

## **Chapter 5**

### **UNDERGRADUATE LICENSURE AND BOARD EXAMINATIONS**

#### **5-1. HIGHLIGHTS**

a. Medical, dental and optometry program participants must successfully complete step/parts 1 and 2 of the appropriate United States Medical Licensure Examination (USMLE), Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examiners (COMLEX), Clinical Skills Examination, Performance Evaluation Component, the National Board Dental Examination (NBDE), or National Board of Examiner for Optometry (NBEO) before graduation. All students must provide pass or fail board results to the Student Management Office. Optometry program participants must additionally successfully complete part 3 of the NBEO.

b. Medical and dental, program participants must take and pass part 1 of the appropriate USMLE/COMLEX, or NBDE before the beginning of the third-year academic curriculum and provide the results to Student Management Office by 15 September unless you attend a dental school that mandates taking part 1 between the first and second year. In that case the results of the examination are due by 15 Sept of the beginning of the second year. Optometry students must pass Part 1 of the NBEO prior to the start of their fourth academic year.

c. Medical program participants must take and pass part 2 of the USMLE/COMLEX/Clinical Knowledge Examination/Clinical Evaluation Component, after completing the third-year academic curriculum but before 15 September and provide the results to Student Management Office by 15 October.

d. All fourth-year medical students must take and pass the Clinical Skills (CS) Examination/Performance Evaluation (PE) Component as part of the USMLE/COMLEX 2 examination by December 15. Students must provide results of the examination to the Student Management Office by 15 February of the graduating year. Students who are unsuccessful at the first attempt will have their entitlements suspended until a passing score is received. A retest date must be provided to the Student Management Office. Participants will have their entitlements suspended for failure to take, pass or provide the scores of the CS/PE Component of the USMLE/COMLEX to the Student Management Office by the required deadline and be withdrawn from or not allowed to enter into the PGY-1 match or subsequent Army GPE, and I may be given, with or without my consent, any of the alternative obligations as outlined in USC Title 10, Chapter 105. Dental program participants must take part 2 of the NBDE in December during the fourth-year academic curriculum and provide the results to the Student Management Office by 15 February (second attempts must occur by the following March and results provided by 15 April).

e. Optometry program participants must take part 2 of the NBEO in December during the fourth-year academic curriculum and provide the results to the Student Management Office by 28 February (second attempts must occur by the following April and results provided by 5 May). Part 3 of the NBEO must be taken in April prior to graduation and the results provided to the Student Management Office by 5 May.

f. Medical, dental, and optometry program participants must submit an on-line waiver request, if curriculum requirements are not completed in time for parts/steps 1 or 2 of the licensure examination, by 30 June, supported by a letter from the Dean of Student Affairs.

g. Medical, dental, and optometry program participants will have their entitlements suspended for failure to take part 1 or part 2 (and part 3 for optometry) of the USMLE/COMLEX/NBDE/NBEO on schedule, failure to provide examination results to the Student Management Office by the required deadline, or failure to request a waiver prior to 30 June from taking part 1 or 2 of the USMLE/COMLEX/NBDE/NBEO.

h. Medical, dental and optometry program participants will have their entitlements suspended for first time failure to pass part 1 or 2 of the USMLE/COMLEX/NBDE/NBEO and may result in loss of scholarship eligibility. A second time failure of part 1 or 2 of the USMLE/COMLEX/NBDE/NBEO, may result in loss of scholarship eligibility.

i. Fourth-year medical students who do not pass part 2 of the USMLE/COMLEX will be placed on leave of absence and will have 90 days from the date they were initially scheduled to graduate to pass the exam. Failure to do so may result in termination from the HPSP and call to active duty in another military capacity.

## **5-2. GENERAL**

a. The USMLE/COMLEX is a single examination given in three parts. To be eligible for the USMLE/COMLEX part 3, a physician must have: obtained the MD/DO degree; successfully completed steps/parts 1 and 2; and met the requirements for taking step/part 3 imposed by the licensing authority administering the examination.

b. The NBDE is a single examination given in two parts. Each part is administered on line. To be eligible for the NBDE part 2, a dental student must have successfully completed part 1.

c. The NBEO is a single examination given in three parts. Boards are administered in the spring of the third academic year, December and April. To be eligible for successive boards, an optometry student must have successfully completed the previous examinations.

d. The Army requires obligated military students to successfully complete parts 1 and 2 (and 3 for optometry) of the appropriate USMLE, COMLEX, NBDE, or NBEO at specific time frames before graduation. Obligated military students include HPSP participants, ROTC Delay students, USMA delay students and attendees at the USUHS.

e. The Army requirement to take and pass licensure/board examinations exists for obligated military students even if there is no such requirement at the school or for graduation.

f. The Army requires all physicians to obtain a medical license within one year of completing PGY-1. Dentists and optometrists must obtain a license within one year of entering AD. In order to meet these requirements, physicians, dentists, and optometrists must have passed all phases of the appropriate examinations in a timely fashion. A valid license is a necessary condition for unsupervised practice and continuation in graduate medical, dental and optometry education. Army facilities are not resourced to support the additional education that is often needed for those who have not passed steps/parts 1, 2 and 3 of the appropriate undergraduate examination.

