

Managing M2 Year

M3 Peer Support

Amith, Tim, and Jane

Topics:

1. Effective ways to assess where I am at/whether I am progressing
2. Navigate Step studying with classes at this point in the year
3. What resources should I be focusing on at this point in the year
4. Making the transition from curriculum to dedicated study time
5. Explaining the specifics of the Step 1 exam including the format, timing and scoring
6. Walk you through a day in your life during dedicated study time
7. Study Plan Development
8. Approaching practice questions and how many

Assessing Where You Are and If You're Progressing

- Consider your end-of-M1-year NBME exam result, what your target score goal is, and what fields of medicine you are interested in:
 - More on this in a later slide, but more competitive specialties generally require more competitive scores
 - Know that a poor result on this exam does not mean a poor Step 1 score. You still have two blocks worth of material to cover
 - A comprehensive NBME will be administered at the beginning of block 8 in January to give you an idea of what you need to study moving into dedicated but also the progress you've made/didn't make from the NBME you took at the end of block 5
- A great way to track progress is with a question bank
 - More on this later
- Can you explain a concept to someone else?
 - Medical students are excellent memorizers, but being able to explain the "why" or the mechanism of a topic likely indicates mastery and will benefit you greatly on Step 1

Balancing Step Studying and Classes

- Try not to neglect one for the other but do try to incorporate more Step studying earlier on to make your dedicated studying less stressful
 - Study material taught in the classroom that is also high-yield for Step to optimize study time
 - There were questions on Step 1 I knew from class material alone
- DoCS isn't just "stuff for clinical years"
 - Understanding physical exam maneuvers, their purpose, and the significance of positive and negative findings will help you on many Step 1 questions
 - Heart sounds and videos of physical exam findings do appear on Step 1
 - MSK exams also important
- Labs are helpful too
 - Pathology slides show up
 - As do photos of cerebral hemispheres, brain slices, and spinal cord sections

Resources to Focus On Now and Later

- Assess how you learn best if you don't already know
- If something isn't working for you, try something new
- Don't resource overload; stick to what works for you
- Studies have shown that of all study resources, number of completed practice MCQs correlate most strongly with Step 1 performance (more on qbanks later)
- Common resources used by our class to study for both classes and Step 1 besides question banks: First Aid, Firecracker, Anki decks (i.e. Zanki, Brosencephalon, etc.), Boards and Beyond, Sketchy, Pathoma, and Osmosis
- Once block 8 begins and throughout dedicated, use CBSSAs (purchasable practice online NBMEs similar to the ones you took in M1 year)



Transitioning to Dedicated

- Take a break after Block 7
- Take advantage of opportunities to review and practice relevant material in Block 8
 - NBME subject exams, Core Cases
- Conventional wisdom is to start with content review before practice questions
 - Block 8 is conducive to content review

Step 1 Specifics - Format & Timing

- 7 question blocks
 - Time: 1 hour per block
 - Questions: ~40 questions per block
 - 1.5 minutes per question
 - No more than 280 questions
- Break time: 45 minutes – utilized at your discretion
- Tutorial: 15 minutes
 - Can preview this beforehand: <http://orientation.nbme.org/Launch/USMLE/STPF1>
 - Unused tutorial time adds on to your 45 minutes of break time

Step 1 Specifics - Content

Table 1: Step 1 Test Specifications*

System	Range, %
General Principles**	13-17
Blood & Lymphoreticular/Immune Systems	7-11
Behavioral Health & Nervous Systems/Special Senses	9-13
Musculoskeletal, Skin & Subcutaneous Tissue	6-10
Cardiovascular System	6-10
Respiratory & Renal/Urinary Systems	9-13
Gastrointestinal System	5-9
Reproductive & Endocrine Systems	9-13
Multisystem Processes & Disorders	7-11
Biostatistics & Epidemiology/Population Health	5-7
Social Sciences: Communication Skills/Ethics	3-5

* Percentages are subject to change at any time.

