

**GUIDELINES FOR
STUDENTS TAKING EXAMINATIONS
IN YEARS I AND II**

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GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS TAKING EXAMINATIONS IN YEARS I AND II

The following guidelines are written to ensure that all students have a uniform experience while taking examinations at the College of Medicine. They are based on the NBME guidelines used for shelf examinations in the Year III core clerkships. They also reflect the conditions students will experience when taking board examinations. Students are expected to read and familiarize themselves with these guidelines. They are distributed annually to students at the beginning of the academic year (in August) and are posted online on the Medical Education website for the UC College of Medicine, under Policy and Procedures: <http://www.med.uc.edu/medical/MedEd/Policies/index.cfm>. These guidelines cover the usual and customary practices for examinations but changes to exam administration may be necessary and will be communicated to students via email. It is the student's responsibility to check email daily for updates on examinations particularly at and during examination times.

These guidelines replace the following previously issued guidelines: Student Guidelines for Taking Examinations, Approved by the Education Policy Committee, August 2, 2007; Students with Test Accommodations on Written Exams, Approved by the Education Policy Committee August 2, 2007; Years I and II Examination Interruption Guidelines, Approved by Year I and Year II Curriculum Committees, Effective October 13, 2005; Emergency Closing Policy for Examinations for Years I and II at the College of Medicine, Approved by the Education Policy Committee, August 2, 2007 and College of Medicine Policy Regarding Student Use of Computerized Teaching Rooms, undated.

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINATIONS

The following guidelines apply to Year I and Year II students for both paper and computer-based examinations.

1. Examinations may or may not be proctored as decided by the course director. Student conduct during all examinations is guided by the General Professional Standards, Guidelines for the Honor Council and the Academic Performance Standards, Guidelines for Promotion Boards distributed to students at the beginning of the academic year (in August) and found online at: <http://medonestop.uc.edu/MedOneStop/home.aspx>) and <http://www.med.uc.edu/medical/MedEd/Policies/index.cfm> .
2. Students are expected to arrive on time to examinations. It is highly disruptive to all involved when students arrive late. For this reason and for the security of each examination, late examinees may be admitted up until the first person has completed and handed in his/her examination. Highly unusual circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the course/clerkship director. No extra time will be permitted for late arrivals to complete the examination.
3. Students are to remain quietly in their seats.

4. Personal belongings: **No personal belongings are permitted** in the seating area of the testing room.

All materials except pencils and erasers must be deposited in the area in the front or near the perimeter of the room designated for personal belongings. Materials are not to be placed in aisles or by the student's seat.

Personal belongings include, but are not limited to:

- Reference material (books, notes, papers) must be placed in backpacks
- Backpacks, briefcases, purses, coats, brimmed hats/caps, hooded sweatshirts with pockets
- Personal Digital Assistants (e.g., palm pilots)
- Calculators (unless supplied by the College of Medicine)
- Paging devices
- Recording/filming devices
- Radios, iPods and any other electronic devices

Cell phones and PDAs have evolved into highly sophisticated computers with multiple functions. For the security of the examination and for an appropriate and quiet atmosphere necessary for examinations, **cell phones are not to be left in backpacks and may NOT be brought into the examination room; they are to be left in the student's locker.** If a student is found with a cell phone or an electronic device on his/her person, the student will receive a zero for the examination and referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. This is not open for appeal or grade grievance. If a cell phone is inadvertently brought into the room (e.g., in a backpack) and goes off, the phone will be confiscated until the end of the examination.

Watches with functioning alarms may be worn. However, the **alarm must be turned off.**

5. Questions regarding the examination:

- No content questions will be answered during the examination.
- Typographical and other errors will be announced to everyone at the same time.

6. **No extra time** for transferring answers from text booklet or computer to answer sheet, is given. When time is up, no further writing or computer entry is allowed for any reason. A student who fails to end a paper and pencil or computer-based examination at the end of the examination as determined by the course director or proctor will receive a zero for the examination. Continuing the examination would be considered an Honors Code violation and will be reported as such.

7. All test material is to be placed in designated areas before the student leaves the examination room.

B. PAPER EXAMINATIONS

1. For a paper examination, students will be registered and handed a sealed copy of the examination. If required, College of Medicine calculators will be placed on the desk next to the computers or distributed at time of registration.
2. Students are to record their name and identification number on their answer sheet. They are advised to record their answers immediately.
3. Students must wait for the course director or proctor to announce that they may begin.
4. The food and drink rules existing for each examination room will be observed during examinations, i.e., all beverages must be in a closed container. The course director or proctor has the right to inspect any food or beverage containers that have been brought into the examination room.
5. Restroom breaks are permitted and must be taken within the immediate vicinity, i.e., going to Starbucks or to another floor is not permitted. In large lecture halls, only one student of each sex may use the restroom at a time. All material should be placed face down on the student's desk. Additional testing time is not given for time lost during a personal break.

