

Medical Literature Curriculum III: Current Biomedical Research FAQs (<http://www.upstate.edu/mlc/>)

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1. What is this course about?

The MLC III course entails a return to the scientific basis of medicine for upper-level medical students possessing significant clinical experience. Most papers chosen will have been published within the last 6 months or year in line with the focus of currently active problems and debates in medicine.

2. Why is the requirement being instituted now?

The new LCME standard enacted in February 2007 must be implemented in United States medical schools by July 1, 2008. Schools must show uniform evidence of implementation by the target date for accreditation (which our school will be formally undergoing in the next two years leading to our site visit in 2010).

3. Who is required to take this course?

All College of Medicine students are required to successfully complete this requirement during their fourth year of medical school, beginning with those students graduating in 2009. This applies to both MD students and students in the MD/PhD program.

4. How many credits will I receive for taking this course? Does it count toward existing totals?

The course is worth 4 credits and is separate from existing requirements. Students must still complete 25 elective credits on the Syracuse campus and 27 on the Binghamton campus, 4 credits of which is comprised of a “Return to Basic Science” selective.

5. Why is the course not satisfying the existing “Return to Basic Science” selective requirement?

The decision that the course for next year will no longer satisfy that requirement was made by the school. There is a push nationally for greater attention to a return to the scientific basis of medicine in the fourth year of medical school in response to the AAMC Medical School Objectives Project recommendation that this be a priority. Beyond that, the goals for the course differ from selective objectives. MLC III is designed to continue the thread of students becoming engaged with the medical literature from the first day of medical school, and will furthermore substantively address the new LCME accreditation standard regarding exposure to the latest developments in clinical and translational research.

6. Will the sessions be videotaped? Will “distance learning” options be available?

Yes, sessions will be taped, and “distance learning” options for students at the Binghamton Clinical Campus and RMED locations will be available.

7. What is the timetable for completion and flexibility?

The course will run from July until the end of April. One self-contained unit will be offered approximately every week throughout the period.

8. Will this new requirement affect my taking away electives? Traveling abroad? RMED?

No. Students can still complete sessions at the Binghamton Clinical Campus and RMED locations. With regular attendance, the course can be completed as early as late October/early November allowing for travel abroad later on in the fourth year. Preliminary survey data indicates that many students will be through with their away electives by mid to late fall allowing for ample time for completion if not undertaken concurrently, with sessions continuing to be held through the end of April.

9. Can this be completed concurrently with my taking clinical electives? Clerkships? Acting internships?

Students this current year oftentimes attended sessions while taking concurrent clinical electives, but not while doing acting internships. With nearly 10 months allotted to complete the MLC III requirement, students are strongly advised against participating in sessions during required clerkships and acting internships.

10. Can the weekly session date and time be changed?

The 5 p.m. time slot is designed for maximum flexibility to allow students to attend while taking concurrent experiences. The late start time is also desirable for clinical faculty in terms of their not having to reschedule clinics or other commitments to attend. Tuesdays were chosen for the flexibility they allow for students to attend weekend events/travel for residency interviews.

11. Who will be teaching the course? How will the sessions work?

Each week will feature different invited faculty discussants. Faculty from most of the clinical and basic science departments will be represented. Each session is self-contained and weighted equally. You do not need to attend an introductory session, nor will any session in the sequence rely on your having attended a previous session. Students may select whichever session they want based on their interests and scheduling commitments.

12. How is this course different from the MLC I & MLC II courses?

While a short case report (1-2 pages) or clinical vignette might occasionally be assigned to set the context, this course is not about reading case reports or writing hypotheses. This course is about reading primary research reports and commentaries on current clinical and translational research. The pacing and intensity of the course is also different (a 4-credit course meeting once per week versus an 8-credit course meeting three times per week, for example). Typical assignments will involve translating a study into lay language suitable for communication with patients or writing a pro/con piece based on the results of the latest research and its impact on a relevant clinical problem.

13. Will quizzes still be open-notes?

Yes.

14. What is the grading mode?

The course will be graded H/HP/P/F.

15. How do I sign up for it?

You will be automatically enrolled by the Registrar's Office in the course.

Please contact Karen Kelly (kellykc@upstate.edu) with any questions.