UNITED STATES MEDICAL LICENSING EXAMINATION (USMLE)

The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) is a three-step examination for medical licensure in the United States. It is sponsored by the Federation of State Medical Boards and the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME).

- USMLE Step 1 assesses a student's ability to apply basic sciences to the practice of medicine. The eight-hour test consists of 350 multiple-choice questions.
- USMLE Step 2 CK (Clinical Knowledge) assesses a student's ability to apply medical knowledge, skills, and understanding of clinical science for patient care.
- USMLE Step 3, a two-day exam, assesses whether a medical school graduate can apply medical knowledge and understanding of biomedical and clinical science for the unsupervised practice of medicine. This exam is taken only after obtaining an M.D. degree.

Passing Step 1 and Step 2 CK is required for graduation from Yale School of Medicine. Students apply for the USMLE online at the NBME website at https://apps.nbme.org/nlesweb. Additional information on USMLE scheduling and guidelines is available online on the medical education website at https://medicine.yale.edu/education/academicprogress/registrar/scheduling/usmle.

USMLE Step 1 and USMLE Step 2 CK are computer-administered at Prometric Testing Centers. This system has given students considerable flexibility over the choice of test time and place. The Office of Student Affairs holds a USMLE information session for students preparing to take the exams after completion of their clerkships.

Requirements

1. Yale School of Medicine students are required to take USMLE Step 1 and USMLE Step 2 CK by December 31 of the year before graduation.
2. Joint- and dual-degree students (excluding M.D.-Ph.D. students) are required to take Step 1 and Step 2 CK on or before June 30 of the year that they start the joint/dual degree.
3. M.D.-Ph.D. students may take USMLE Step 1 prior to the ATP as required by the MSTP program.
4. Any failure of Step 1 or Step 2 CK will be brought to the attention of the Progress Committee and the student's head of advisory house. In general, a student in good standing will be allowed three attempts to take and pass each of these examinations.
5. If a student fails an exam three times, the Progress Committee will review the student's overall academic progress. Under extraordinary circumstances the Progress Committee may permit a fourth attempt, but barring that permission, the student will be dismissed from the medical school.

6. If a student who fails one of these exams is also experiencing other academic difficulties, including issues related to unprofessional behavior or failure to progress through the clinical clerkships, or is already on academic probation, the Progress Committee will review the student's overall academic progress. The Progress Committee will then determine how many times and under what circumstances that individual may be permitted to repeat these exams, which may be fewer than three times.

Additional Guidelines

1. It is strongly suggested that students complete USMLE Step 1 and USMLE Step 2 CK by June 30 in the first year of the Advanced Training Period (ATP).
2. Students may schedule up to eight weeks of study for USMLE Step 1 and up to four weeks of study for USMLE Step 2 CK. Any study time over these limits must be approved by the associate dean for student affairs.
3. It is strongly suggested that M.D.-Ph.D. students take USMLE Step 1 by August 31 of the year in which they complete their six months of clerkships in order to fully engage with their Ph.D. work.