Purpose

The purpose of the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) is not to advocate for the student, but rather to provide an honest and objective summary of the student’s personal attributes, experiences, and academic accomplishments based, to the greatest degree possible, on verifiable information and summative evaluations. When possible, comparative assessments of the student’s attributes, experiences, and accomplishments relative to their institutional peers will be provided. The MSPE will primarily contain information about the student’s medical school performance, although a brief summary of verifiable premedical experiences and achievements may be included when relevant.

Policy

The MSPE is prepared for all senior students by the Senior Dean for Student Affairs. The document is a key part of the residency application packet.

If for any reason, an individual student believes the Senior Dean for Student Affairs cannot prepare the letter in an unbiased manner, a request to the Senior Dean for Student Affairs or any other dean can be made to have the letter completed by another member of the Dean’s Office.

The MSPE is a letter of evaluation, not a letter of recommendation. That is, it is intended to be a comprehensive summary of the student’s academic record through the first three years of medical school. Therefore, the MSPE summarizes an individual’s progress until it is submitted on October 1st as dictated by the National Residency Match Program (NRMP). It is intended to present the student in the best possible light while conveying accurate information to a residency program director about the student’s qualifications for graduate medical education.

Procedures

Components of the MSPE

a. Identifying Information: This includes the student’s legal name and year in school as well as the name and location of the medical school.

b. Noteworthy Characteristics: This section includes information intended to help a residency program selection committee review applicants holistically as residency programs seek to achieve a residency class that hosts a diverse set of background experiences, characteristics and perspectives. A bulleted, brief description of up to
three achievements, activities, or other personal information is provided. The student selects which characteristics are included in this section.

c. **Academic History:** This area includes the following information: a) matriculation and expected graduation dates, an explanation of any extensions, leave(s) of absence, gap(s) and/or break(s) in the educational program. b) the student’s prior, current, or expected enrollment in as well as the month and year of the student’s expected graduation from dual, joint, or combined degree programs. c) Details regarding school specific policies, of coursework the student was required to repeat during their medical education. d) Information, based on school specific policies, of any adverse action(s) imposed on the student by the medical school.

d. **Academic Progress:**
   a. **Summary statement** that includes a description of the basis for grading and the number of Letters of Distinction attained by the student
   b. **Professional performance statement** that describes the attributes of professionalism for VTCSOM. It then describes any professionalism accolades (Letters of Distinction or Gold Humanism Honor Society membership) and/or professional behaviors that result in disciplinary probation or honor code violations for the individual student.
   c. **Research.** Identifying the research project, mentor, and any presentations or publications.
   d. **Preclinical coursework.** A description of the preclinical curriculum, comments from selected PBL facilitators, and a listing of the preclinical Letters of Distinction.
   e. **Clerkships.** The clerkships are detailed in chronological order. The student’s grade will be revealed followed by a description of the components of each clerkship grade. Narrative assessments from clinical clerkships based upon summative faculty assessments that are not edited for content. There will be minor editing for length, redundancy, grammar, and spelling.

- **Summary:** A summative assessment of the student’s overall performance in medical school that includes a table graphically depicting the range of distribution of Letters of Distinction. VTCSOM does not use a comparative adjective at or overall rating.

- **Medical School Information:** An appendix or link that lists information about the School and composition of the MSPE.

**Process of writing the MSPE**

A template for the MSPE will be created each year according to the AAMC guidelines. The basic information (identifying information and academic history) is inputted by the Student Affairs Manager. The Student Affairs Manager also obtains and inputs information for the research and preclinical narratives from the respective faculty members. As clerkships are completed, the Student Affairs Manager inputs the narrative provided by the respective clerkship director.

All graduating medical students should make an appointment to meet with the Senior Dean for Student Affairs (or the alternate writer in the event an alternate writer has been requested) between April of their 3rd year and August of their 4th year. Students are asked to provide an up-to-date curriculum vita and a draft of the three noteworthy characteristics.
A member of the student affairs staff will assist with minor editing of the various narratives for length, redundancy, grammar, and spelling. The Senior Dean for Student Affairs (or the alternate writer) will review the MSPE and have one additional member of the MSPE committee (one of the other deans) review the MSPE.

By mid-September when the MSPE is finalized, each student is given the opportunity to review the final draft of the MSPE for factual accuracy. At this juncture, student may not ask for assessment language to be changed. Students have the opportunity to initiate an academic grievance at the time the clerkship director comments are submitted to one. All reviews must be in-person or over the phone. Students who will be out of town during September should notify their MSPE writer as soon as possible. Every effort will be made to have the letter completed before the student departs, so the student can review the content of the letter in person. For those students who are not able to review their MSPE in the office, they are encouraged to arrange a phone call during which the MSPE will be read to them by the Student Affairs Manager. The MSPE will not be transmitted electronically to students for review and any hardcopy of the MSPE will be discarded after student reviews it.

All MSPEs are transmitted on October 1 of each academic year.

The MSPE is a static document meaning that it is not modified after October 1 of the respective student’s 4th year.