

MSTP Return to M3: Updates for Re-Entry in 2027

We are excited to have you join the clinical curriculum in 2027. Below we describe pertinent changes to the curriculum that have occurred and how they impact your return to the MD program.

The M3 clinical year begins in early May. The academic calendar started to shift in 2021, and the new schedule was fully in place for the 2024-2025 academic year. This was in response to national events, including USMLE Step 1 becoming pass/fail. Moreover, this change provides additional time at the start of the M4 year, before residency applications are due, to complete important acting internships and get your USMLE Step 2 score before applications open at the end of September.

Next year, the M3 year starts May 3, 2027. Any student who will be in clerkships for the 2027-2028 academic year must attend the mandatory in-person M3 orientation on 5/3/27. In addition, SAMI occurs one Friday afternoon per month starting in May; every student in the clerkship year must report in-person on their mandatory assigned SAMI Friday. There will be exceptions for SAMI attendance for MSTP students still in an out-of-state lab during May and June.

MSTP students who want to return on the “second” date (6/28/27) can request an “A1/A2 clinical schedule” in the traditional (UH/VA/Metro) track. These schedules start with 8 weeks of elective time from May 3-June 25, allowing students to have their first core clerkship on 6/28/27. Of note, there are non-MSTP students who will need these schedules as well. Therefore, the assignment of an A1/A2 schedule to MSTP students is not guaranteed, though efforts will be made to accommodate MSTP students who need this later re-entry. If you are assigned an A1/A2 schedule, you still need to report to required activities in May and June (M3 orientation, SAMI).

The traditional medical students now complete their required research block in the summer between M1 and M2. In the past, the 8 weeks of flex time in M3 was used for the required research block, which MSTP students would have been exempt from. However, those 8 weeks are now required elective weeks. This is pertinent for any MSTP that receives an A1/A2 schedule and starts clerkships on 6/28/27, missing the 8-week elective block from May 3-June 25. These 8 weeks of electives will need to be made up, potentially as a research elective. Of note, MSTP clinical tutorial can account for some of this time (we recommend doing 2 years of clinical tutorial, which counts as 4 weeks of clinical elective credit).

The move of the required research block to summer means that the required clinical weeks for awarding the MD degree have increased. As a result, MSTPs entering the curriculum more than 8 weeks in (i.e.: wanting a third late re-entry date) are unlikely to meet all graduation requirements on time. Additionally, if students enter at a later point, it will be challenging to have everything necessary for the residency application by the end of September. MSTP students who would like to request a re-entry point different than 5/3/27 (or 6/28/27 if they receive the A1/A2 clinical schedule) will need to speak with their society dean about this.

The 6-weeks of M4 vacation have been converted to a 10-week personal and professional development block that can be used across M3 and M4. Students will use some of these weeks to account for academic remediation, others will use some weeks for residency interviews, and others will use some (or all) of these weeks as vacation. MSTP's with an A1/A2 clinical schedule who start clerkships on 6/28/27 may use some of these weeks to account for any of the missed 8 weeks of elective time.

We are here to help. We recognize that this is a stressful time and that some of these changes may come as a surprise to you. The School of Medicine is committed to making your transition back to the MD program as seamless as possible. We will review your individual M3 re-entry plan in more detail at the individual “MSTP Re-Entry Meetings” with your society dean, research PI, and MSTP advisor this summer.