Initiating or receiving telephone calls is not permitted while taking a restroom break during an examination.

6. Students who finish the examination early are permitted to leave the room until the last ten minutes of the examination or at the discretion of the course director or proctor.
7. All test material is to be placed in designated areas before the student leaves the examination room.
8. The ten-minute mark (prior to end of examination) will be announced.
9. Students who have completed an examination are to refrain from making noise outside the testing room and immediately leave the testing area.

C. COMPUTER-BASED EXAMINATIONS

1. For a computer-based examination, each student will be handed appropriate material (Scantron, scratch paper, directions on how to access the examination, electronic media, etc.) after they are seated at their desk. If required, College of Medicine calculators will be placed on the desk next to the computers or distributed at the time of registration.
2. Students are to record their name and identification number on their Scantron sheet. Students are advised to record their answers immediately. The Scantron sheet will be considered only if answers were not submitted electronically due to technical problems.
3. For computer-based examinations, log onto the examination following distributed directions.
4. **Technical problems during computer-based examinations.** If a student encounters technical problems during the examination, he/she is to please notify the course director or proctor immediately. If problems persist, the student will be given a paper copy of the examination. If the computer problem is resolved quickly, the student may return to the computer-based examination and will receive time equal to the delay to complete the examination, plus adequate time (up to 15 minutes) to transfer answers from the back-up answer sheet to the computer. The amount of additional time to transfer answers will be prorated depending upon the number of questions to be transferred but will not exceed 15 minutes total. Extended computer downtime may necessitate rescheduling the examination due to insufficient copies of tests and images.
5. No food or beverages are allowed in the computer rooms. This is an issue of student safety and the potential for equipment damage. If a student's medical condition requires food or drink, the student must have made adequate arrangements ahead of time with the UCCOM Disabilities Accommodation Committee, who will communicate to the course director that alternative arrangements must be made for the student.
6. Restroom breaks are permitted and must be taken within the immediate vicinity; i.e., going to Starbucks or to another floor is not permitted. In the computer labs, only one student may leave the room at a time. All material should be placed face down on the student's desk. Additional testing time is not given for time lost during a personal break.

Initiating or receiving telephone calls is not permitted while taking a restroom break during an examination.
7. Upon completing the examination, students are to follow the direction of the IT staff regarding what to do with the computer. Students are to leave the room immediately and not to stay to check email, use the internet, etc.
8. All test material is to be placed in designated areas before the student leaves the examination room.
9. The ten-minute mark (prior to end of examination) will be announced.
10. Students who have completed an examination are to refrain from making noise outside the testing room and immediately leave the testing area.

D. STUDENTS WITH TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the UCCOM Disabilities Accommodation Committee may approve the following test accommodations:

- Extended time (1.5 x the standard amount of time) to complete written exams
- Alternative testing room, in a distraction-limited environment
- Other accommodations as determined by the committee and delineated in the letter of approval of accommodations that is sent to the student. Other accommodations will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Procedures for Arranging an Examination for Students with Test Accommodations

1. The Dean's Office will notify course/clerkship directors of a student's eligibility for test accommodations at the earliest possible time, as a courtesy, to allow the course directors opportunity to make necessary arrangements. The Assistant Dean for Academic Support will assist academic departments in making arrangements for test accommodations upon request.
2. The Assistant Dean for Academic Support writes a new letter for each academic year verifying that the student is eligible for test accommodations. The student may show this verification letter to course directors as needed. The student is responsible for notifying the course directors of his/her eligible test accommodations and discussing arrangements for test accommodations with course directors. No course/clerkship director or faculty can or should grant test accommodations without specific recommendations from the UCCOM Disabilities Accommodation Committee.
3. Accommodations for examinations are limited to paper and pencil examinations and computer-based examinations. The extended time does not include practical examinations, laboratory examinations, examinations that involve real or standardized patient interaction (including but not limited to Clinical Competency Examination), or oral examinations.
4. The extended time for the examination may be provided prior to and/or after the regular start and end times for the examination. This decision rests solely with the course or clerkship director.
5. A distraction-limited environment does not mean distraction-free nor does it necessitate that a private room be afforded to each student with accommodations. Students with similar test accommodations may share a room for testing purposes at the discretion of the UCCOM Disabilities Accommodation Committee.
6. Questions or concerns about testing accommodations for students should be directed to the Office of the Assistant Dean for Academic Support.

