



Office of the Dean
School of Medicine

Policy Title: Policy on Narrative Assessment

Last Review/Revision/Approval: October 2025

Review Cycle: 4 years

Body Responsible for Review/Revision/Approval: Preclerkship Course Director Committee, Clerkship Director Committee, Curriculum Steering Committee

Responsible Dean: Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education

Relevant LCME Element: 9.5

Policy Statement/Purpose:

Written narrative feedback and assessment provides students with the opportunity to reflect on their performance, including non-cognitive attributes and skills. This contributes to their growth and improvement as professionals. Students receive meaningful narrative feedback and assessment wherever it is feasible based on faculty-student interaction, most notably in the circumstances noted below in the policy guidelines.

Definitions:

- Small groups are defined as 15 students or fewer.
- Feasibility may be defined either by the length of interaction between a student and a faculty member or by the nature of the activity for which narrative assessment is provided.
 - For small group discussions, it is feasible that a faculty member can provide a global end-of-year narrative assessment if they have interacted with a student in greater than four sessions throughout the course.

- For laboratory and skills sessions, it is feasible that a faculty member can provide narrative assessment if they are familiar with the objectives of the session and have personally observed the student performing the relevant skills.
- For clinical activities, faculty members may feasibly provide narrative assessment for any student with whom they have worked.

Policy Directives:

In the pre-clerkship curriculum phase, students receive written narrative assessment from faculty in the courses that have longitudinal small group activities and meet the criteria above, such as the dissection groups in the Anatomy lab and the small groups in the Clinical Skills Integration courses. Assessments are based on performance in course-specific skills and students' contributions to group learning.

In the clinical curriculum phase, written narrative assessment is a component of all clerkship evaluation forms, regardless of clerkship length. Faculty are required to write a global narrative evaluation of the student's performance for inclusion in the student's Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE). Formative narrative comments that are meant only for the student are provided separately. These comments are intended to give the student constructive or reinforcing feedback and are not included in the MSPE.

In all phases of the curriculum, written narrative feedback may be provided to students based on their performance related to objectives for professional behavior. This includes both outstanding professional behaviors, as well as professional lapses, and is accomplished through the process of the school's Physicianship Enhancement Form (PEF).

The Preclerkship Course Director Committee monitors the provision of narrative assessment in relevant courses on an annual basis as part of its monitoring process. The Clerkship Director Committee ensures that narrative assessment is provided on all evaluations through quarterly clerkship coordinator reports as part of its monitoring process.