

GSA Committee on Student Affairs MSPE Effective Practices Working Group: June 2020 MSPE Guidance for Disruptions Related to COVID-19

This guidance document from the GSA Committee on Student Affairs (COSA) MSPE Effective Practices Working Group is intended to assist schools in addressing COVID-19-related curricular, evaluative, and other changes in the MSPE. As with previous MSPE guidance, it is not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, this resource emphasizes clarity and recognizes that many of the decisions must be made at the medical school-level in alignment with institutional policies. The MSPE Working Group endorses the [2016 MSPE Task Force Recommendations for Revising the MSPE](#) and used them as the foundation for this COVID-19-related guidance.

This resource has two parts:

1. Compiled high-level guidance (pg. 1)
2. MSPE Template with guidance and sample language embedded in blue (pgs. 2-4)

Guidance

General: Except where noted, the Working Group endorses following the [2016 MSPE Recommendations](#). The increased standardization and inclusion of grading rubrics in MSPEs across schools has been noted favorably by program directors and staff.

Length of the MSPE: Adding the suggested descriptions about COVID-19-related changes may result in a longer MSPE. The Working Group's guidance is to keep the length to 7-8 pages and consider how your school can effectively balance completeness with readability and relevance.

MSPE Sections:

- ***Academic History:*** Include a brief statement above the table indicating whether the applicant's academic experience was affected by COVID-19.
- ***Academic Progress/Clerkships:***
 - Continue listing the rotations, including electives, in chronological order
 - Include a brief description about COVID-related changes (e.g., grading, mode of participation, etc.) within the relevant clerkship narrative(s).
 - If your school utilized virtual/remote electives during this time, include a brief description of how they were delivered and assessed.
 - Add a brief statement at the beginning of the Clerkships section indicating that the clerkships will be listed in chronological order and that COVID-19 related changes will be noted in the specific clerkship narrative(s).
 - Continue to describe the grading rubric for each clerkship, whether or not it has changed due to the pandemic, and include a histogram of student performance.
 - Consider including a brief statement about whether the student was allowed to participate in away rotations and how (e.g., virtually, in-person, etc.) at the start of the Clerkships section.
- ***Summary:***
 - If your school groups or ranks students, disclose how you arrived at these groupings or rankings AND define terms used (e.g., "excellent," "superior," etc.).
 - Briefly describe any changes your school made to grouping or ranking processes or categories.

School of Medicine

Date

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

No suggested changes

NOTEWORTHY CHARACTERISTICS

Continue to follow the 2016 Recommendation to limit the Noteworthy Characteristics section to three short bulleted items that highlight the student's salient experiences and attributes and provide context for the academic evaluation.

ACADEMIC HISTORY

Include a brief statement above the table indicating whether the applicant's academic experience was or was not affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

***SAMPLE LANGUAGE:** This student's academic experience was/was not affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; please see the Academic Progress section for more detail.*

Date of Initial Matriculation in Medical School	
Date of Expected Graduation from Medical School	
Please explain any extensions, leave(s), gap(s), or break(s) in the student's educational program below:	
Information about the student's prior, current, or expected enrollment in, and the month and year of the student's expected graduation from dual, joint or combined degree programs.	
Was the student required to repeat or otherwise remediate any course work during their medical education? If yes, please explain.	
Was the student the recipient of any adverse action(s) by the medical school or its parent institution? If yes, please explain	

ACADEMIC PROGRESS**Professional Performance**

Continue to follow the 2016 Recommendation to include details on professionalism, including how the school defines and evaluates professionalism for students and areas of strength and weakness/development.

Preclinical Coursework

No suggested changes for the 2020-2021 residency application cycle.

In future applications cycles, we recommend placing commentary that reflect changes, if any to preclinical course work.

SAMPLE LANGUAGE: *Grading for the following courses/semesters was altered to Pass/Fail due to COVID-19 alteration to curriculum delivery.*

Clerkships (in chronological order)

1. ***Continue to list rotations, including electives, in chronological order***
 - ***Include a brief description about COVID-related changes (e.g., grading, mode of participation, etc.) within the relevant narrative(s).***
 - ***If your school utilized virtual/remote electives during this time, include a brief description of how they were delivered and assessed.***
2. ***Add a brief statement at the beginning of the Clerkships section indicating that the clerkships will be listed in chronological order and that COVID-19 related changes will be noted in the relevant narratives.***

SAMPLE LANGUAGE: *Clerkships are listed in chronological order. Any changes as a result of COVID-19 are briefly described in the relevant clerkship narrative(s).*

3. ***Continue to follow the 2016 Recommendations to include a description of the grading rubric and a histogram of student performance for every clerkship, and to address areas of strength and weakness/development.***
4. ***Consider including a brief statement about whether the student was allowed to participate in away rotations and how (e.g., virtually, in-person, etc.) at the start of the Clerkships section.***

SAMPLE LANGUAGE:

- *Student X participated in virtual away rotations, as described in the relevant narratives.*
- *Student Y was allowed to participate in in-person rotations for experiences the home institution was not able to provide, as described in the relevant narratives.*

SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR A CLERKSHIP AFFECTED BY COVID-19:

PEDIATRICS (March 2-April 13, 2020) *This clerkship was graded P/F*

This rotation was modified due to our school suspending medical students' clinical contact due to COVID-19. The clerkship grade was assessed % shelf exam, % case write-up, % OSCE, etc.

Clerkship Director's Comments: Participated in discussions enthusiastically. Provided a well-researched and timely discussion on vertical transmission of COVID-19 to newborns. Displayed great empathy in the tele-OSCE."

SUMMARY

- *In line with the 2016 Recommendations, provide a summative assessment of the student's performance relative to their peers. If your school groups or ranks students, disclose how you arrived at these groupings or rankings and define any terms used (e.g., "excellent," "superior," etc.).*
- *Briefly describe any changes your school made to grouping or ranking processes or categories.*

SAMPLE LANGUAGE

The MSPE process at the School of Medicine assigns an evaluation level to each student based on XYZ. This process:

- *Remained the same for this student*
 - *Was altered this year to **[please describe]**.*
 - *Was suspended this year.*
 - *Other, please describe*
- *Continue to follow the 2016 Recommendation to provide school-wide comparisons if using a final "adjective" or overall rating.*

MEDICAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

No suggested changes.