STUDENT HANDBOOK

August 2026

MEDICAL EDUCATION READINESS PROGRAM

Student Services

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Academic Rules

This handbook provides you with the basic information you need to know as a student. The student services and academic rules of the Medical Education Readiness Program are subject to change as circumstances may require.

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FOREWORD

Dear Student:

Welcome to the Medical Education Readiness Program (MERP). We have a strong tradition of assisting aspiring medical students in building the foundation they need to be successful in medical school and to achieve their dreams of becoming physicians.



This guide offers a clear path to making the most out of your educational experience while in the MERP. Our dual mission is to provide people from diverse backgrounds with additional academic preparation to foster their success in medical school, and to help determine their readiness to meet the demands of a fast-paced and rigorous medical school curriculum.

At MERP you can expect to receive quality education and guidance from our knowledgeable instructors. Our instructional philosophy is based upon inspiring students to learn and practice beyond the evaluation of simple competencies so they can move toward a higher level of expertise and be fully prepared to transition to medical school.

Becoming a physician is truly a calling, and the path to becoming one is not always easy, which is why we are dedicated to making sure individuals with the skills, drive and aspiration to go to medical school have the opportunity to do so.

Wishing you great success,

Inna Lindner

Inna Lindner, Ph.D.
Interim Director
Medical Education Readiness Program

Throughout this document you will notice references to multiple policies and procedures. You should take the time to become familiar with the details of these policies and procedures. If you have any questions, you should direct them to the personnel at listed below:

Frank DeMaria
Manager of Student Services

(754) 210-8371

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ACADEMIC CALENDAR
2026/2027

AUGUST 2026

August 31	Orientation
September 1	First day of Instruction
October 2	Mini 1*
November 6	Mini 2*
December 10	Final Exam
December 11	Last Day of classes

JANUARY 2027

January 4	Orientation
January 5	First day of Instruction
February 5	Mini 1*
March 12	Mini 2*
April 15	Final Exam
April 16	Last Day of classes

MAY 2027

May 3	Orientation
May 4	First day of Instruction
June 4	Mini 1*
July 9	Mini 2*
August 12	Final Exam
August 13	Last Day of classes

Note: *Dates subject to change

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Medical Education Readiness Program (MERP) is a rigorous medical school preparatory program offering students the opportunity not only to enhance their knowledge of the basic sciences, but also to develop the study skills and self-discipline essential to succeeding in medical school. MERP offers a unique opportunity to qualified students to gain acceptance to Ross University School of Medicine (RUSM) or American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine (AUC) upon successful completion of MERP. Students who successfully complete MERP will be offered admission into the next starting class of either RUSM or AUC, depending on which school referred the student to MERP.

MERP's mission is two-fold: to provide students from a diversity of backgrounds with additional academic preparation to foster their success in medical school, and to help determine the readiness of these students to meet the demands of a fast-paced and rigorous medical school curriculum.

Admission to MERP is limited to students who have applied to either RUSM or AUC and who have been identified as conditionally qualified medical school candidates and referred to MERP. These students must satisfy the condition of successfully completing MERP and thereby evidencing their enhanced knowledge of the basic sciences and academic readiness to begin medical school. MERP students are also expected to demonstrate the professionalism required of a future medical professional. A referral from RUSM or AUC is a prerequisite of admission to MERP. While admission to MERP is conditioned upon a referral from RUSM or AUC, MERP operates independently of RUSM and AUC with its own curriculum, administration, faculty, and staff.

MERP is a non-accredited preparatory program, which does not offer transferable credit hours and does not grant degrees. **MERP is offered three (3) times a year.**

This Student Handbook is published for MERP students. Once enrolled in MERP, all students are bound by the policies and procedures in this Student Handbook.

MERP reserves the right to change rules and regulations, course offerings, passing requirements, academic calendar and other material contained in this Student Handbook. Such changes will be announced in advance of their effective dates whenever possible, and these notices will be disseminated via email and/or posted electronically in the learning management system.

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2. THE CURRICULUM

MERP students will be registered for the following four (4) basic science courses: Medical Clinical Anatomy; Medical Biochemistry/Molecular Biology; Medical Microbiology/Immunology and Medical Physiology/Biophysics. These courses are intended to expose students to the topics taught in a medical school curriculum. All scheduled lectures in MERP are video recorded and made available as supplemental material online. Visual and/or audio recording of any class is strictly prohibited. Students may not use devices with recording capability during lectures, including, but not limited to cell phones and tablets.

Students can access course materials, supplemental information and their grades through an easily accessible online learning management system program. Each semester, the schedule of lectures, quizzes and exams are distributed to students at the beginning of the program and is subject to change. Students are responsible for checking the learning management system regularly for notices of changes to the schedule or curriculum and for other important announcements, including changes to MERP policies and procedures.

Each course is designed to be similar in content to a four-credit-hour, graduate-level science course. Students are advised, however, that transferable credit hours are not awarded. Students should expect to repeat the courses offered at MERP, or classes similar to them, during their first year of medical school or upon transfer to any other program at a degree-granting institution.

In addition to the core classes, MERP offers supplemental resources to help students hone their study skills. These resources are subject to change at any time.

The MERP curriculum may include lectures given by guest lecturers and candidates for new appointments.

3. STUDENT GRADING AND PROMOTIONS POLICY

The Executive Director of MERP, based in part on the advice of MERP faculty, determines the nature, frequency, content and scoring of student examinations. Every student enrolled in MERP is expected to take each scheduled exam, quiz or case study as defined in *Section 3.1 – Graded Events*. Regardless of academic standing based on Graded Events, MERP reserves the right to withhold promotion of any student who is not in good standing, as defined in *Section 3.1 – Graded Events*.