## **5-3. USMLE/COMLEX/NBDE/NBEO PART 1**

Medical and dental students are required to take and pass step/part 1 of the USMLE, COMLEX, or NBDE as appropriate, before the beginning of the third year academic curriculum, unless you attend a dental school that mandates taking step/part 1 between the first and second year. Students must provide the results of the examinations so they are received in the Student Management Office by 15 September in the year the examinations are taken. Optometry students must take and pass part 1 prior to the start of their fourth academic year. All examination scores submitted must be received by the Student Management Office no later than 1 June.

## **5-4. USMLE/COMLEX/NBDE/NBEO PART 2**

a. Medical students are required to take and pass part 2 of the applicable examination after completing the third year academic curriculum, but before applying for PGY-1. The results of step/part 2 must also be provided by **15 October** in the year the examinations are taken. The examination should therefore be taken by 15 September. Waivers may be granted if requested in writing prior to the deadline. Waivers are generally given only if curricula requirements are not completed in time for the examination. The Dean of Student Affairs must provide a written explanation in support of waiver.

(1) Participants will have their entitlements suspended for failure to take, pass or provide the scores of the Clinical Skills Examination/Performance Evaluation Component of the USMLE/COMLEX to the Student Management Office by 15 February of the graduating year. Students who are unsuccessful at the first attempt must provide a retest date to the Student Management Office. Since the reporting schedule is longer for this examination, it should be taken by 1 November in order to meet the suspense date. There is a significant demand for testing between September and December, so it should be scheduled as early as possible.

b. Dental and optometry students are required to take part 2 of the appropriate NBDE or NBEO in December during the fourth-year academic curriculum and provide the results to the Student Management Office by 15 February for Dental and 28 February for optometry. If the first attempt is unsuccessful, students are required to retake step/part 2 of the examination the next time it is given.

(1) Dental students are required to retake step/part 2 of the NBDE the next time the examination is given in March during the fourth-year academic curriculum and provide the results to the Student Management Office by 15 April.

(2) Optometry students are required to retake step/part 2 of the NBEO the next time the examination is given in April during the fourth-year academic curriculum and provide the results to the Student Management Office by 5 May or upon receipt, whichever is earlier.

**5-5. NBEO PART 3. OPTOMETRY STUDENTS MUST TAKE PART 3 OF THE NBEO IN APRIL PRIOR TO GRADUATION AND THE RESULTS PROVIDED TO THE STUDENT MANAGEMENT OFFICE BY 5 MAY**

**5-6. FAILURE TO TAKE EXAMINATIONS**

Students are generally placed on a leave of absence (LOA) (entitlements suspension) for failure to take step/part 1 or step/part 2 (and part 3 for optometry) of the USMLE/CS Examination, COMLEX/PE Component/NBDE/NBEO within the aforementioned timeframes.

a. Students in the medical, dental and optometry program must submit, in advance. The request must be submitted online to the Student Management Office via the website <https://www.mods.army.mil/medicaleducation> for approval. The suspense is for this submission is not later than 30 June if step/part 1 or 2 of the examinations cannot be completed at the appropriate time. A supporting letter signed by the Dean of Student Affairs must be received by 15 July if the reason for the request is incomplete academic requirements. Submission of a request does not constitute an approval. It is the student's responsibility to confirm approval or denial of the request at the website.

b. The suspense for waiver submission for the CS/PE examination is 31 August. A supporting letter signed by the Dean of Student Affairs must be received by 15 July if the reason for the request is incomplete academic requirements. Submission of a request does not constitute an approval. It is the student's responsibility to confirm approval or denial of the request at the website.

c. Students are generally denied any waiver from taking step/part 1 or 2 of the USMLE/COMLEX/NBDE/NBEO that is submitted after 30 June. Students must ensure they plan ahead to take step(s)/part(s) 1 and 2 of the examinations in sufficient time to meet deadlines to provide the waiver requests and the results to the Student Management Office to avoid suspension of entitlements. Such individuals will be placed on LOA when they fail to take the licensing examinations as required.

**5-7. FAILURE TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE EXAMINATIONS**

Students are placed on LOA for failure to pass examinations and a due process will be initiated (see Chapter 9 paragraph 9-3) for first time failure to pass any part of the USMLE/ COMLEX/ NBDE/NBEO. Entitlements are retroactively reinstated upon receipt of passing scores as long as there has been no deviation from the usual curriculum. In those cases, entitlements are reinstated as of the date of resumption of the usual curriculum. Students must provide a letter from the Dean of Student Affairs indicating that there has not been any deviation from the usual curriculum. Students face termination from the Program or other adverse administrative action for second attempt failure to pass any part of the USMLE/COMLEX/NBDE/NBEO. Fourth-year medical students who do not pass step/part 2 of the USMLE/COMLEX will be placed on leave of absence and have 90 days from the date they were initially scheduled to graduate to pass the exam. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal from Army GPE, and possibly termination from the HPSP and call to active duty in another military capacity.