- If you have any issues with the approval process, contact the Assistant Registrar or the Director of Student Electives.
- The maximum amount of time permitted for non-clinical electives is 16 weeks total in Years 3 and 4.

### Clinical Tailor-Made Electives

- Students wishing to design their own clinical elective(s) with a specific Icahn School of Medicine faculty member or a faculty member from an outside institution may do so by submitting the *Elective Registration: Clinical Tailor-Made* form to the Assistant Registrar. The form can be accessed online via the [Medical School Forms web page](#).
- Once you have completed the form, it needs to be reviewed and approved by the following: Assistant Registrar, Mentor/Preceptor, and the Director of Student Electives.

### Tailor-Made Research Electives

- Students wishing to design a research elective with a specific Icahn School of Medicine faculty member or mentor from an outside institution may do so by submitting the *Elective Registration: Tailor-Made Research Elective* form (MD, MD/PhD, or MD/MPH) to the Assistant Registrar. The form can be accessed via the [Medical School Forms web page](#).
- Once you have completed the form, it needs to be reviewed and approved by the following people: Assistant Registrar, Mentor/Preceptor, and the Associate Dean for Medical Student Research
  - MD/MPH students also require the approval of the MD/MPH Program Director
  - MD/PHD students also require the approval of the MD/PHD Program Director
- The maximum amount of time permitted for research electives or other non-clinical electives is 16 weeks total in Years 3 and 4.

### Electives at Other Schools and Institutions

#### Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS)

- Students are required to use the AAMC’s *Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS)* to register for electives offered at schools that are VSAS Host Institutions.

- Visit the AAMC website to [view a list of VSAS Host Institutions](#).
- Once registered through VSAS, students will need to complete the form, *Elective Registration: Electives at Other Institutions* (Required for all Away Electives, VSAS, and non-VSAS), which can be found on the [Medical School Forms web page](#).
- For supporting documentation required by the host institution please contact the Assistant Registrar.
- To complete your registration for the elective, submit to the Assistant Registrar the following: a description of the elective, a confirmation of your acceptance from the host institution, and the completed Icahn School of Medicine form, *Elective Registration: Electives at Other Institutions*. (Required for all Away Electives, VSAS, and non-VSAS)

### **Non-VSAS**

- Contact the host institution directly to request the elective.
- Students will need to complete the *Elective Registration: Electives at Other Institutions* (Required for all Away Electives, VSAS, and non-VSAS), which can be found on the [Medical School Forms web page](#).
- For supporting documentation required by the host institution please contact the Assistant Registrar
- To complete your registration for the elective, submit to the Assistant Registrar the following: a description of the elective, a confirmation of your acceptance from the host institution, and the completed Icahn School of Medicine form *Elective Registration: Electives at Other Institutions*. (Required for all Away Electives, VSAS, and non-VSAS)

### **Tailor-Made Electives at Other Schools**

- Students can also request to complete Tailor-Made Electives at other schools. Students must have a mentor at the site responsible for awarding the grade. The student must complete and submit the appropriate form (*Elective Registration: Clinical Tailor-Made* or *Elective Registration: Tailor-Made Research*) to the Assistant Registrar and to the Director of Student Elective or the Associate Dean for Medical Student Research at the Icahn School of Medicine for approval. The online forms can be found on the [Medical School Forms web page](#).
- The maximum amount of time permitted for non-clinical electives is 16 weeks total in Years 3 and 4.

**Please Note:** Medical Schools in different U.S. states may require students to pay for a background check and toxicology screening. As of June 2012, medical schools in Florida and Tennessee require this documentation. Please check with the school to which you are applying to make sure you have met any updated requirements.

### **International Electives**

Students may only take international electives if they are either offered at Canadian medical schools or from among the global health electives offered in the [elective management system](#). Funding is not usually available for international electives unless otherwise noted in elective descriptions.

The registration process for Mount Sinai Global Health electives is as follows:

1. Find a Global Health elective in the [elective management system](#).
2. Apply through the system for the elective at least 90 days PRIOR to the proposed start date of the elective to allow for paperwork to be completed.
3. The Global Health program coordinator,

will contact you with additional information and requirements for the specific elective to which you have applied. Note that most electives require a separate application to the program itself before you even begin the registration process.

