Program description
The Decompressed Program allows students who have academic challenges or personal reasons the opportunity to decompress their preclinical education, and complete Phase 1 in 3 academic years rather than 2 academic years.

Program admission
Students who need extended time to complete Phase 1, due to academic or personal reasons, may request to participate in the program. Students who fail one or two block final exams in Blocks 1-3 on their initial attempt will be offered the option to participate in the program. Entry into the program is entirely voluntary and not mandatory.

Students may not participate in the Decompressed Program if they have acquired a course failure (includes Block, DoCS1 fall term, Synthesis fall term, Medical Colloquia fall term).

There are two deadlines for entry into the program.
1. Prior to Block 3 Final exam: End of Block 3 Week 4. Students who commit to entering the program at this time will sit for the Block 3 final exam approximately three weeks after the scheduled exam date or at the discretion of the curriculum dean or designee. Students with up to one unmet requirement (UMR) are eligible. Students with two UMRs going into Block 3 are not eligible. Therefore, students who are considering the program and have accumulated two UMRs before the winter break should make efforts to fulfill at least one of those UMRs over the winter break.
2. After the Block 3 Final exam: End of Synthesis week 3. Students with up to two UMRs are eligible.

Participation in the Decompressed Program will be confirmed by Student Affairs in consultation with the Curriculum Deans within three weeks of the end of Block 3. The student will withdraw from Block 4 and DoCS1 spring term. Student Affairs will notify their respective campus promotions committee and Registrar's Office of the student's participation into the program. At the time of entry into the program, the student will meet with representatives from student and curricular affairs and will sign a Decompression Program Agreement document that will specify program details and support in place for the student.

Special Curricular Programs
Participation in the Decompressed Program may affect a student's ability to participate in SCPs or joint degree programs.

Reporting of student participation on the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE)
Participation in the Decompressed program will be reported on the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) as follows: "This student participated in the UICOM Decompressed program and completed Phase 1 in 3 academic years rather than 2 academic years. Assessment is equivalent to the traditional program."
### Program curriculum

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**Decompressed Program**

Coursework in the Decompressed Program is mapped out above. The program years are referred to as D1, D2 and D3 for years 1, 2 and 3, respectively. Students will be registered full time for the following three terms: D1 Fall, D1 Summer, and D3 Spring. Students will be registered part time for the following four terms: D1 Spring, D2 Fall, D2 Spring, and D3 Fall.

**Block courses:** Additional time for study in Block courses occurs after the Block for Blocks 3, 5 and 6, and prior to the start of the Block for Blocks 4 and 7. For Blocks in which the additional time is prior, the College-wide Block leader or designee will provide students with an outline and learning objectives for the block and the prior year’s materials for lectures and prep for flipped classrooms.

*See Course Footnotes on DoCS and Synthesis timing below.*

**Medical Colloquia:** Medical colloquia will be completed by the end of D2 Fall term.

### Student Assessment

Students in the decompressed program will participate in the same assessments as students in the traditional program. [https://medicine.uic.edu/education/educational-policies/assessment-policies-and-procedures/](https://medicine.uic.edu/education/educational-policies/assessment-policies-and-procedures/)

Decompressed students will have additional formative assessments during the unscheduled time (e.g., weekly assignments). Failure to turn in the weekly assignment or late or poor quality assignments may result in a meeting with their campus student support team or in documentation of professionalism concerns.

**Timing of assessments**

Students in the Decompressed Program will be given additional time to prepare for final exams in Blocks 3-7. Block finals will be taken two weeks after the end of Block 5 and three weeks after the end of the Block for Blocks 3 & 6. Blocks 4 & 7 final exam will be taken as scheduled because additional preparation time occurs before the block.

Students will take Block weekly quizzes, TBLs, DoCS assessments and NBMEs as scheduled.
**Progression through Phase 1**

**Eligibility for promotion to Decompressed Year 2 (D2)**

The College will promote to the D2 year all students who satisfactorily complete all D1 curricular requirements as designated by the program. This includes all credit-associated courses (by assessment policy this includes all non-compensatory course components) as outlined in the College’s Assessment policies.

1. A student who passes all requirements of all other credit-associated courses will be promoted to the D2 year. The student is expected to complete Synthesis week 4 in D2 year.