MERP does not issue transcripts or interim academic progress reports. MERP only provides a "Performance Record," at the request of educational institutions or former students, as the official record of academic performance for students who have completed the program. A student must complete the entire MERP program to obtain a MERP "Performance Record." The "Performance Record" indicates completion of the program and the final overall grade earned in the program. Failure to complete the entire program results in an "Incomplete" grade. Any interim progress information provided to students after Graded Events is considered an internal record and will not be provided for external use for any reason.

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3.1 GRADED EVENTS

To encourage continuous learning and improve retention of material, MERP administers quizzes. Quizzes are administered electronically using student-owned computers. It is the student's responsibility to follow the information technology (IT) instructions and to ensure he/she has the proper computer capabilities and settings installed prior to any quiz.

MERP also administers three major exams (referred to as "Mini Exams" or "Minis") during the semester. The Mini Exams test all four core subjects, with an equal percentage of questions coming from each of the four areas. MERP then assigns a grade to each student's performance in each subject matter as well as an overall grade for the program.

Students are expected to allow sufficient time to log in prior to the beginning of a Graded Event and begin the assessments promptly after receiving password. Students who start an exam and/or join assessments late may be subject to receiving a grade of zero, unless a delay was related to a technical issue beyond the student's control. It is the student's responsibility to acquire laptops/tablets that meet the minimum required specs that are outlined on the MERP website. Students are required to secure a working place that will provide a reliable internet/Wi-Fi connection free of distraction and noise, preferably a room or office.

If a student suspects a fellow student of cheating during a Graded Event, the student should discreetly alert an exam proctor. A student found cheating on a Graded Event receives a grade of zero for that Graded Event and may be subject to dismissal from the program at the sole discretion of the Executive Director.

Students may not use any device with recording capability during any Graded Event, including, but not limited to smart watches, tablets, or any other non-approved electronic devices. Use of such devices for any reason, even if not recording, is restricted to areas outside the room where the Graded Event is taking place. During assessments, all study materials, textbooks, and lecture notes should be put away and you will only be allowed a list of approved items on your workstation per the assessment instructions. Violation of this policy could result in a zero on the assessment and/or dismissal from the program. This policy will be strictly enforced. It is strictly prohibited to duplicate any exam or quiz content or any review materials. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from the program.

Cell phones will be allowed only for the purpose of communication with ExamSoft and/or MERP staff in the event of a technical issue during assessments. Before each assessment, a set of instructions will be provided.

3.2 GRADING

The final grade in MERP consists of a weighted average of quizzes (20%) and three Mini Exams (accounting for 25%, 25% and 30% of the final grade, respectively). Students referred to MERP by RUSM or AUC must earn at least 60% in each of the four core courses and a 65% overall average and be in good standing with MERP professionally and financially to matriculate into RUSM or AUC at the completion of MERP. **Where a student's final grade**

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is short of the required grade either in subject or overall score by 0.5% or less, MERP faculty will round up to the nearest whole number. If the interim progress of a student, calculated from grades earned up to any point in time, indicates that it would be mathematically impossible for him/her to meet the above-described requirements of the referring university, the Executive Director of MERP may administratively withdraw the student.

3.3 MISSED CASE STUDIES, QUIZZES OR EXAMS

Attendance at each scheduled Graded Event is mandatory. Failure to attend a Graded Event at the scheduled time, without an Approved Absence, as defined below, will result in a zero being recorded for the missed Graded Event.

An Approved Absence may be granted only by the Executive Director of MERP at his/her sole discretion for extenuating circumstances. Except in the case of emergency situations (e.g., a sudden and severe illness or injury), an Approved Absence may not be granted if it is not requested in advance of the scheduled Graded Event. A request for an Approved Absence must be accompanied by appropriate documentation and must qualify as an "Emergency Absence" as defined in *Section 3.6 – Emergency Absences*. The Executive Director may request additional documentation for any request made for an Approved Absence.

At the Executive Director's sole discretion, any Graded Event, except for the final Mini Exam ("Mini 3"), may be made up by weighting the other grades awarded in the course. The excused assessment grade will be averaged with similar assessments taken by the student (i.e., completed quiz grades will be averaged and assigned to the missing quiz grade). If it is mathematically impossible for a student who missed the final Mini Exam to pass MERP regardless of the grade earned on the final Mini Exam, the student will not be offered the option to make up the missing Mini Exam grade by means of weighting prior exam grades, even if the student missed the final exam due to an Approved Absence. In these circumstances the student will be awarded an overall failing grade for MERP. **MERP does not offer make-up exams.**

Subject to the approval of the Executive Director, a first time MERP student may make up a maximum of two (2) Graded Events, only one of which may be a Mini Exam, by weighing the student's grades on similar assessments. Students who are repeating MERP or have taken a leave of absence from a previous term may make up a maximum of one (1)
Graded Event by means of weighing the student's grades on similar assessments, at the discretion of the Executive Director. A student that misses a Graded Event, even if due to an Approved Absence, will not be offered a make-up exam. **MERP does not offer make-up exams.**

3.4 GOOD STANDING

MERP reserves the right to withhold services, including denying access to Graded Events, from students who are not in good standing academically, professionally or financially. Students denied access to a Graded Event due to their lack of good standing shall receive a zero for the Graded Event and no opportunity will be provided to make up the Graded Event.

