Dartmouth
GEISEL SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

# Pre-Clerkship Split Policy (Phase 1)

## Summary of Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to 1) define a Split Year in Phase 1 (Year 1 and Year 2); 2) clarify the limits for requesting a Split Year in Phase 1; 3) describe the process of student application for a Split Year in Phase 1; and 4) outline the steps for institutional approval of the application.

## Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to Geisel medical students in the Phase 1 Pre-Clerkship curriculum beginning with students matriculating in the Geisel MD program in the Fall of 2025.

## Definitions

**Split Year Schedule:** The completion of one academic year's requirements over two years. This does not include Leave of Absence (LOA), dual degree programs, or Academic Scholar Years (ASY).

**Split Year Student:** A medical student who is splitting requirements of one academic year's worth of courses over two academic years, with approximately 50% of the academic requirements in each year. Approved Split Year Students are considered to be enrolled full-time during the years of their split and are considered to be in good standing.

## Policy Statement

For context, students may not take more than seven (7) years to complete Geisel's MD curriculum, inclusive of Split Years, LOAs, and ASYs.

Students in Year 1 or Year 2 of Phase 1 may **request** to split their year for personal or academic reasons. An approved Split Year Student will be enrolled in approximately 50% of the academic requirements in each academic year and will be considered a full-time student in good standing with regard to enrollment throughout the split. Students may request **only one (1) Split Year during Phase 1.**

Some students in academic difficulty may be **required** to split their year by the Academic Progress Committee (APC) as described in the Medical Student Academic Advancement and Promotion Policy (UME-APC-0001).

In all cases, Phase 1 must be completed in no more than three (3) academic years, such that Phase 1 of Geisel's MD curriculum is completed by the end of three (3) academic years of enrollment. This requirement to complete Phase 1 by the end of three (3) academic years is inclusive of an LOA and a Split Year. See Appendix for further guidance.

In no case will students be approved for more than two (2) Split Years across the entirety of their enrollment in the MD curriculum.

Links to relevant policies can be found below for reference and review.

## Procedure

1. A student requesting to split Year 1 or Year 2 of Phase 1 should start by consulting with the Associate Dean for Pre-Clerkship Education.

2. The student must formally apply for a Split Year by completing the Status Change Form available on the Geisel Registrar's Office webpage.

3. The Geisel Registrar's Office will route the request to the Associate Dean for Pre-Clerkship Education for review and approval. The Associate Dean for Pre-Clerkship Education must formally approve the status change and provide the Registrar's Office with the Split Year Schedule that they have planned with the student.

4. The Geisel Registrar's Office will then route the request to additional approvers for review and approval.

5. If a student's request for a Split Year is denied, they may appeal the decision by contacting the Associate Dean for Medical Education, who will have the final decision.

6. After all approvals are obtained, the Geisel Registrar's Office will take appropriate action in all student-related databases, which include registration and posting the Split Year information to the student's transcript. The Geisel Registrar's Office will also notify the relevant Dartmouth and Geisel departments.

7. In the first year of the Split, a Split Year Student is billed full tuition and fees. In the second year of the Split, a fee of $7,500 plus half the increase in tuition and other applicable fees will be charged. It is the student's responsibility to understand all financial ramifications of this status change.

## LCME Standard

None.

## Related Information: Documents, Policies, Links, Etc.

Status Change Request Form: https://geiselmed.dartmouth.edu/admin/registrar/status_change/

Leave of Absence Policy UME-REG-0010

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

Clinical Split Policy UME-REG-0012, under review in 2025

Eligibility for Graduation Policy UME-REG-0003

## Policy Administration

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| **Policy Number** | UME-REG-0011 | | |
| **Reviewed By:** | Geisel Registrar, Associate Dean for Pre-Clerkship Education | **Effective Date:** | July 11, 2017 |
| **Approved By:** | Associate Dean for Medical Education | **Last Date Approved:** | June 2, 2025 |

## Policy Contact Information

**Geisel Registrar**
Geisel.Registrar@Dartmouth.edu

## History

| Date | History |
|---|---|
| July 11, 2017 | Policy was created, approved by the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, and put into effect. |
| June 12, 2018 | Policy was reviewed. |

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| July 31, 2020 | Policy was retired due to implementation of new curriculum. |
| April 5, 2022 | Policy was reviewed and updated specifically for Phase 1 – Year 1. |
| December 5, 2022 | Policy was reviewed and updated to include Phase 1 – Year 2 and to add Appendix. |
| December 14, 2022 | Policy presented to Medical Education Committee (MEC), as MEC needed to approve non-clinical elective counting toward graduation requirements. Approved by MEC and Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education. |
| May 21, 2025 | Policy reviewed and updated to allow 1) a maximum of one Split Year per student in Phase 1; 2) the requirement that Phase 1 must be completed in three (3) academic years; and 3) a maximum of two (2) Split Years across the entirety of enrollment in the MD curriculum. These revisions apply beginning with students matriculating in the Geisel MD program in the Fall of 2025. Policy was reviewed and approved by the Phase 1 Subcommittee of the MEC. |

## Background

None.

## APPENDIX

**Guidance for students taking a Split of Year 1 or Year 2 in Phase 1 who plan to register for an independent study project, non-clinical elective.**

If students on an approved Split Year 1 or Year 2 choose to take or need additional courses to comply with the definition of a Split student, they are eligible to register for an independent study project elective. This independent study project will be considered a non-clinical elective and will count towards the total elective credits required for the Geisel MD degree. The Split Year 1 or Year 2 student should consult with the Associate Dean for Pre-Clerkship Education to determine whether there is an opportunity to create a non-clinical elective as part of a Phase 1 Split schedule. If the Associate Dean for Pre-Clerkship Education approves, the non-clinical elective should be indicated on the proposed Split schedule provided to the Registrar's Office.

A Split Year 1 or Year 2 student must apply for this non-clinical elective using the same process that Phase 2 and Phase 3 students use, which is to complete the Non-Established Elective / Sub-I Application available on the Geisel Registrar's Office webpage.

Non-Established Elective / Sub-I Application

This non-clinical elective will be titled "MDED-6007 Independent Study Project" and graded on the Pass/Fail grade set. The student will be eligible to earn a maximum of 8 credits across the two academic years of the Split, with no more than 2 credits of research per term during Phase 1 (1 credit typically equals 40 hours of work). The credit distribution will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Once the Non-Established Elective / Sub-I Application is completed and approved by the Assistant Dean for Advanced Clinical Curriculum, it will be posted to the Split Year 1 or Year 2 student's OASIS schedule and transcript.

The Non-Established Elective / Sub-I Application can be submitted before or after the status change request has been fully processed. The Non-Established Elective / Sub-I Application is **required** to be submitted by a student no later than 2 weeks after the Registrar has notified the student that their status change request has been approved and processed.

The MDED-6007 Independent Study Project is only available to Phase 1 students who have been approved to Split Year 1 or Year 2. Split students taking the MDED-6007 Independent Study Project must successfully complete this elective before promotion to the next year of the curriculum. Students who are approved for a Phase 1 Split must follow all applicable Geisel grading and academic advancement/promotion policies. Similarly, all Geisel grading policies, including the timely submission of grades, are applicable to the MDED-6007 Independent Study Project elective.