4. Once the appropriate paperwork has been completed, the coordinator will complete your registration and you will receive confirmation from the registrar that you are fully registered.
5. Registration must be completed at least 60 days PRIOR to your departure. Registration includes electronic registration, completion of the Global Health checklist as well as any other necessary paperwork specific to the elective (e.g. letter of support). We are unable to offer retroactive credit for electives and we cannot accommodate last-minute requests given the complexity of planning and approving international electives.

The registration process for electives at Canadian medical schools is as follows:

1. Follow the application process for the Canadian medical school.
2. Register through EMPOWER for the Global Health elective entitled “Canadian Medical School Elective.”
3. Apply through the system for the elective at least 90 days PRIOR to the proposed start date of the elective to allow for paperwork to be completed.
4. The Global Health program coordinator will contact you with additional information and requirements for the specific elective to which you have applied. Note that most electives require a separate application to the program itself before you even begin the registration process.
5. Once the appropriate paperwork has been completed, the coordinator will complete your registration and you will receive confirmation from the registrar that you are fully registered.
6. Registration must be completed at least 60 days PRIOR to your departure. Registration includes electronic registration, completion of the Global Health checklist as well as any other necessary paperwork specific to the elective (e.g., acceptance letter from the Canadian medical school, etc.). We are unable to offer retroactive credit for electives and we cannot accommodate last-minute requests given the complexity of planning and approving international electives.

## *Year 3 Students and Away Electives*

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In general the Icahn School of Medicine students wishing to do away electives will do so in the fourth year. From time to time, a student may have a reason to do an away elective during elective time in Year 3. The following should be considered:

- Students must meet the prerequisites set by the institution they are visiting.
- Students should recognize that they may not be as prepared as they would be in Year 4 with the benefit of all or most of the clinical clerkships. In general, assessments done at the away elective is set at a standard for a Year 4 student.
- Students may not know the “system” and logistics at an away location and with a shorter allotment time of elective in Year 3, it may be difficult to acclimate to new systems in time to be able to have an effective elective.
- Any elective done outside of an LCME-approved school must have the approval of an Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Director of Student Electives and that approval must acknowledge that this mentor approves the elective for the student in Year 3.
- If there are any questions or concerns, students are encouraged to meet with the Director for Student Electives or their Faculty Advisor to discuss.

## *Ensuring that your Mentor/Preceptor has Submitted an Evaluation*

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### **Electives at Icahn School of Medicine**

Towards the end of your elective, including away electives, you must deliver to the mentor/preceptor the *Elective: Evaluation/Grade Form*, available on the [Medical School Forms web page](#), which the mentor/preceptor will complete and return to the Registrar's Office at the conclusion of the elective. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that this form is completed and returned to the Registrar's Office (Email: [registrar@mssm.edu](mailto:registrar@mssm.edu) or Fax: 212-369-6013) at the conclusion of the elective.

### **Electives at other schools**

If you are doing an elective at another institution and they wish to use their own institution's form for evaluation rather than the Icahn School of Medicine form, the mentor/preceptor may complete their institution's form and submit that to the Assistant Registrar. It is the student's responsibility to follow-up with those schools to receive your grade and communicate that to the Assistant Registrar.

## *How Electives are Graded*

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All electives are graded Pass, High Pass, Honors or Fail.

## *Completing an Evaluation of the Elective*

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### **Electives at Icahn School of Medicine**

All **third- and fourth-**year students are required to evaluate each elective experience AND the preceptor through our evaluation system using their existing login and password. Evaluations assist us in understanding and evaluating the effectiveness of the electives. **Evaluations must be completed no later than four weeks after receiving a notification via email.** If a student does not complete the mandatory evaluation four weeks after receiving notification, the student will receive an Incident report and no credit for the elective. Please refer to Student Conduct section of Handbook on Incident reports. If the MSPE has been submitted, it will be amended and re-uploaded to reflect this breach of professionalism. The evaluations must be filled out in order to receive credit for the elective.

## *Electives Review System*

Students are encouraged to ensure that they are on track with meeting their elective requirements for graduation by logging in to their Empower account.