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Students maintain good standing academically by earning grades sufficient for promotion through completion of the program. Students maintain good standing professionally by complying with all academic- and conduct-based policies and procedures in the Student Handbook, course syllabi, or any other MERP publications and by always exhibiting professionally appropriate behavior during and outside of all programmatic activities. Students maintain good standing financially by making all required tuition and fee payments in a timely manner by the due date. MERP reserves the right at any time to dismiss or to require the withdrawal of any student that is deemed unfit to complete MERP for academic or professional reasons or that fails to remain in good financial standing.

A student may be deemed unfit to complete MERP if the student exhibits signs of posing a risk to the safety of the MERP community, such as by exhibiting alarming, threatening, bizarre, hostile or otherwise disruptive behavior or by exhibiting any behavior unbecoming of a medical professional, as determined at the sole discretion of the MERP Executive Director. The MERP Executive Director may dismiss a student on these grounds at any time and there is no opportunity to appeal the dismissal.

Students who are not in good standing, either professionally or financially, at the end of the MERP program may not be recommended for matriculation to RUSM or AUC, regardless of their academic standing. The decision to matriculate a student who is not in good standing, either professionally or financially, shall be made by the Executive Director at his/her sole discretion. There is no appeal process available if a student does not matriculate at RUSM or AUC under these conditions. Students who are not in good academic standing may not matriculate at RUSM or AUC under any circumstances.

3.5 ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all scheduled classes and lectures is mandatory. Attendance will be taken at all scheduled lectures, Graded Events and other mandatory sessions. Students are required to have their cameras on during lectures. Students are responsible for notifying Student Services of planned or unplanned absences and for learning the material taught in their absence.

Students are expected to always be punctual. Repeated unexcused absences or repeated tardiness may adversely affect a student's good standing professionally and may also affect a student's ability to matriculate at either RUSM or AUC, regardless of academic standing. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness may result in, but is not limited to any of the following actions:

- Advising
- Final Warning
- Dismissal

Academic Success lectures are designed to help MERP students become organized active learners, critical thinkers and confident test takers. Attendance at all Week 1 Academic Success lectures is mandatory for all students. Attendance at Academic Success lectures scheduled during Weeks 2 and 3 are only mandatory for those students with cumulative grades below 60%. However, all students are welcome to attend any Academic Success lecture, and it is

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recommended that all students attend these sessions. There may be mandatory Academic Success lectures scheduled for any or all students at any time during the semester.

MERP is non-sectarian and as such, does not close for the religious holidays of any specific denomination or group unless the holiday is recognized by the host country. Graded Events may be scheduled to occur on religious holidays. Students are advised to plan accordingly.

3.6 SHORT-TERM EMERGENCY ABSENCES

Students may have unavoidable reasons for interrupting their enrollment during a semester. With the approval of the MERP Executive Director, or his/her designee, a student may be temporarily excused from classes due to documented emergency circumstances, such as severe illness or major injury to the student, or a similar emergency or death in the student's immediate family. Immediate family consists of parents, grandparents, spouse, child or sibling. Such a brief absence, where a student intends to (and can) return within five (5) calendar days to complete all the remaining coursework for the program, constitutes a Short-Term Emergency Absence and has no effect on the student's enrollment status. The request for a Short-Term Emergency Absence should be made as soon as reasonably possible and should be accompanied by appropriate documentation of the emergency. MERP will not make any tuition refund or credit for classes a student misses while on the Short-Term Emergency Absence.
Additionally, a student must secure an Approved Absence for any Graded Event that may be scheduled to take place during the Short-Term Emergency Absence.

A student who finds it impossible to return from a Short-Term Emergency Absence within five (5) calendar days from the time he/she left could be withdrawn from MERP or provided the option for a *Leave of Absence*, at the discretion of the Executive Director. To be approved for a *Leave of Absence*, please see section 3.8 – *Leave of Absence Policy.*

3.7 UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCES

Except for approved Short-Term Emergency Absences as defined in *Section 3.6 – Short-Term Emergency Absences*, students who fail to attend classes, or any other scheduled Graded Event or academic activity, without notifying Student Services, may be subject to disciplinary action.

A student who fails to attend class or other scheduled academic activities and Graded Events for five (5) or more calendar days shall be administratively withdrawn from MERP

S*ection 6.2 – Tuition Refund Policy for Withdrawals*.

If a student takes an Unauthorized Absence of more than five (5) days and is withdrawn, he/she could be ineligible for readmission.

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3.8 LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

The Executive Director, or his/her designee, may approve a Leave of Absence (LOA) for situations that may arise that are outside of the student's control and that may impact academic performance or the completion of the program. A LOA is strictly for extraordinary circumstances when there is evidence that the student is facing a medical emergency, such as a serious illness or injury, or another significant personal circumstance impeding the completion of the current registered semester. A student who wishes to temporarily interrupt their studies for more than five (5) calendar days with intent to return the following term may apply for a LOA. To be considered for a LOA, a student must contact the Manager of Student Services and submit a completed Leave of Absence Request Form with acceptable supporting documentation, such as, but not limited to, notes from medical professionals, medical records, published death notices or obituaries, court orders or deployment orders, etc., as applicable.

If a student is approved for a LOA, the grades they earned during MERP will not be retained for the returning MERP semester. Students may be eligible for a maximum of two Leaves of Absence, at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Please note that financial obligations are separate from course academic policies. *Please see section 7 for further information.*

3.9 OTHER INTERUPTIONS IN ATTENDANCE

MERP may implement disciplinary actions for conduct infractions which may result in suspension, dismissal and/or denial of matriculation as defined in *Section 4 – Professional Conduct and Ethics*. Students may be dismissed from MERP for, among other things, poor academic performance, for violation of the Honor Code or Code of Conduct standards, and/or for other disruptive or unprofessional behavior. As a general policy, students who are dismissed will not be considered for readmission.