Student Examinations with Test Accommodations

1. Examinations may or may not be proctored, as decided by the course/clerkship director. If more than one student is taking an examination in the same room, a proctor will be present.
2. Students are expected to arrive on time to examinations. **A student who arrives late to an examination without a valid excuse from the Registrar will not** be given additional time. If a student is more than 30 minutes late for an examination without a valid excuse, he or she may be disallowed from taking the examination and assigned a grade of zero.
3. The food and drink rules existing for the examination room will be observed during examinations, i.e., all beverages must be in a closed container. The course director or examination proctor has the right to inspect any food or beverage containers that have been brought into the examination room.
4. For a paper examination, the student(s) is to receive a sealed copy of the examination.

For a computer-based examination, the student(s) is to receive appropriate material (Scantron, scratch paper, directions on how to access the examination, electronic media, etc.). If required, College of Medicine calculators will be available.

Technical problems during computer examinations: If a student encounters technical problems during the examination, he/she is to please notify the course director or proctor immediately. If problems persist, the student will be given a paper copy of the examination. If the computer problem is resolved quickly, the student may return to the computer-based examination and will receive time equal to the delay to complete the examination, plus adequate time (up to 15 minutes) to transfer answers from the back-up answer sheet to the computer. The amount of additional time to transfer answers will be prorated depending upon the number of questions to be transferred but will not exceed 15 minutes total.

5. If a student is in an un-proctored room, he/she must tell the individual who is proctoring the examination, when a restroom break is used or when he/she leaves the room for any reason. If the room is proctored, only one student may leave at a time for a restroom break. All material should be placed faced down on the student's desk. Additional testing time is not given for time lost during a personal break.
6. The proctor will notify the student fifteen minutes before the end of the examination.
7. Questions or concerns about a student's behavior during a student examination with test accommodations should be directed immediately to both the course/clerkship director and the Assistant Dean for Academic Support.

E. IRREGULAR INCIDENTS/INTERRUPTIONS DURING AN EXAMINATION

1. The COM recognizes that personal and family emergencies (e.g., student illness, car accidents, home accidents, etc.) could prevent a student from completing an examination. All emergency calls for students while taking examinations will be directed to the Registrar's Office (513-558-5577). The Registrar or her designee will take a message for the student and inform the course director or proctor that the student has an emergency call. The student will be escorted to the Registrar's Office to receive the call. Should the student decide to not return to the examination, thus not completing the examination, the student may be given another examination once the emergency is over. Documentation (police report, hospital report, etc.) confirming the emergency is to be submitted to the Registrar. In those rare instances, where a student is aware of a conflict between a scheduled examination and a family member's upcoming medical procedure, the student is to make arrangements ahead of time with the course/clerkship director to take the examination on a different day. Documentation (written note from a non-family member physician, hospital, etc., stating date and time procedure is scheduled to take place) is to be provided to the course/clerkship director.
2. Should a student become ill while taking an examination, the student has the option of completing the examination or informing the course director or proctor that he/she is unable to complete the examination. Students who are unable to complete the examination must be seen by a non-family member physician the same day of the examination and a written excuse submitted to the Registrar. The grade for the exam and/or rescheduling of the exam is determined by the course director.
3. Irregular incidents may include evidence of copying, giving or receiving unauthorized information, making unauthorized notes, continuing to answer questions after the examination has ended or engaging in other behavior disruptive to fellow examinees. These incidents will be handled according to Honor Council guidelines and will be reported to the Honor Council.
4. If a fire alarm or other emergency condition occurs during an examination, either paper or computer-based, students will immediately cease taking the examination and evacuate the affected buildings. All materials should be turned over and left on the desk.
5. Proctors will ensure that all students leave the examination rooms in a timely manner.
6. Students may be asked to evacuate to a specific location.
 - a. For examinations given in the labs on the G-Level of the Care/Crawley Building, students should evacuate to the outside plaza. Students in the North Wing labs of the Care/Crawley Building are to evacuate to the lower area outside the Fitness Facility. Those in the South Wing labs are to go to the loading dock area.
 - b. For examinations given in Kresge Auditorium or CCDA, students are to evacuate to the outside plaza.
7. Students are to remain in an area where they can hear the all clear announcement.
8. The examination timing mechanism will be suspended by the IT examination coordinator.

