Grading Policy

The Course or Clerkship Director is responsible for clearly delineating and communicating the criteria utilized for assessment of student performance at the outset of the learning experience. This should include the number and format of all examinations, the weighting of examinations in the determination of a final grade, and the criteria for passing.

The MSSM transcript will reflect a complete and accurate grading history for all courses in the medical school. This is consistent with guidelines from the AAMC and most universities and colleges.

Years 1 and 2

Each course director will complete a grade roster at the end of each course and a written evaluation of student performance in laboratories, clinics, small-group sessions, and/or conferences is required.

All grades are due in the Office of the Registrar within two weeks of course completion.

Grading in Years 1 and 2 is on a Pass/Fail basis. A student who does not complete a course will receive an Incomplete. Types of situations where a student may not complete a course include illness or family emergencies. The Incomplete will change to a Pass or Fail once the student has successfully completed the course. A student who successfully remediates a failing grade will receive a final grade of FP (Fail remediated to Pass).

Course Directors will identify the bottom 5% of passing students. Students in this score range will be designated as having received a “marginal pass” for tracking and monitoring purposes only. Marginal grades are considered a full Pass on the transcript. However, marginal grades are tracked by Student Affairs as part of an early warning system for students at risk of academic difficulty. A student receiving a marginal grade on an examination or in a course may be brought to the attention of Students Affairs for counseling in order to strategize about how to avoid future difficulties. A student who has three marginal passes in an academic year will be placed on Monitored Academic Status. See page  for a full description of academic status.

A student who fails a course in Year 1 must remediate the course before starting year 2. A student who fails a course in Year 2 must remediate the course before taking USMLE step 1 and starting Year 3. Remediation is determined by the Course Director.

Years 3 and 4 and the Art & Science of Medicine 1 and 2

The Art & Science of Medicine courses (ASM) in Years 1 and 2 as well as the clerkships in Years 3 and 4 have a special focus on the teaching and assessment of clinical skills and may use any of the following in assessing a student’s performance:

- Faculty, preceptor or resident evaluations
- Oral and/or written examinations
- NBME subject test exams
- Written or oral presentations of a specific subject related to the clerkship or course
- Exams using standardized patients or simulations
- Observed structured clinical exams

The weight given to specific parameters may vary with an individual clerkship or course.

Each Clerkship or Course Director completes an individual grade sheet for each student. The sheet includes the final grade plus a comprehensive narrative paragraph. The final grades and narratives for clerkships completed before the beginning of Year 4 are an integral part of the student's MSPE.

All reports of student performance are due in the Office of the Registrar within six weeks of the clerkship's completion.

The grading system for most required clerkships is H (Honors), HP (High Pass), P (Pass), CP (Conditional Pass), and F (Fail). ASM 1 and 2 in Years 1 and 2 respectively and Critical Care and Introduction to Internship in Year 4 are graded Pass/Fail. Electives are graded on a system of Honors/Pass/Fail.

A student will receive a temporary grade of Conditional (C) in the event they fail the NBME subject exam or other final exam BUT only if they have satisfactory clinical evaluations. Upon successful completion of the failed exam, the grade is revised to a Conditional Pass (CP) or Conditional High Pass (CHP). There is no Conditional Honors. If the student fails the exam on the retake, he or she will receive an overall failing grade and will need to retake the entire clerkship and then take the NBME exam or final exam again. Students are not permitted to retake an NBME subject examination to improve a grade.

A student can fail a clerkship based on overall clerkship score, unsatisfactory clinical evaluations or a repeated failure on an NBME subject exam or final exam. Students who behave unprofessionally during the clerkship are also at risk of failing. If a student is felt to be unprofessional to the point that evaluators do not feel that the student is a reliable, accurate reporter of clinical data a trustworthy team member, the student will receive a failing grade. A student who receives a failing grade for a clerkship must retake all or part of the clerkship at the discretion of the Clerkship Director and the promotions committee. Upon successful completion of remediation a student will receive a grade of FP.

All students must pass all clerkships in Year 3 to advance to Year 4.

**Grades and Transcripts**

Official transcripts of courses taken at Mount Sinai School of Medicine toward fulfillment of the M.D. degree requirements will identify a grade for each course or clerkship as described above.
Written narrative evaluations are not part of the transcript and will not be duplicated or mailed with transcripts; however, all clinical narratives for clinical courses and clerkships completed before the beginning of Year 4 are included in the MSPE which is considered a “narrative transcript.”