2. Dates for retake examinations are determined by the Office of Educational Affairs. Any student who has accrued an unmet requirement is encouraged to fulfill the unmet requirement at the earliest possible opportunity offered, provided they are academically ready.

3. A student may start summer term of year D1 with a maximum of one unmet requirement. A student who has accrued two unmet requirements at the start of Synthesis week 4 must halt their progress in the curriculum and may not proceed to summer term courses. The student must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence for Academic Study for their case to be discussed at their campus promotions committee and CCSP at the next scheduled meeting. The student must fulfill the unmet requirements during summer term, and upon successful completion, can progress to Decompressed Year 2 (D2). Their D2 curriculum would be modified such that they take Synthesis Week 4, Block 5 and DoCS1 summer term immediately following Block 4 of their D2 year (see figure below).

4. A student who fails a course must step out of the curriculum. Students who do not complete all requirements of all program designated, credit-associated D1 courses by the last summer retake exam date after the attempt to retake or repeat the assignment, when allowed, will fail the course. They must immediately step out of the curriculum and undergo review by their campus promotions committee and CCSP at their next scheduled meeting. These students are eligible for dismissal. The CCSP may, at its discretion, approve these students for a repeat year only if they have not already repeated a year. Any additional courses with unmet requirements will be transcripted with a failing grade.

**Repeat of the D1 Year.** See APPS, Section III.B. Repeat of the M1 year
Eligibility for promotion to Decompressed Year 3 (D3)
At the conclusion of Fall term of D2 year, decompressed students will officially change class (year of graduation) and complete the Phase 1 curriculum with their new class. This information will be provided to CCSP by the Office of Student Affairs.

The College will promote to the D3 year all students who satisfactorily complete all D2 curricular requirements as designated by the program. This includes all credit-associated courses (by assessment policy this includes all non-compensatory course components) as outlined in the College’s Assessment policies.

1. Students must pass all requirements of all credit-associated courses of the D2 year and incomplete or dropped courses from D1 year before promotion to the D3 year.

2. Dates for retake examinations are determined by the Office of Educational Affairs. Any student who has accrued an unmet requirement is encouraged to fulfill the unmet requirement at the earliest possible opportunity offered, provided they are academically ready.

3. Students may start a new Block course within the same curricular year with a maximum of 1 unmet requirement. A student who has accrued two unmet requirements at the start of a new block in the same curricular year must halt their progress in the curriculum and may not proceed to the new block. The student must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence for their case to be discussed at their campus promotions committee and CCSP at the next scheduled meeting. Any courses with unmet requirements will be transcripted with a failing grade. The student is eligible for a repeat year (provided they have not had a repeat year) or dismissal from the college as outlined below.

4. A student who fails a course must step out of the curriculum. Students who do not complete all requirements of all credit-associated D2 courses by the last summer retake exam date after the attempt to retake or repeat the assignment, when allowed, will fail the course. They must immediately step out of the curriculum and undergo review by their campus promotions committee and CCSP at their next scheduled meeting. These students are eligible for dismissal. The CCSP may, at its discretion, approve these students for a repeat year only if they have not already repeated a year. Any additional courses with unmet requirements will be transcripted with a failing grade.

Repeat of the D2 Year. See APPS, Section III.B. Repeat of the M1 year

Eligibility for Promotion to the M3 Year
The College will promote to the M3 year all students who do the following (A and B):

A. Satisfactorily complete all D3 curricular requirements. This includes all credit-associated courses (by assessment policy this includes all non-compensatory course components) as outlined in the College’s Assessment policies.
1. Students must pass all requirements of all credit-associated courses of the D3 year and pass USMLE Step 1 before promotion to the M3 year.

2. Dates for retake examinations are determined by the Office of Educational Affairs. Any student who has accrued an unmet requirement is encouraged to fulfill the unmet requirement at the earliest possible opportunity offered, provided they are academically ready. They must fulfill the requirements prior to sitting for the USMLE Step 1 Exam.

3. A student who has accrued two unmet requirements at the same time in the D3 year may continue in the curriculum but must retake exams, complete assignments or otherwise meet these unmet requirements at the earliest possible opportunity, provided they are academically ready. They must fulfill the requirements prior to sitting for the USMLE Step 1 exam.

