

## **Evaluating Student Performances in the UF COM Competency-Based Curriculum**

**Background:** Based upon the 1997 adoption of a competency-based curriculum and evaluation system, student performances are assessed and evaluated upon the degree of mastery of UF COM graduation competencies, and the competency-based evaluations are uniform across the four-year curriculum. The level of competency would secondarily be transcribed into letter grades or pass/fail marks.

The evaluation system is based also upon the premise that instruments to evaluate student performances should discriminate in order to identify both the students with academic difficulty, to support and provide remediation, and the outstanding students, by providing appropriate recognition.

### **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. Reporting of competency scoring must be concomitant with the reporting of grades.
  
- Student competency scoring and final letter grade determinations of student achievement must be aligned with the Curriculum Committee's guidelines in discriminating between student performances either by competency scores or letter grades.
  - Knowing 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, it is expected in a course or clerkship that 17-34% (based on AOA selection standard) of student performances would be deemed as 'exemplary' and/or be scored as grades of A.
  - It should be understood that courses and clerkships that give over 50% A's are not providing the discrimination that is desired. A director would present his or her case to the course or clerkship directors for their feedback, and to the Evaluation Subcommittee for its assessment and approval. The Subcommittee may make recommendations to the Curriculum Committee about altering the course if indicated.
  - A course or clerkship director that anticipates exceeding the level of 50% should notify the Evaluation Subcommittee prior to releasing grades to students.
  - A course or clerkship director can petition for an allowance to give a higher percentage of A's. For example, when NBME

subject examination scores demonstrate that the class average for a given academic year is at or above the 75th percentile for the nation, it is reasonable to consider providing more than 50% A's. There could be other justifications for this allowance, including high performance on other external measures for courses and clerkships that do not use subject examinations.

- Unsatisfactory performances will be designated by a rating of "needs remediation" for any graduation competency or by an assigned letter grade of D or E. A grade of D would be used to indicate a level of competence in the course that would require remedial work to address deficits in the performance of the student, but the student would not be required to repeat the entire course. A grade of E would be used to describe a level of performance that is so low that the only remediation would be to repeat a course in its entirety. An overview of the distribution of competency evaluations will be presented to the Curriculum Committee each year by the Chair of the Evaluation Subcommittee.

- All electives will be graded on the S/U (satisfactory/ unsatisfactory) grading scale.
- Valid instruments used for student evaluation must be designed to distinguish student performances into different levels of competence. The reliability and validity of course evaluation instruments will be addressed. The Curriculum Committee will monitor and enforce the use of reliable and valid evaluation tools, and the distribution of competency scores and grades for each course.
- An item analysis of test questions for courses and clerkship will be included in the annual course reports submitted to the Evaluation Subcommittee, and subsequently presented to the Curriculum Committee.
- This document shall take effect on July 1, 2006, for all four medical classes.