** The General Principles category for the Step 1 examination includes test items concerning those normal and abnormal processes that are not limited to specific organ systems. Categories for individual organ systems include test items concerning those normal and abnormal processes that are system-specific.

Table 4: Step 1 Discipline Specifications*

System	Range, %
Pathology	45-52
Physiology	26-34
Pharmacology	16-23
Biochemistry & Nutrition	14-24
Microbiology & Immunology	15-22
Gross Anatomy & Embryology	11-15
Histology & Cell Biology	9-13
Behavioral Sciences	8-13
Genetics	5-9

*Percentages are subject to change at any time.

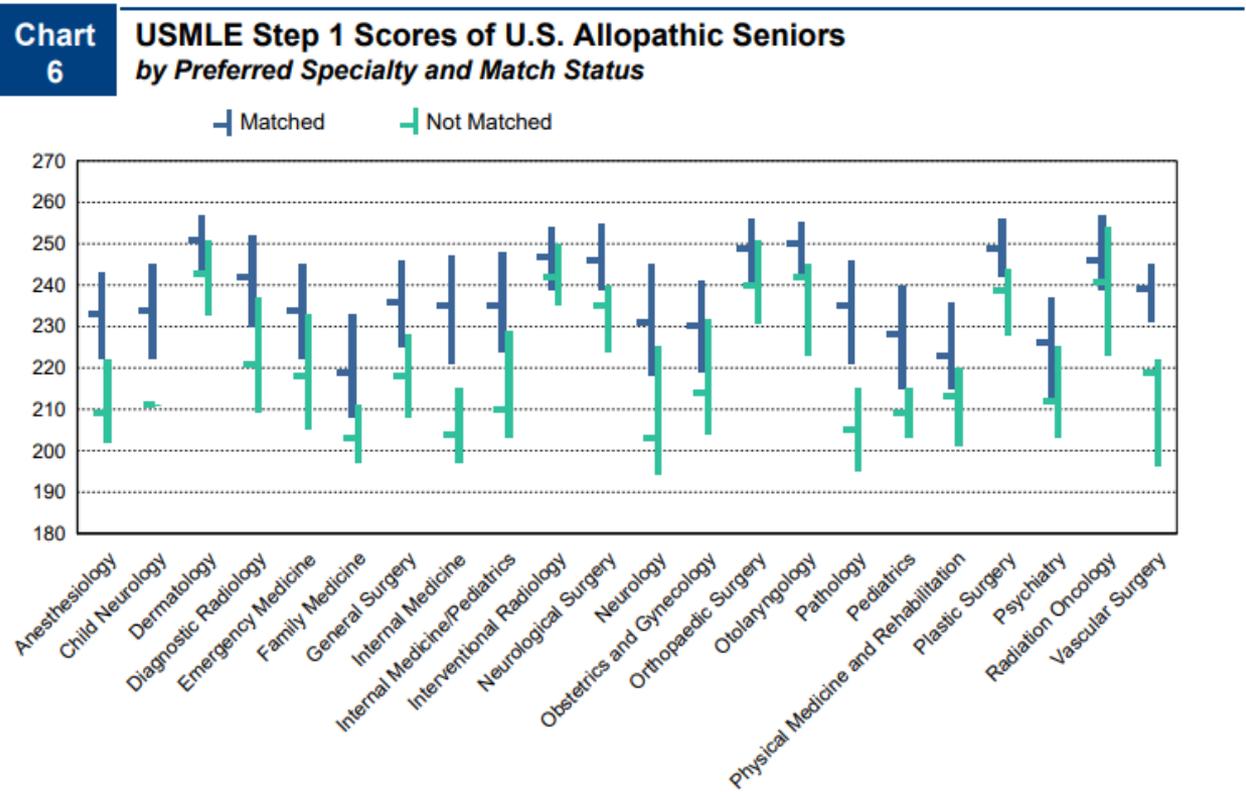


Step 1 Specifics - Scoring

- Minimum passing score: 194
- Average* score: 232.8 (S.D. = 17.5)
 - *for US MD graduates who matched to their preferred specialty in 2018
- Average scores for different specialties vary