4. A student who has accrued three unmet requirements in the D3 year must halt their progress in the curriculum and may not proceed to the next block. They must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence for their case to be discussed at their campus promotions committee and CCSP at their next scheduled meeting. The student is eligible for a repeat year (provided they are not already on a repeat year) or dismissal from the college as outlined below.

5. Students who do not complete all requirements of all credit-associated D3 courses after the attempt to retake or repeat the assignment, when allowed, will fail the course. They must immediately step out of the curriculum and undergo review by their campus promotions committee and CCSP at their next scheduled meeting. These students are eligible for dismissal. The CCSP may, at its discretion, approve these students for a repeat year only if they have not already repeated a year. Any additional courses with unmet requirements will be transcripted with a failing grade.

B. Students who have taken USMLE Step 1 will be recommended for promotion to the M3 year. The promotion will not be effective, however, until the fall M3 term (tenth term), and is dependent upon the receipt of a passing Step 1 score in the interim.

Students who are not recommended for promotion following the tenth term will not be allowed to begin clinical rotations.

Repeat of the D3 Year. See APPS, Section III.B. Repeat of the M1 year

Time Limits
Students must complete requirements for promotion and graduation within the following time limits, from the date of initial enrollment (M1 orientation). The College may dismiss students who do not meet these time limits.
Students must complete Phase 1, which includes passing USMLE Step 1, within a maximum of four years, with leaves of absence for any reason counting toward this time limit. Students must finish all graduation requirements within a maximum of seven years.

**Student responsibilities**

- Students who decompress are expected to work with a Learning Specialist and/or the Director of the Decompressed Program to develop a study plan for each block that encompasses both the time the block is in session as well as the additional, unscheduled time used for studying. This will give students the opportunity to try different study routines and find a method that works for them prior to the unscheduled study period.
- During the unscheduled time, students will turn in a weekly assignment that will be reviewed by the Director or designee. If a decompressed student does not turn in the assignment, turns in an assignment late or turns in a poor quality assignment, they must meet with their support team. If it becomes a pattern, the Director will write up professionalism concerns form.
- Decompressed students must have mandatory periodic check-ins to monitor progress - at least once during the block and once during the unscheduled time.
- Decompressed students must attend study / learning strategies sessions. This would be an ongoing series that includes sessions on changing mindset and elements within the Clinical reasoning course including time management, self-directed study, and test-taking skills. Frequency of these sessions will be determined in coordination with the Director and the Academic Support Team.
- Decompressed students must attend live or pre-recorded faculty or peer-educator led reviews / study sessions as scheduled by the Director and the Academic Support Team.

**Financial aid considerations**

Students in the decompressed program will be registered full time for three terms (D1 Fall, D1 Summer, D3 Spring) and part time for four terms (D1 Spring, D2 Fall, D2 Spring, D3 Fall) rather than being full time for the five terms of Phase 1. (Note: Full-time enrollment = 12+ credit hours/term; part-time enrollment = 6-11 credit hours/term.) Students will not be registered for the D2 summer term. Check [https://apps.registrar.uic.edu/tuition/professional/](https://apps.registrar.uic.edu/tuition/professional/) for tuition and fees.

**Course Footnotes (DoCS and Synthesis):**

*DoCS: Select DoCS sessions are recommended to help students learn Block material: Year D1 spring term related to Block 3, and Year D2 fall term related to Block 6. Students are not required to attend the recommended sessions, but must inform the DoCS coordinator whether or not they will participate to ensure sufficient resources. If students choose to attend these sessions, they are still expected to complete DoCS1 Spring term in Year D2 and DoCS2 Fall term in Year D3 in their entirety. There may be additional campus-specific clinical experience requirements to be discussed with the local DoCS course directors. *Students would be required to have additional clinical visits in Year D2 to maintain clinical experience in preparation for rejoining DoCS2 in Year D3 Fall term.
*Synthesis:* Synthesis weeks will be taken immediately following the corresponding Block course. Note that students will be registered and start Synthesis week 4 in D1 Summer term, have an Incomplete (I), and finish the course after Block 4 in D2 Summer term. If the student does not complete the course by the end of D2 Summer term, the grade will convert to Fail (F). See section on “Financial aid considerations” above for tuition implications.