

Compiled by Nathan Copeland via the OSR listserve September 2009
University of Tennessee Health Science Center
nathan.copeland@gmail.com

The questions:

- 1) Does your school have a passing score for each shelf exam? If so, what is it?
- 2) How does your school incorporate shelf exams into the grade you receive in that rotation?
- 3) Are you given "study time" to prepare for your shelf exam, and does your rotation assist in that preparation?
- 4) How long are each of your rotations?

NYMC:

- 1) 2 standard deviations below the national mean
- 2) decided by the course director. minimum of 20%
- 3) the day before all the exam, except for peds and psych
- 4) med-10 wks, peds- 8 wks, surg- 8 wks, ob- 6 wks, psych- 6 wks, neuro- 4 wks, fam med 4 wks

Buffalo:

1. Yes, but varies according to discretion of individual departments.
2. Also varies according to the discretion of individual departments-- some value shelf more, some value evaluations more.
3. Absolute zero study time-- we work up till the night before the shelf. Rotations are hopeless-- do not prepare us for shelf at all.
4. Family med, psych, OB/GYN, pediatrics: 6 weeks. Internal medicine, surgery: 8 weeks. Neurology, surgical subspecialties, advanced internal medicine: 4 weeks.

Cornell:

Uses shelf exams in all subjects except medicine

- 1) Unknown
- 2) Can be as much as 60% of the grade.
- 3) Sometimes given the day before an exam as a study day
- 4) Medicine and surgery are 12 weeks. The rest are 6.

UTHSC San Antonio:

- 1) Unknown
- 2) Each rotation incorporates the shelf exam into the grade differently, but all use the shelf exam score somehow.
- 3) The shelf exam is taken on the last Friday of each rotation. No extra study time is given to study for the shelf, though (example) on surgery rotation, the schedule for 24 hour call ends 2 nights before the shelf exam.
- 4) Surgery and Internal Medicine - 12 weeks each, Pediatrics, OB-GYN, Family Medicine, Psychiatry - 6 weeks each

Vanderbilt:

- 1) most none, one 80%, one you have to be above the national average
- 2) Minor, I'd say 15-20% of the grade on most rotations
- 3) no study time, no prep courses
- 4) Medicine 11 weeks, Surgery 11 weeks, Psych, Neuro, Pediatrics, & OB/Gyn 6 weeks each

Northwestern

1. Most rotations have a min. score required to pass. It is usually 2 SD below the average or a score of ~60
2. Yes. Shelf exams count for approx 20-30% of the grade depending on the rotation
3. There is no study time to prepare for shelf exams. Students are usually not assigned to overnight call for up to 2-3 days before any shelf. On pediatrics we were given 1 day off prior to the exam; however this might have changed this year since an OSCE has been added to the

pediatrics rotation.

4. Length of the required 3rd year rotations is:

Surgery - 12 weeks, Medicine - 12 weeks, Pediatrics - 6 weeks, OB/Gyn 6 weeks, Primary Care/Neurology/Psychiatry - 4 weeks each

Brown:

- 1) Pass >5% however varies between rotations.
- 2) 20-50% of a rotation's grade
- 3) No extra time is given
- 4) Rotations are 6 weeks long, except Medicine (12) and Surgery (8).

Johns-Hopkins:

- 1) >5th percentile of scores
- 2) for all basic clerkships shelf exams make up 25% of the grade
- 3) no dedicated study time off except for perhaps day before exam (variable among clerkships), also lecture series during most clerkships of topics relevant to field of study.
- 4) most basics are 9 weeks (medicine, peds, surgery, and a combined psych/neuro/optho) with two 4.5 week clerkships (ambulatory, e-med), though we are switching to an 8 week schedule for all clerkships in one year.

University of Utah:

- 1) Based on a distribution
- 2) This varies by clerkship, usually it is a percentage of the overall score with the raw score translated to the 4.0 scale based on how other students performed.
- 3) We are not given study time to prepare for our shelf exams. There is no specific shelf preparation sessions, but there are didactic lectures which are usually helpful.
- 4) Each rotation is 6 weeks long. We do 12 weeks of internal medicine divided into two rotations, and family medicine is 4 weeks with a surgery subspecialty filling the other 2 weeks. Thus, surgery totals 8 weeks of our curriculum.

University of South Florida:

- 1) passing scores are a national percentage selected by the course director. I think 17% is the highest cut-off for passing and it varies.
- 2) The shelf exam must be passed to pass the course. Additionally certain scores (selected by the course director) are required for certain grades. For example, you must get 85% to get an A in a course, so if you have 99% in all other course work but get an 84% on your self exam you will receive a B (maybe B+) as your final grade.
- 3) Some courses give study time (max is one day off), most do not. Some professors will host reviews to help students prepare.
- 4) rotations range from 3 months to 4 weeks.

University of Alabama School of Medicine:

- 1) Passing score for shelf: Family/rural higher than 2SD below mean, IM higher than 60, OB above 59, Peds above 60, Psych 62 or greater, Neuro above 60, Surgery above 60.
- 2) Shelves account for 20% of your grade
- 3) Most rotations you get the day before your exam off to study. Some rotations go over questions as a workshop. Most of studying is done in whatever time you have in your leisure.
- 4) All rotations are 8 weeks except for psych and neuro which are each 4 weeks. You take the shelf at the end of the 4weeks.

Penn State:

1. 10th percentile (nationally)
2. Yes, different % of grade for different clerkships.
3. No true 'study time'. Most clerkships give the day before the shelf off to study. There are a few lectures in each clerkship. You basically have to study every night after being at work all day + weekends.