Step 1 Specifics - Scoring



Source: NRMP Data Warehouse

Example of a Day of Dedicated Studying

- Example #1
 - 2 blocks (80 questions) of UWorld: 4-6 hours
 - Timed blocks drawing from all content areas
 - Reviewing the questions and re-learning content, if necessary, took up to 2 hours per block. Reviewing and re-learning incorporated other content-heavy resources such as B&B, Sketchy, textbooks, Osmosis
 - Content review with First Aid + Pathoma: 2 hours
 - Distributed one full pass of FA and about half a pass of Pathoma throughout dedicated, ended up with daily “assignments” for each.
 - Review with Anki: 1 hour



Study Plan Development

- Considerations
 - Environment/location
 - Length of dedicated period
 - Resource selection
 - Studying/life balance
- Tools for organizing your study plan - many options
 - Tools that make your schedule for you
 - Osmosis
 - Cramfighter
 - Tools that give you less guidance
 - Calendar app
 - Excel spreadsheet

Approaching Practice Questions

- School pays for a 6-month subscription to UWorld
 - Plan when to open it accordingly, but you can extend your subscription if you desire more time
 - Common advice: save the UWorld Qbank for dedicated and finish either the Rx Qbank or Kaplan Qbank (or both if you desire) before dedicated.
- If you tend to need more time, consider starting UWorld before dedicated.
- Based on your own goals, needs, and results, decide if you would benefit from a second-pass through UWorld and plan accordingly
 - If you do a second pass through UWorld, make sure you're not just answering questions correctly because you memorized the correct answer.

UWorld QBank

- Known for its well-written questions that require higher-order thinking and resemble the style of many Step 1 questions
- Tables are comprehensive and emphasize the high-yield info of a disease
- Illustrations are high-quality and simplified for enhanced understanding
- Explanations are very thorough and help you understand the “why”
- Design tests of up to 40 questions that you can customize by system and subject in timed or tutor mode
 - Questions can be from categories: all, unused, incorrects, or marked
 - Tutor mode is generally advised for topics on which you feel weak/uncomfortable and want more time to think through or if you are primarily using the Qbank as a learning tool
 - Timed mode is generally advised for when you feel comfortable with the material and want to simulate real testing conditions or if you are using the Qbank as an assessment tool to gauge how you are performing/how much you know

More on Practice Questions

- Quantity is important but so is quality
 - Try to set up deadlines for yourself to complete a section based on your individual needs and then make weekly goals of how many questions you want to get through
 - If a certain topic is harder for you, don't rush through it just to meet a goal number of questions
- Don't focus too much on scores, but they can help you track progress especially if you do a second-pass
 - Qbanks are really effective as learning tools
 - Don't be discouraged at first if you're not performing as well as you'd like
- Other Qbanks
 - USMLE-Rx: "walkthrough" in question format of a large quantity of material in *First Aid* with the same features of UWorld
 - Kaplan: has more questions that test "lower-yield" and esoteric material but has some gems that people do see on Step 1
 - AMBOSS: QBank that comes with a Learning Library of topic summaries that you can access independent of the questions

Questions and Next Steps

- Contact Janice Tamplin (tamplin2@uic.edu) for an initial meeting if you are interested in 1:1 or small group sessions with one of us regarding any concerns you have with these topics or related issues not covered here
- Remember that everything here is just what we recommend...there are different ways to approach things, but these are our views
- Any questions about anything here or about M2 year?
- We'll send this PowerPoint to you soon
- Thank you for your attendance!
- Sign your name on the attendance sheet if you haven't
- We'd appreciate any feedback, which you can leave on the evaluation forms