

## **Specific Policies Relevant to Tri-Institutional MD-PhD Students**

### **Jurisdictional Authority Concerning MD-PhD Students**

Both the enrollment status of the student and curricular requirements of the respective programs, MD and PhD, govern which school has jurisdictional authority over policies and procedures. When a student is enrolled in the Medical Education program, the policies and procedures pertaining to medical students would apply; when the student is enrolled in a graduate program, the policies and procedures specific to that graduate school would apply. For curricular requirements or processes, the policies and procedures of the relevant curriculum mandating a specific requirement would apply. For instance, for USMLE exam requirements and deadlines, which are part of the medical college curriculum, the medical college's policies would apply. Similarly, for requirements related to qualifying examinations (ACE), thesis proposals, thesis defense etc., the policies and procedures of the relevant graduate school would apply. MD-PhD students are expected to comply with all Weill Cornell Medicine institution-wide policies as well as policies relevant to other entities in which they participate, for example, WCM housing, Rockefeller University housing or institution-wide policies at the respective graduate schools. Violations of a policy, issuance of sanctions and right to appeal would be handled according to the policies of the entity that holds jurisdiction, as defined above.

### **Access of WCM to MD-PhD Students' Graduate School Records**

1. Before matriculating into the PhD portion, each MD-PhD student is required to sign a FERPA release to allow WCM to access all their academic and disciplinary records from the relevant graduate school.
2. This policy is effective for classes entering in Fall 2022 and onwards.

### **Withdrawal of an MD-PhD Student from the PhD Program to Receive an MD degree only**

Return to the MD degree curriculum should not be considered a "right" but rather a "privilege" and is contingent upon a satisfactory record in the medical curriculum prior to the student's leaving for the PhD program as well as professional behavior during both the prior MD and PhD portions of training. The Senior Associate Dean for Education has the right to review all requests of students seeking transfer back into the MD program. Ordinarily, upon receiving the request for transfer, the Senior Associate Dean for Education shall request that the student's record in the medical college and the relevant graduate program be reviewed at the next meeting of the Promotions and Graduation (P&G) Committee. This Committee may make non-binding recommendations to the Senior Associate Dean for Education as to whether the transfer should be permitted and any stipulations that may apply. The final decision regarding re-entry and/or special conditions, if any, that may apply will lie with the Senior Associate Dean for Education based on the recommendation of the P&G Committee. The following specifies the general terms for a student who is permitted to return to the MD Program.

1. Procedure for Withdrawing from the PhD program for an MD (only) degree: Students who wish to withdraw from the PhD portion of the MD/PhD program should first consult

with the MD-PhD Tri-Institutional Director. The Tri-I Director informs the Senior Associate Dean for Education who consults with Associate Deans of Curriculum and Student Affairs as necessary. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs meets with the student to review the terms of return to facilitate the timing and feasibility. Depending on the timing of the student's notification of withdrawal from the PhD program and the putative resumption of the medical curriculum, the student may be placed on an administrative hold for a short interval or a personal leave of absence, which is issued by either the Medical College or the relevant graduate school (for longer intervals).

2. Medical Curriculum Courses completed prior to entry into the PhD program: It is expected that students who are enrolled in the PhD portion would have successfully completed all foundational courses and achieved a score in the USMLE Step 1 exam as well as have taken several clerkships.
3. Curricular requirements after withdrawal from the PhD program: Students would be expected to satisfy all graduation requirements for the MD degree. These include:
  - a. All remaining clerkships as they apply to the class of the expected graduation year
  - b. Area of Concentration Blocks 1 and 2 (NOTE: work done in the PhD program does not count toward fulfilling this requirement)
  - c. Translational Science and Advanced Clinical Ethics courses
  - d. Registering a score for USMLE Step 2CK exam (in addition to registering a score for the USMLE Step 1 exam); ordinarily, the student would be expected to sit for the Step 2CK exam in the designated Step 2 CK study course at the end of the clerkship year or when otherwise specified.
  - e. A 1-month sub-internship in an approved discipline; ordinarily this will be in internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, neurology or emergency medicine.
  - f. 16 weeks of electives, at least four of which must be outside the department of the student's declared career specialty
  - g. Health Care Policy course
  - h. Transition to Residency course
  - i. Any other courses that the Medical College may deem as required for students enrolled in the MD program relevant to the graduating year of the returning MD-PhD student.
4. Completion of the full required 4-year medical curriculum within six years while enrolled in the medical college curriculum ("4-in-6" rule).
  - a. Note that for purposes of calculating the "six years" the period of time spent in active enrollment in the PhD portion or on an approved leave of absence from the graduate school program is NOT counted.

5. Timing of Entry into the Medical Curriculum

- a. Ordinarily, the student would be expected to resume the medical curriculum at the start of the Phase 2 curriculum (i.e., required clerkships), which is Spring semester of year 2 (January). Note that the student would be required to participate in the clerkship lottery in the Fall prior to re-entry. Exceptions to the expected start date require the approval of the Senior Associate Dean for Education.

6. Other Issues

- a. Regular policies pertaining to WCM housing, health care insurance, tuition and fees apply.

If the decision of the P&G Committee/Senior Associate Dean for Education is to deny return of the student to the MD program, the student shall be automatically dismissed from the Medical College, subject to the usual policies and procedures of appeal to the Appeals Committee as specified in the Appeals Policy (OME 900.06).

**Dismissal of an MD-PhD Student from a Graduate Program (Rockefeller University, Gerstner-MSKCC Graduate School, Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences)**

1. When a student is dismissed from a graduate school, the graduate school shall:
  - a. immediately inform the Medical College (Tri-I Director and Senior Associate Dean for Education) of the dismissal or disenrollment.
  - b. transfer to the Medical College all academic and disciplinary records and appeals documents relevant to the student, per the FERPA release.
2. Upon notification of dismissal from the graduate school:
  - a. The Senior Associate Dean, Education will inform the student of the receipt of the dismissal/disenrollment notice and that the student has seven (7) calendar days to inform the Medical College of their decision to petition the Promotion and Graduation Committee (P&G) to hear the case for continued enrollment in the MD program.
  - b. The Senior Associate Dean, Education at this time also places the student on “administrative hold” until a final determination is made as to the student’s final status, i.e., re-instated/dismissed by the Promotion and Graduation committee or withdrawn.
  - c. If the student petitions for re-instatement as a medical student, the P&G Committee process with appeal would unfold as usual. Ordinarily, the P&G Committee would be convened to expeditiously hear the student’s petition.
  - d. A student may voluntarily withdraw at any time prior to a final decision of the P&G Committee.
  - e. If a student fails to respond to the Medical College within seven (7) calendar days described above, the student would be considered *withdrawn* from the Medical College.

3. MD-PhD Students who are dismissed from the MD program BEFORE the start of the Graduate School program (PhD portion) will be automatically dismissed from the MD-PhD Program. A student will ultimately need to petition the Graduate School to enroll as a PhD (only) student.