Medical School Information

**Mission, emphases, and strengths of the school:** The mission of VTCSOM is to develop physician thought leaders through inquiry, research and discovery, using an innovative curriculum based upon adult learning methods in a patient-centered context. VTCSOM graduates will be physicians with outstanding clinical skills and significantly enhanced research capabilities who will remain life-long learners. They will have an understanding of the importance of interprofessionalism to enable them to more effectively function as part of a modern healthcare team. The four Value Domains of the school are: basic science, clinical science, research, and interprofessionalism. These domains are woven throughout the curriculum.

**Unusual characteristics of the medical school’s educational program:** The preclinical years utilize a hybrid problem-based learning (PBL) format with lectures and workshops interwoven with the PBL format. The third year is traditional and utilizes the Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital, an 800 bed Level 1 Trauma-certified hospital, almost exclusively for the clinical clerkships. From early in the curriculum, students gain and awareness of the importance of interprofessionalism which enables them to more effectively function as a part of a healthcare team. Finally, each student must complete a hypothesis-driven research project prior to graduation.

**Average length of enrollment (initial matriculation to graduation):** 4 years

**Description of the assessment system:** We use a pass/fail (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) grading system throughout the four year curriculum. Students who excel in the various aspects of the curriculum may receive Letters of Distinction. These awards are based on outstanding performance in a particular portion of one of the four Value Domains, utilizing specific criteria for each letter. In many ways, Letters of Distinction are akin to the student receiving a grade of “Honors” for the particular component of the curriculum. Up to eight pre-clinical Letters of Distinction are awarded in in each of the Value Domains as well as for the outstanding performance in the Problem-Based Curriculum. Each of the required third year Clinical Clerkships awards up to eight Letters of Distinction. Additional Letters of Distinction awarded after the third year include: Professionalism, Clinical Science Integration, and Research.

**Medical school requirements for promotion/graduation:** VTCSOM requires students to have passed USMLE Step 1 for promotion to the 3rd year. VTCSOM requires students to have passed USMLE Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS for graduation.
Medical school requirements for successful completion of Objective/Observed Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE). OCSEs are used for:

- Completion of the clinical science domain in the preclinical years.
- Completion of some clerkships.
- Completion of the third year.

Utilization of the course, clerkship, or elective directors’ comments in the composition of the MSPE: The narrative comments contained in the MSPE can best be described as edited for grammar, style, and length, but not content.

Utilization by the medical school of the AAMC Recommendations for Revising the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE): VTCSOM is in compliance with the recommendations to the extent possible given that we are a pass/fail school and do not rank our students.

Description of the process by which the MSPE is composed at the medical school:

The Noteworthy Characteristics section is composed based upon input from the student. The Academic History section is a table describing the student’s progress through the curriculum with details of any gaps or adverse actions. The Academic Progress section includes:

- a Professional Performance section that highlights particular commendations or challenges that the student faced;
- a description of the student’s research project;
- a compilation of narrative comments from the various preclinical facilitators;
- a narrative from each of the required clinical clerkships.

The Summary is written by the Senior Dean for Student Affairs and includes a table with the distribution of numbers of Letters of Distinction among that class.

Student rights:

- Students are permitted to have someone other than the Senior Dean for Student Affairs as the author of the MSPE.
- Students are permitted to review the MSPE prior to submission. This review is for the student to correct factual errors and not to modify evaluative comments.