9. Students may **not** discuss the examination with any other person, or access any type of information related to the examination. Honor Council guidelines are in effect, and students should monitor themselves and others to ensure compliance.
10. After the fire alarm or other cause of interruption has ended, students will return to their assigned room in a timely manner (within 15 minutes) and resume the examination when announced by the course director/proctor to do so. Students returning later than 15 minutes following the all clear signal may be asked to provide an explanation to the course director.
11. The IT examination coordinator will resume the examination timing mechanism after adding additional time equal to that lost during the interruption (length of the alarm plus 15 minutes to return). Students returning late to the examination room will not receive additional time above that given to all students.
12. In the event of a prolonged interruption, the course director may decide to suspend the examination and reschedule it for a different date.

F. EMERGENCY CLOSING POLICY FOR YEAR I AND YEAR II

First and second year classes, including those involving patient responsibilities, will follow the officially announced cancellation policy used by the West Campus (<http://uc.edu/Trustees/Rules/RuleDetail.asp?ID=91>). Note: This policy applies only to Year I and II students, not Year III and IV students.

Specifically:

- On days when the University delays opening, classes and exams will resume at the hour that the University reopens if this is at or before 3 pm. Any activities that would have taken place before the University opens will be postponed or cancelled (see below for details).
- On days when the University is closed, all classes and exams for that day will be cancelled.

The following lists the protocol for any activities missed due to an emergency. For all of these, course directors may contact students via e-mail to make adjustments to these procedures; students are responsible for checking their messages regularly during a University delay or closure to ensure that they are informed of any changes from the course director.

1. For examinations:
 - a. If the University delays opening to a time later than the official start time for the examination, the exam will begin at the hour that the University opens if the re-opening occurs at or before 3 pm.
 - b. If the University is closed on the day of an examination, the examination will be made up on the first Saturday following the examination sequence. If the week after the examination sequence is a break week, the examination will be made up on the first Saturday after classes resume.

2. For other graded activities (e.g., quizzes, TBLs, standardized patients), or activities with required attendance (e.g., Gross Anatomy lab; Microbiology lab) that are cancelled due to either a delayed opening or closure of the University, the activity may be made up either on an available opening on the regular schedule, or on a Saturday (at the discretion of the course director).
3. For ungraded activities (e.g., lecture, Microanatomy lab), it will be up to the course director to decide whether these activities need to be made up. In most cases, students will be referred to the audio versions of last year's lecture (if available), or told to complete the assignment (e.g., lab) on their own time. If an official makeup time is scheduled, the course director will notify the students via e-mail.

G. SUMMARY POINTS FOR STUDENTS TAKING EXAMS IN YEARS I AND II

- Arrive on time to exams. No extra time is given for late arrivals and you'll not be permitted if any examinee has already completed the exam. When you are finished, turn in the exam and leave the exam area quietly.
- Bring only pencils and erasers to the seating area, no other personal belongings are permitted. Leave your cell phone and any other electronic device in your locker. If your cell phone is found in the exam room, you will receive a zero for the exam.
- Coats, **brimmed hats/caps** or hooded sweatshirts with pockets will not be permitted.
- Record your answers on the prescribed answer sheet/Scantron immediately. No extra time is given at the end of the exam for you to do this.
- No food or drink is permitted in the computer rooms.
- For technical problems during a computer-based exam, notify the course director/proctor immediately.
- If you become visibly ill during an exam, either complete the exam or inform the course director/proctor that you cannot finish and see a non-family member physician the same day as the exam for a written excuse to be given to the Registrar.
- Any calls regarding personal emergencies during an exam are to go to the Registrar at 513-558-5577. If an emergency is anticipated during an exam time, discuss the situation ahead of time with the course director.
- If a fire alarm occurs during an exam, leave your exam as directed by the course director/proctor, evacuate the building and wait for the all clear announcement. Do not discuss the exam with anyone during the fire alarm.
- Know the UC Inclement Weather Policy found at <http://uc.edu/Trustees/Rules/RuleDetail.asp?ID=91>
- Become familiar with the complete Guidelines for Students Taking Examinations in Years I and II found at <http://www.med.uc.edu/medical/MedEd/Policies/index.cfm>
- Check email frequently as changes to exam guidelines may be necessary and are communicated to you by email.
- Your conduct during exams is guided by General Professional Standards, Guidelines for Honor Council (found at <http://medonestop.uc.edu/MedOneStop/home.aspx>) and the Guidelines for Promotion Boards (found at <http://www.med.uc.edu/medical/MedEd/Policies/index.cfm>).