

## Evaluating Student Performance in the UF COM Competency-Based Curriculum

**Background:** Two curriculum policies on student evaluations have been established over the past 18 years. The 1987 Harris Report describes a rationale and a guide to assign letter grades to student performances. The 1997 evaluation policy mandated that student evaluations be based upon mastery of UF COM graduation competencies and that the competency-based evaluations be uniform across the four-year curriculum.

Both policies are based upon the premise that instruments to evaluate student performances discriminate in order to identify both the students with academic difficulty, to support and provide remediation, and the outstanding students, providing appropriate recognition.

**Status:** The 1987 Harris Report was neither enforced nor was it incorporated into the currently used 1997 competency-based evaluation system. Evaluation instruments used in most courses and clerkships are not sensitive in discriminating between student performances either by competency scores or letter grades.

**Proposed Action:** Recommend that the two policies be integrated, and the curriculum committee re-embraces the evaluation of student performance policy.

### Proposed Evaluation Policy:

- Student performances in all courses, clerkships and electives will be evaluated first on mastery of assigned competencies, and secondarily be assigned a letter grade or a pass/fail mark. Only a course or clerkship director assigns the letter grade or pass/fail mark.
- Student competency scoring and final letter grade must be aligned with the curriculum committee's guidelines for different levels of student performances as identified in each course, clerkship, or elective. It is expected that the distribution of competency scores and letter grades will vary somewhat from year to year and certainly will vary from student group to student group rotating through the clinical services. The typical class, however, will be expected to have the following distribution of competency scores and summative letter grades: 15-30% of the class earn 'exemplary' competency scores and grades of A, 10-30% of the class earn 'acceptable' competency scores and grades of C; and a large group of students, comprising the remainder of the class, that earn a 'very good' competency scores and grades of B (B, B+). Unsatisfactory performances will be designated by a competency score of "needs remediation" and an assigned letter grade of D or F.
- Valid Instruments used for student evaluation must be designed to distinguish student performances into different levels of competence. The reliability and validity of current and future course evaluation instruments must be addressed. The curriculum committee must monitor and enforce the use of reliable and valid evaluation tools, and the distribution of competency scores and grades for each course.