3.10 PROMOTION

Qualified students who both earn a passing grade, as defined in *Section 3.2 - Grading*, and are in good standing both professionally and financially, will, pursuant to the recommendation of the Executive Director of MERP either: matriculate to the school that referred the student to MERP or be offered an interview by RUSM and AUC.

Students who successfully complete MERP may only attend the institution that referred them to MERP. A qualified student referred to MERP by RUSM will be invited to attend only the next- incoming class of RUSM. A qualified student referred to MERP by AUC will be invited to join only the next-incoming class of AUC. A student who attends MERP shall not be given an offer of admission to any university other than the one that referred him/her to MERP regardless of their performance in the program.

4. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND ETHICS

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MERP expects its students to adhere to the highest standards of ethical and professional behavior in every aspect of their lives, as is expected of medical professionals. Students shall conduct all aspects of their lives with honesty, integrity and respect for fellow students, instructors and others. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action at the sole discretion of the Executive Director, up to and including dismissal from MERP. As a prerequisite for admission to MERP, and as a condition to continued attendance at MERP, students must acknowledge receipt of and agree to abide by the MERP Honor Code, as defined in *Section 14 – The Honor Code*. MERP students must also abide by the terms of the Student Handbook and any other written policies or procedures published by MERP at any time.

4.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1.1 JURISDICTION

This Code of Conduct applies to behavior that affects the MERP community, irrespective of where or when that conduct may occur. Discipline may extend to conduct outside of program activities (including but not limited to those not sponsored or supported by MERP) when the behavior or actions in question adversely affect the MERP community, professional reputation and/or pursuit of its objectives.

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4.1.2 RULES AND REGULATIONS

Any student found to have committed misconduct, including but not limited to the types of misconduct outlined below, may be subject to disciplinary action at the sole discretion of the Executive Director of MERP. The following list of behaviors is illustrative, but not intended to be all inclusive, of behavior that may subject a student to disciplinary action:

1. Acts of dishonesty including, but not limited to, the following:

    a) furnishing false information to any MERP official, faculty member or office; or
    b) forgery, alteration or misuse of any MERP document, record or instrument of identification; or computer piracy, including duplication of computer software, copyright infringement and unauthorized computer entry.

2. Disruption or obstruction of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings and other MERP activities, including but not limited to surfing the internet, texting or using one's cell phone during such activities.

3. Physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, and harassment including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, coercion and/or other conduct that threatens or endangers the health, wellbeing or safety of any person, either on or off MERP premises or at any MERP-sponsored activity.

4. Failing to be punctual, reliable, and conscientious in fulfilling professional duties, including participating in MERP educational and other MERP-sponsored activities.

5. Failing to maintain professional hygiene, demeanor and appearance when attending program activities or at MERP-sponsored events, or at any other time when representing MERP.

6. Conducting oneself in a manner that would reasonably be expected to bring ridicule or disrepute to the student, MERP or the medical profession.

7. Bullying and/or cyberbullying.

8. Attempted or actual theft of and/or damage to MERP property or property of a member of the MERP community or other personal or public property, whether or not related to the MERP community.

9. MERP specifically prohibits any person or organization operating within the MERP community to participate in any "hazing" activity. Hazing is defined as any action taken or situation created which, regardless of intent or consent of the participants, may reasonably produce bodily harm or danger, mental or physical

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discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, fright, humiliation or ridicule, or otherwise compromises the dignity of an individual; compels an individual to participate in an activity that is unlawful and/or contrary to MERP rules, policies and regulations; will unreasonably or unusually impair an individual's academic efforts. Hazing is further defined as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or removes public or private property, for the purpose of initiation or admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for, continued membership in a group or organization. Such activities and/or actions prohibited include, but are not limited to: tests of endurance; submission of members or prospective members to potentially dangerous or hazardous circumstances; any activity that by its nature is so intense that it would cause severe mental anxiety, mental distress, panic, human degradation or public embarrassment; creation of excessive fatigue or a late work session that interferes with scholastic activities or deprives persons of the opportunity for sufficient sleep (six hours per day), decent edible meals and/or access to means of bodily cleanliness; forcing or coercing a person to consume alcohol or other substances, in any amount; any requirement that compels an individual to participate in an activity that is illegal, perverse or indecent; and compelling individuals to engage in sexual behaviors, sexual or racial harassment or slurs, or exhibitionism.

10. Failure to comply with oral or written directions of MERP officials or law enforcement officers acting in performance of their duties and/or failure to identify oneself to these persons when requested to do so.

11. Violation of published MERP policies, procedures, rules or regulations.

12. Violation of any applicable law.

13. Use, possession or distribution of narcotics or other controlled substances at any time, except as expressly permitted by law, or being under the unlawful influence of such substances at any time.

14. Use, possession or distribution of alcoholic beverages, except as expressly permitted by law or MERP regulation; or displays of public intoxication.

15. Illegal or unauthorized possession of firearms, explosives, other weapons or dangerous chemicals or representing or threatening use of such materials or weapons.

16. Participation in a demonstration that disrupts normal MERP operations or infringes on rights of other members of the MERP community; leading or inciting others to disrupt any MERP scheduled event or normal activities related to MERP.

