Dartmouth
GEISEL SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Eligibility for Graduation Policy

Summary of Purpose

This policy was created to address the requirements for completion of the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree program at Dartmouth Geisel School of Medicine.

Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all graduating Geisel medical students.

Definitions

Doctor of Medicine Degree Application: An application accessed via DartHub and completed by medical students at a specified time in their final year. The application requires students to provide logistical information related to diplomas and graduation ceremonies.

Policy Statement

- The Geisel School of Medicine is dedicated to graduating a well-rounded physician with proficiency in each of Geisel's Core Competencies. Proficiency in these competencies is demonstrated through successfully achieving the medical education program objectives for each competency throughout the curriculum. The Geisel School of Medicine MD degree is conferred by the Dartmouth College Board of Trustees upon medical students who have successfully completed all MD degree requirements and who have received endorsement from the Academic Progress Committee (APC) and the faculty of the medical school.

- The MD degree is conferred once a year on that year's designated Geisel MD Class Day.

- Each degree candidate is required to complete the Doctor of Medicine Degree Application as instructed by the Geisel Registrar's Office and must have all Dartmouth accounts paid in full.

- All eligible degree candidates may participate in the Geisel Class Day Ceremony and the Dartmouth College Commencement Exercises. Special circumstances occasionally arise that may interfere with a student's ability to meet the MD degree requirements in time for participation in graduation ceremonies with their class. In these circumstances, participation in the Geisel Class Day Ceremony and Dartmouth College Commencement Exercises, while

degree requirements are being completed, will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of Educational Affairs.

Medical Degree Graduation Requirements

All required courses of the curriculum must be successfully completed prior to the awarding of the MD degree.

The Geisel MD program must be completed in 7 consecutive calendar years starting from the date of matriculation to the graduation date 7 academic years later. This requirement ensures that students 1) have acquired up to date knowledge and skills in the constantly evolving field of medicine and 2) have broad opportunities for post-graduate training and licensure. Inability to complete the Doctor of Medicine degree within 7 consecutive calendar years will result in separation for students pursuing solely a Doctor of Medicine degree. The standard time to complete a Doctor of Medicine degree is 4 years, and the additional 3-year allowance to complete the degree should be ample time to address issues that may interfere with the traditional time trajectory. Therefore, students should plan voluntary LOAs and reduced course loads carefully to allow time for possible unavoidable events. The requirement to complete the Doctor of Medicine degree within 7 consecutive calendar years does not apply to students accepted as candidates for dual degrees.

Students are held to the degree and graduation requirements for the academic year in which they are enrolled, regardless of when they matriculated into the program. For example, if core clerkship or elective requirements change during a student's extended course of study, they are held to the degree requirements for their new graduation class. Students should contact the Geisel Registrar's Office if they have concerns about adhering to requirements for their new graduation class.

Specific medical degree graduation requirements:

- In the Pre-Clerkship years, students must successfully complete all required courses.
- Students must pass United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 1.
- Students must take USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge.
- In the Clinical years, students must successfully complete all required Clerkships and courses. In addition, students must successfully complete a 4-week sub-internship and 24 credits of individually scheduled electives. Of the 24 credits of electives, at least 16 credits must be clinical. Of the 28 credits total (sub-internship plus electives), 6 credits are required to be outside of a narrowly defined specialty. If a student elects to take additional sub-internships, the credits earned will be applied toward the clinical elective requirement.
- Students are expected to successfully complete all courses for which they are registered.

- Under rare and extenuating circumstances, the Dean of Educational Affairs, upon recommendation from the Associate Dean for Medical Education, in conjunction with the Medical Education Committee (MEC) as necessary, may amend certain degree requirements. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis and only if the Geisel program and course objectives are satisfactorily met.

Procedure

None.

LCME Standard

Standard 9.9 – Student Advancement and Appeal Process

A medical school ensures that the medical education program has a single set of core standards for the advancement and graduation of all medical students across all locations. A subset of medical students may have academic requirements in addition to the core standards if they are enrolled in a parallel curriculum. A medical school ensures that there is a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of a medical student, including timely notice of the impending action, disclosure of the evidence on which the action would be based, an opportunity for the medical student to respond, and an opportunity to appeal any adverse decision related to advancement, graduation, or dismissal.

Standard 10.3 – Policies Regarding Student Selection/Progress and Their Dissemination

The faculty of a medical school establish criteria for student selection and develop and implement effective policies and procedures regarding, and make decisions about, medical student application, selection, admission, assessment, promotion, graduation, and any disciplinary action. The medical school makes available to all interested parties its criteria, standards, policies, and procedures regarding these matters.

Related Information: Documents, Policies, Links, Etc.

Medical Student Academic Advancement and Promotion Policy UME-APC-0001

LCME Functions and Structure of a Medical School (Contains the LCME Standards): http://lcme.org/publications/

Graduation Checklist

Curriculum Overview Years 1-4

Technical Standards for Matriculation, Promotion, and Graduation UME-CNTRL-0000

Core Competencies

Policy Administration

Policy Number	UME-REG-0003		
Reviewed By	Geisel Office of the Registrar	**Effective**	June 1, 2012
Approved By	Dean of Educational Affairs	**Date Approved**	July 15, 2025

Policy Contact Information

Geisel Registrar
Geisel.Registrar@Dartmouth.edu

History

Date	History
June 1, 2012	Policy was created, approved by the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, and put into effect.
July 7, 2017	Policy was reviewed and revised.
June 12, 2018	Policy was reviewed.
March 31, 2020	Policy was reviewed and revised.
September 10, 2020	Policy was reviewed and revised.
February 20, 2023	Policy was reviewed and revised to reflect a change to elective requirements that were voted on by the MEC on October 20, 2021.
May 11, 2023	Policy was reviewed and revised to change Committee on Student Performance and Conduct (CSPC) to Academic Progress Committee (APC).
June 26, 2024	Policy was reviewed and revised to include a statement that there is only one MD degree conferral date per year and to update position titles.

August 22, 2024	Added language to policy to be clear about requirement to complete degree requirements within 7 consecutive calendar years and expectation that students extending their course of study will adhere to degree requirements for their new graduation class.
May 21, 2025	Updated to new policy template.
July 15, 2025	Policy reviewed and updated to provide rationale for required program completion in 7 consecutive calendar years.

Background

None.