4. 4, 6 (Ob, Peds) , or 8 (Med, Surg) weeks.

University Nevada School of Medicine:

- 1) Grades: below 10th percentile you fail the shelf. You must achieve >50th percentile to be considered "high pass" and greater than 70-80th percentile for honors depending on the clerkship. If you fail you are allowed to continue the next clerkship, but have to take shelf exams for BOTH at the end of the rotation, and you cannot get higher than a "pass" after failing once.
- 2) The shelf is worth 25-50% of the final grade depending on the clerkship
- 3) All rotations have didactic sessions geared at shelf prep throughout the rotation.
- 4) 6 weeks family, 6 weeks peds, and 12 weeks of internal medicine with 4 weeks of ICU built in, 4 weeks hospital, and 4 weeks ambulatory. surgery block: 6 weeks psych, 6 weeks OB/GYN, and 12 weeks of surgery with exposure to 3 weeks of trauma/ER, 3 weeks Gen surg, 2 weeks of VA surg, 1 week of peds, and 3 weeks of various specialties. Neurology is required as a 4 week rotation during 4th year, but no shelf exam is given.

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health:

- 1) Passing scores - passing scores as well as cut-offs for different grades. Not all clerkships use a Shelf exam; we take a Shelf for medicine, surgery, ob/gyn, and psych, all of which are required during the third year. For peds and primary care, we take departmental exams. Some clerkships have lower cut-offs early in the year and increase them as students progress through the clerkships and enter with greater knowledge and experience. In others it's a flat scale all year.
- 2) varies between clerkships. In some clerkships, it counts for as little as 25% of your grade and in others (psych) it is half. In general it's usually about a third.
- 3) None
- 4) Medicine, surgery, primary care all 8 weeks. Peds, ob/gyn, neuro (required during the 3rd or 4th year) 6 weeks. Psych 4 weeks. Anesthesia and radiology (both required during the 3rd or 4th year) 2 weeks.

University of Chicago:

- 1) Unknown
- 2) Unknown
- 3) At least one full day of studying is given

University of Miami:

- 1) 5% above national average
- 2) different percentages of your grade but typically 20-25% of your final grade
- 3) Pediatrics and soon psychiatry will give students the day before the shelf off. In OB/Gyn, we received access to a free database of multiple choice questions offered by the national board of ob/gyn
- 4) Internal medicine, surgery, and family medicine are 8 weeks. Pediatrics, psychiatry, and ob/gyn are 6 weeks.

UCSD School of Medicine:

- 1) Unknown
- 2) Shelf exams are 25% of your grade for each rotation. You have to pass the shelf to pass the rotation.
- 3) A few rotations give you a day or two to study, but most just make sure you're not on call the night before.
- 4) Peds: 8 weeks, Neuro: 4 weeks
Surgery: 8 weeks, Elective: 4 weeks
ObGyn: 6 weeks, Psych: 6 weeks
Medicine: 12 weeks

University of Kentucky:

- 1) Unknown but probably >65 in most rotations
- 2) All schools typically use shelf exams to assess knowledge

- 3) Typically the afternoon before the shelf
- 4) Surgery - 2 mos, OB-GYN - 1 mo, Peds - 2 mos, Internal Med - 4 mos, ER - 2 weeks (as an inset of IM), Family Med - 1 mo, Psych - 1 mo, Neuro - 1 mo

Mayo

- 1) Shelf is taken for surgery, pediatrics, medicine, neurology, ob-gyn, and psychiatry rotations.
- 2) Most do not have a passing score.
- 3) Teaching sessions are provided, but most
- 4) rotations are only 6 weeks (surgery, peds, medicine, ob-gyn) and only three weeks for psych and neuro

Southern Illinois School of Medicine:

- 1) Yes, they are as follows: Surgery: 60, Pediatrics 61, Psychiatry: 62, Internal Medicine and Obstetrics/Gynecology: Over 11th percentile, Family Medicine: No Passing Score
- 2) Depends on the rotation, but you have to receive a honors score on the shelf to receive honors in the clerkship.
- 3) Rotation assists in preparation with a lecture series.
- 4) Surgery and Internal Medicine are 10 weeks each, while Peds, OB/GYN, Family Medicine, and Psychiatry are 6 week.

UCSF:

- 1) UCSF only uses shelves for surgery and OB. Passing is 60.
- 2) For surgery, you must get 80 to honor, but getting 80 does not ensure honors depending on evals. For OB, the honors threshold goes up over the year, as students are expected to score better as they get more knowledge.
- 3) OB gives the day off before the shelf to study. Surgery just gives the exam the last day, some students do not get a day off for prep.
- 4) Internal med: 8 wks, Surgery: 8 weeks, Family med: 6 weeks, OB: 6 weeks, Peds: 6 weeks, Neuro: 4 weeks, Psych: 4 weeks, Anesthesia: 2 weeks, Surgical subspecialty: 2 weeks

University of Toledo COM:

- 1) you need to get above the 10th percentile, so each shelf has a different raw score cut off
- 2) we use the percentile (instead of raw score) and that becomes 40% of your total grade for the rotation
- 3) varies to having a day and a half off to no extra time
- 4) 5 wks of peds, ob, psych, family med. 10 wks of internal med and surgery.

Howard

- 1) The passing score for the shelf is 62 and 78 is considered honors.
- 2) Shelf exams for MOST of our 3rd year rotations
- 3) One day preceding
- 4) OB, Surgery, Peds = 8 wks; Medicine = 12 wks; Neuro/PM&R = 4 wks; Family Med = 4 weeks; Psych = 6 wks