17. Conduct that is disorderly, lewd or indecent; breach of peace; or aiding, abetting or procuring another person to breach the peace.

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18. Aiding, abetting or inducing another to commit a violation of the Code of Conduct or any applicable law.

19. Theft or other abuse of computer time, equipment or files, including but not limited to:

    a) Unauthorized entry into a file, to use, read or change contents, or for any other purpose.
    b) Unauthorized transfer of a file.
    c) Unauthorized use of another individual's identification and password.
    d) Use of computing capacity to interfere with work of another student, faculty member or MERP official.
    e) Use of computing capacity to send obscene or abusive messages.
    f) Use of computing capacity to interfere with normal operation of the MERP computing system.
    g) Introduction, reproduction and/or promulgation of any computer virus.

20. Abuse of the judicial or disciplinary system, including, but not limited to:

    a) Falsification, distortion or misrepresentation of information before a judicial body.
    b) Disruption or interference with orderly conduct of a judicial proceeding.
    c) Knowingly instituting judicial proceedings without good cause.
    d) Attempting to discourage an individual's proper participation in, or use of, the judicial system.
    e) Attempting to influence the impartiality of a member of a judicial body prior to, and/or during, the course of the judicial proceeding.
    f) Harassment (verbal or physical) and/or intimidation by a student of a member of a judicial body prior to, during and/or after a judicial proceeding.
    g) Failure to comply with sanction(s) imposed under the Code of Conduct.
    h) Influencing or attempting to influence another person to commit an abuse of the judicial system.

4.1.3 VIOLATION OF LAW

1. MERP conduct proceedings may be instituted against a student charged with violation of applicable law without regard to the pendency or outcome of civil litigation or criminal arrest and prosecution. Proceedings under this Code of Conduct may be carried out prior to, simultaneously with, or following civil or criminal proceedings.

2. If the alleged offense is also the subject of proceeding before a judicial body under the Code of Conduct, such matters will be handled internally by the MERP administration. MERP cooperates fully with law enforcement and other agencies in enforcing criminal law on MERP property and in the conditions imposed by criminal courts for rehabilitation of violators. Individual students, staff, or faculty members, acting in their personal capacities, remain free to interact with a governmental representative or law

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enforcement official as they deem appropriate.

4.1.4 STUDENT COMPLAINTS

1. **Complaint:** Any member of the MERP community may file a complaint against a MERP student with the MERP Executive Director, or the MERP Executive Director's designee. The complaint should be submitted as soon as possible after the activity or event giving rise to the complaint. The complaint shall (i) be in writing, (ii) identify the complaining party ("complainant") and any other witnesses to the activity or event, (iii) identify the student complained of ("respondent") by name, if possible, and (iv) contain a detailed description of the event or activity giving rise to the complaint. If the complainant fears for his or her safety, the complainant should state so in the complaint and include a request that the complainant's name be kept confidential until his or her safety concerns are addressed. Students who fear their safety is in imminent danger are advised to contact the MERP Executive Director and the local police immediately.

2. **Charges:** The Executive Director will review the written complaint and investigate the allegations in the complaint to determine whether the conduct described violates the MERP Code of Conduct, Honor Code or any other rule or regulation. The Executive Director's receipt of multiple complaints of minor infractions by the same student, which alone may not warrant further action, may together indicate a pattern of behavior that warrants an investigation or disciplinary action. Upon receipt of a complaint, it shall be in the Executive Director's sole discretion to determine that the conduct described merits disciplinary action of any kind. The Executive Director may determine that a single violation does not warrant discipline but may take into consideration multiple complaints and violations when making a determination with regard to appropriate discipline in any matter. The decision of the Executive Director with regard to any complaint filed, and any discipline that may or may not be imposed as a result of a complaint, may not be appealed.

4.2 RECORD OF SANCTION

A record or document of any complaints and investigations that result in any disciplinary action taken with regard to a student shall remain part of the student's MERP file. This information and documentation will be considered when it is time for the Executive Director to make recommendations for matriculation to RUSM or AUC and for consideration by RUSM or AUC administration. This information may result in the student being denied admission to RUSM or AUC, regardless of whether the student is in good academic standing. Notification of any complaint, investigation or disciplinary action may be reflected in any type of recommendation provided by MERP to another institution.

Documentation of expulsion for academic or non-academic offenses may be placed in the student's official file by MERP by noting both the expulsion and the offense leading to the expulsion (e.g., "expelled for academic misconduct").

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5. DRESS CODE

In order to provide an appropriate and productive academic environment and to present a professional appearance, students should adhere to the following dress code. The dress code is classified as business casual. Professional pants, tops, skirts or dresses are appropriate. Shorts, jeans, tank tops, flip flops or other attire not meeting the commonly understood definition of business casual are not permitted. Overall, clothing should be modest and professional. For special events such as, but not limited to, orientation, guest speakers and panel discussions, formal business attire should be worn. If you are in doubt as to whether attire is appropriate, you may ask any member of the faculty, or the Executive Director, for guidance.

6. WITHDRAWALS

6.1. DEFINITION OF WITHDRAWAL

An official withdrawal occurs when a student's enrollment is voluntarily discontinued by the student and the student notifies Student Services of his/her withdrawal.

An administrative withdrawal is when a student ceases participation in MERP without providing notification of withdrawal to Student Services or when a student is required to withdraw from MERP for failure to meet academic progression requirements and maintain good academic standing or is dismissed as a result of disciplinary or other action.

The effective date of withdrawal is normally the student's last date of attendance. MERP is designed to be an integrated program. Students cannot withdraw from a single course during a semester; they must withdraw completely from MERP. In extenuating circumstances due to health issues, the MERP Executive Director may grant a student an official withdrawal and impose conditions, at the Executive Director's sole discretion, that the student must meet in order to return to MERP.

Because MERP is intended to be a one-time program, a student is not guaranteed they will be granted permission to return to the program, even if the student had a valid reason for withdrawal from MERP.

6.2 MERP Tuition Refund Policy for Withdrawals and Leaves of Absence

Students who withdraw or take a leave of absence from MERP are eligible for a prorated tuition refund according to the schedule below. Refund eligibility is based on the week of withdrawal or leave, as measured from the first day of academic instruction.

Note on Leaves of Absence:
Students who take a leave of absence are subject to the same refund schedule as withdrawals. Upon returning to MERP studies, students must **repay the refunded portion of tuition**.

Tuition Refund Policy

- **First day of MERP (Orientation Day) through the Friday of Week 5:** 66% refund
- **Saturday of Week 5 through the Friday of Week 10:** 33% refund

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- **Saturday of Week 10 through the end of the program:** No refund

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7. SAFETY AND SECURITY

A truly safe educational experience can only be achieved through the cooperation of students, faculty and staff. As members of the MERP community, students are asked to report crimes, suspicious activities or other emergencies by the appropriate MERP official. Students who become witnesses to or are the victim of a crime should immediately report the incident to local law enforcement officials and MERP administration. All reports of crimes will be investigated and, when appropriate, brought to the attention of the Executive Director of MERP for disciplinary action.

Student behavior that causes safety or security concerns typically will be addressed through the institution's disciplinary process. Immediate suspension and eventual dismissal may result for students who commit or are involved in actions such as, but not limited to:

a) Illegally possess, purchase, sell or otherwise furnish a firearm or other inherently dangerous object
b) Brandish a knife or other weapon at another person
c) Sell, purchase or possess any controlled substance
d) Commit or attempt to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery
e) Possess, sell or purchase explosives
f) Cause serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense
g) Intentionally damage institution property
h) Commit robbery or extortion
i) Commit or attempt to commit assault or battery
j) Make threatening statements to any faculty, staff, or other students of MERP

Nothing in this policy should be construed as limiting or preventing MERP's discretion to take other action which, in MERP's sole discretion, through its Executive Director, is necessary or advisable to promote safety and security.

MERP takes any threats made to cause harm to others or to oneself seriously. Threats to harm others will be handled by the Executive Director. MERP may also work with the person to determine available resources and appropriate next steps and take any other actions it deems appropriate, including actions that affect the student's enrollment at MERP.

8. STUDENT FEEDBACK

Near or at the conclusion of the semester, students will be given an opportunity to evaluate MERP and its courses. This is a mandatory survey, and students are expected to complete it by the deadline given.

If a student has a complaint that the student does not feel has been appropriately addressed by MERP or, due to conflicts of interests, cannot be appropriately addressed by MERP in the opinion of the student, such student is invited to contact the Manager of Student Services via email at Frank.Demaria@medready.org. The Manager of Student Services will investigate the student's complaint and work with the student to resolve it while maintaining the student's confidentiality concerns, if any, wherever possible.

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9. POLICY ON THE USE OF ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

All students of MERP must comply with the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy as defined in *Appendix I.*

9.1 LEGAL PENALTIES

The misuse of alcohol or drugs may also result in legal sanctions in the form of criminal penalties or civil damages. Every member of the MERP community is subject to the laws of the jurisdiction where he/she is present. Although these laws vary in different jurisdictions, criminal penalties may include fines, probation, rehabilitation, or incarceration. Individuals may also be referred for treatment.

9.2 MERP TREATMENT RESOURCES

Confidential Counseling is available to MERP students free of charge. For counseling information and treatment resources contact:

Dr. George Shepeard, Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Counselor at George.Shepeard@medready.org

10. STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

MERP adheres to the following guidelines regarding student information:

1. The student may inspect and review his or her educational records within 45 days of the day MERP receives a request for access. Students should submit to the Executive Director of MERP a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Executive Director of MERP will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the record may be inspected.

2. The student may request the amendment of his or her educational record(s) that the student believes to be inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the Executive Director of MERP to amend a record that he/she believes is inaccurate. The student should write to the Executive Director of MERP, clearly identifying the part of the record he/she wants corrected and specify why it is inaccurate. If the Executive Director decides not to amend the record as requested by a student, the Executive Director will notify the student of the decision and advise the student that he or she may have a meeting with the Executive Director of MERP or his/her designee regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures may be provided when the student is notified of the option for a hearing.

3. The student may consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in his/her educational records. However, in some cases MERP can disclose information without consent. For example, disclosure to officials with legitimate educational or immediate security interests may be made without consent. An official is a person employed by MERP or its operators and affiliates in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including security personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom MERP contracted (e.g., an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on any relevant educational or regulatory board; law enforcement personnel or a student serving on an official committee or assisting another official in performing his or her tasks. An official has a

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legitimate educational or immediate security interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, MERP may disclose education records without consent to officials of another School in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. MERP may also disclose directory information without consent upon request from a third party. Unless a student specifically specifies otherwise, by following the procedure described in subsection (5) of this Section, directory information may be disclosed without your consent.

   Directory information includes:

   a) Name, address and telephone listing
   b) Dates of attendance
   c) Field of study
   d) Most recent previous school attended
   e) Date and place of birth
   f) E-mail address
   g) Enrollment status
   h) Past and present participation in officially recognized activities

5. To withhold directory information a student may submit in writing a request to the Manager of Student Services. Once filed, this request becomes a permanent part of the student's record and no information may be released (except as described above) until the student instructs otherwise.

6. For students who are referred to the MERP program exclusively by the admissions committees of RUSM or AUC, the status of their participation in MERP is information that is of direct consequence to the referring university and affects the status of the conditional admission extended by the university. Therefore, students are advised that upon withdrawal, dismissal or completion of the MERP program, their status and last date of attendance will be reported to their referring university without further notice or permission required. Additionally, a complete list of MERP students from each class, indicating only their initial enrollment in MERP and referring university, may be provided to both AUC and RUSM after the start of each semester without further notice or permission required.

11. SIREN EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

In the event that an emergency arises, you will receive timely notification via the SIREN system and through email announcements. Please make sure you keep your contact information updated in SIREN.

12. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Medical Education Readiness Program (MERP) is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for qualified students with disabilities consistent with applicable laws. MERP maintains a process for students to use should they wish to request an accommodation.

The first step in the accommodation request process is to contact the Office of Student Disability Services at merposds@adtalem.com or 855.229.0848. Requests may also be faxed to

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630.596.1651.

12.1 ACCOMODATION REQUEST PROCESS

1. Email the OSDS with your intent to apply for accommodation.

2. Indicate first and last name, institution, program, term and your preferred method of contact and any supports you require.
    a Phone
    b Email
    c Teams
    d Other-describe

3. Obtain and fill out the Student Accommodation Request Form

4. Gather the information from your physician or clinician appliable to the diagnoses for which you are applying. If there are multiple diagnoses, there may also be paperwork required from multiple specialists.

i The OSDS will determine if the request is applicable to the office and its services.
1 If yes, OSDS will proceed with interactive process and review.
2 If no, OSDS will refer the student to the appropriate supports and services available.

ii Through an interactive process, the OSDS will work with the student to determine if they meet the criteria for accommodations, discuss potential accommodations to address barriers in the academic or clinical setting, and ensure that requested accommodations are reasonable and do not fundamentally alter the nature of the program or technical standard.

iii During the interactive process, the student can expect to get updates on status, such as:

1 In Review- the file is being reviewed by the Accommodation Coordinator
2 Incomplete- the student has not provided enough information for the Accommodation Coordinator to make a determination or there are issues that need to be corrected on the request form. If the request is Incomplete, OSDS will request additional information and/or inform the student of missing items.

iv Accommodation requests are concluded in one of the following ways:

1 Approved- either as requested or with alternative accommodation. If the request is Approved, OSDS will send the student a notification letter.
2 Denied- based on available information. If the request is Denied based on available information, OSDS will send the student a notification letter and will reach out to the student to setup a phone call for additional assistance.
3 Closed-based on the requested accommodation being available to all matriculated students regardless of disability status. If the accommodation request is closed on this basis, OSDS will send the student information on how to access this resource.

12.2 Documentation Expectations

OSDS Request Form :

- The request form contains 1) a self-report form and 2) a physician/clinician form

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- The physician/clinician form must be completed by a licensed physician or clinician who has expertise applicable to the student's diagnosis and is familiar with the student's personal diagnosis and history. The physician/clinician form includes information about:
  - Diagnostic codes
  - Physician/Clinician license numbers and credentials
  - Explanation of how the student's disability affects a major life activity and is relevant to the student's need in an academic setting
  - Specific recommendations for accommodation

Supporting Documentation:

Along with the request form, students should submit supporting documentation from their physician/clinician, dated within the last five years, which at a minimum, verifies: 1) the presence of the diagnosed medical condition and 2) the current impact of the diagnosed medical condition. However, if the documents listed below are unavailable to the student, OSDS encourages students to submit documentation available to them along with the request form to help facilitate the process.

If a student does not have supporting documentation or is having difficulty obtaining the supporting documentation from their physician/clinician, or a student is unsure what type of supporting documentation to provide with the request form, OSDS encourages and welcomes the student to schedule an appointment with an OSDS Accommodation Coordinator to further discuss.

Examples of supporting documentation that may be requested include but are not limited to:

- Audiology Report
- Ocular Assessment
- Formal Diagnostic Interviews
- A Formal Assessment to include:
  - Intellectual functioning
  - Academic achievement
  - Information processing
- Neuropsychological Assessment
- A signed and dated clinical summary on letterhead

Note: Some requested accommodations may require more detailed documentation to illustrate a connection between the impact of the disability on a major life activity, the described barrier in the academic or clinical setting, and the requested accommodation.

Services Not Covered by OSDS*

- English as a second language
- Personal Care Attendants
- Medical devices personal to the student (glasses, hearing aids etc.)
- Personal Transportation
- Services for students who do not have a temporary or long-term disability
  - See FAQ for more information and examples
- Pregnancy accommodations unrelated to disability
  - For assistance with pregnancy and parenting, contact equity@adtalem.com
- Personal Tutoring

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- Religion

For assistance, please contact equity@adtalem.com

*If you would like information for what is available in your community regarding these services you may reach out to OSDS. However, please know OSDS does not recommend and are not affiliated with any of these services which may be available in the community and any responsibility would lie with the third party directly.

13. THE HONOR CODE

Introduction

The Honor Code applies to every student who is enrolled in MERP.

Accordingly, every student shall be required to verify acceptance of the Honor Code by signing the following Honor Pledge:

"I, (written student's name), as a student at MERP, do hereby accept the Honor Code. I have read the Honor Code, understand it and agree to abide by its provisions. Accordingly, I resolve to refrain from giving or receiving academic material in a manner not authorized by the instructors, from illegally appropriating the property of others and from deliberately falsifying the facts. I will also refrain from conducting myself in a manner that is unbecoming of a medical professional. I acknowledge that, in support of the Honor Code, it is my responsibility to report any violations of the Honor Code of which I am aware. I realize that, in the event of a violation of the Honor Code, a plea of ignorance will not be acceptable, and that such a violation could result in my permanent dismissal from MERP. I further pledge that I shall endeavor at all times to create a spirit of honor, both by upholding the Honor Code myself and helping others to do so."

Registration as a student in MERP is not complete until a signed verification of the Honor Pledge is on file, and no grades may be recorded until this is done. If the Honor Pledge is not signed by the end of the first week of the semester, the student's matriculation may be cancelled. The ultimate responsibility for signing the Honor Pledge rests with each individual student.

Scope of the Honor Code

Section 1. The violations of the Honor Code include lying, cheating, stealing and toleration of the aforementioned acts in all their various forms. In addition, conduct unbecoming of a medical professional will not be permitted as long as a student represents MERP. These terms are explained as follows:

A. **Lying:** a deliberate verbal, written or other misrepresentation of the truth. This violation includes, but is not limited to, forgery and the falsification or misuse of the student identification card by using another's card or by allowing another to use one's own card, falsification of documents concerning sickness or physician's visits, financial documents or transcripts, or verbal attempts to mislead others concerning their identity.

B. **Cheating:** an intentional misrepresentation of another's work as one's own, or a misrepresentation of the circumstances under which the work was done. This violation includes, but is not limited to, copying, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration and

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unauthorized divulging of test contents or other information.

C. **Stealing:** intent to deprive MERP or any other owner of property without authorization or consent. This violation includes, but is not limited to, the theft or mutilation of library material, the unauthorized use or duplication of a key belonging to MERP or the unauthorized entry into any office or other MERP facility by any means.

D. **Conduct unbecoming of a medical professional**: any behavior deemed inappropriate of a medical professional that would in any manner reflect poorly upon the individual, MERP or its affiliates and representatives. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment, illegal use/possession, distribution/sale of drugs, abuse of legal drugs, public intoxication and public indecency.

E. **Toleration:** failure of a student to report items A: lying, B: cheating, C: stealing and D: conduct unbecoming of a medical professional constitutes a violation of the Honor Code and that student may thereby be subject to disciplinary action.

14. POLICY ON PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO IMAGING AT MERP

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any type of photography such as still pictures, video and film recorded or broadcast by any means including storage by electronic media, which occurs in MERP is not used for commercial purposes and that it does not interfere with the educational, scholarly or administrative functions of MERP, or impair any individual's right to privacy. Pictures, video or film taken are not for publication or public distribution in any media form, unless expressly authorized by MERP. All individuals found to be in violation of this policy are subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

Photography of acceptable content may be permitted as long as it is not for commercial purposes. Photography shall be considered to be for commercial purposes if it is intended to be sold or otherwise exchanged for value or is for any use that could imply endorsement of a product or service.

Photography is impermissible and may not be used for any purpose, personal or otherwise, including but not limited to posting on social media sites, if the content is considered to be libelous; defamatory; in poor taste; in any way disruptive to MERP's educational, scholarly, or administrative functions; or pornographic.

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APPENDIX

I. ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

1. OVERVIEW

MERP has adopted, implemented and monitored a program to prevent the unlawful possession, distribution or use of controlled substances and alcohol by MERP employees and students.

2. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

MERP strictly prohibits:

The unlawful manufacturing, distribution, dispensing, use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs and controlled substances or the misuse of legal medications/drugs.

Being under the influence of or misusing any substance or alcohol, while participating in activities for, or in the name of MERP, in a manner which may result in impairment, or endanger the physical, mental and/or emotional well-being, of any person.

Any violation of the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy is considered a violation of MERP's Code of Conduct and is subject to the penalties of MERP and of all applicable jurisdictions.

3. PROGRAM SANCTIONS

The Honor Code and its procedures govern all students. Violation of policies specific to alcohol and other drugs are considered violations of the Honor Code. They include the unlawful possession, use, manufacture, sale or distribution of alcohol and other drugs.

Students are subject to disciplinary action for violations of the Honor Code if a violation of this policy occurs anywhere, and/or results in negative impact or reflection on the MERP community. Regardless of geographic boundaries, if a student has been convicted of a drug or alcohol related offense in a court of law, the student is subject to discipline for a violation of the Honor Code.

Applicable sanctions include, but are not limited to, probation, rehabilitation, suspension or expulsion. MERP may refer any case to the proper local, state and/or federal authorities for appropriate legal action.

4. EXTERNAL SANCTIONS

The sanctions imposed under the Honor Code and/or the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy neither diminishes nor replaces the penalties available under generally applicable civil or criminal laws.

5. PREVENTION & ASSISTANCE

MERP will facilitate substance abuse prevention through general promotion of a substance-free educational environment, by informing students on current and subsequent changes to the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy and through advocating an atmosphere where individuals with a problem are encouraged to seek help.

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MERP's counseling service is available to students without charge. Students seeking assistance for a substance abuse problem will not be subject to sanctions by MERP as a sole result of seeking such assistance.

For information or assistance with substance and/or alcohol abuse matters, or for information on programs contact Dr. George Shepeard, Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Counselor at George.Shepeard@medready.org.

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