

PHASE 1 DECOMPRESSION PROGRAM POLICY

POLICY NAME		PHASE 1 DECOMPRESSION PROGRAM POLICY	
Responsible party:	Office of Educational Affairs, Senior Associate and Associate Deans		
Audience:	Students, Faculty, Staff		
Approved by:	CCIA	Date:	01/08/2025

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 ADMISSIONS

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. Participation is entirely voluntary and not mandatory.

Students may not participate in the Decompressed Program if they have acquired a course failure (includes Blocks 1, 2, or 3, DoCS1 fall term, Synthesis fall term, Medical Colloquia fall term). Students who have elected to repeat a year are ineligible to join the Decompression Program.

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 two unmet requirements (UR) going into Block 3 are eligible. Students who pass this delayed Block 3 final exam attempt will continue in the Decompressed Program. Students with two URs who fail this block 3 final exam attempt, thus receiving a third UR should refer to the Academic

Policies & Professional Standards and must halt progress in the curriculum to request a repeat year, if eligible.

2. After the Block 3 Final exam: End of Synthesis week 3.

Students with up to two URs 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

	Fall term				Spring term				Summer term		
Year 1	B1	S1	B2	S2	B3	S3	Additional time to study for Block 3 final; retake exams for prior blocks; basics of B4 relevant for B5	B4	S4*	B5	Additional time to study for B5 final
	DoCS1				Attend select recommended DoCS1 sessions related to B3 to improve Block learning				DoCS1		
	MC				MC				No MC		
Year 2	B6	S6	Additional time to study for B6 final; Additional activities for enrichment		B7	B8	STUDENT SWITCHES CLASS; Prep for B4	B4	Finish Synthesis week 4. No registered coursework. Summer activities for enrichment; study & retake B4, if necessary		
	Attend select recommended DoCS2 sessions related to B6 to improve Block learning*				DoCS1*						
	MC				No MC						
Year 3	Prep for B7		B7	BRIAK		B8 + Step 1		TTC	Phase 2		
	DoCS2				DoCS2						
	No MC				No MC						

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.

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.

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 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.

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/>

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, checkpoint assessments, TBLs, DoCS assessments and NBMEs as scheduled.

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. This plan should include resources and study time needed for successful completion of future course work and plans for fulfilling previous unmet requirements by the dates set forth by the College of Medicine.
- 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. The 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/> for tuition and fees.

UNMET REQUIREMENTS IN THE DECOMPRESSION PROGRAM

Students in the Decompression Program may only accrue 2 UR or UR-CRR in Decompression Year 1, and 1 UR or UR-CRR in each Decompression year 2 and 3. Students should refer to the Academic Policy and Professional Standards in the event that they receive an unmet requirement.

DECOMPRESSION PROGRAM 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 as outlined in the College's Assessment policies and each individual course syllabus.

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

1. 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.
2. A student may start summer term of year D1 with a maximum of one unresolved unmet requirement (UR) or unmet requirement with course remediation required (UR-CRR). Any student who received an unmet requirement on the Block 3 exam prior to electing to join the Decompression Program will be required to sit for their second attempt of the Block 3 exam at the first scheduled time during the Spring Decompression term. A student who has two unresolved unmet requirements at the start of Synthesis week 4 must halt their progress in the curriculum. The student must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence. This student is eligible for a repeat year

or dismissal from the college. Their case will be discussed at their campus promotions committee and College Committee on Student Promotions (CCSP) at the next scheduled meeting. Any courses with unmet requirements will be assigned a failing grade.

3. A student who fails a course must halt their progress in 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. The student must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence. This student is eligible for a repeat year or dismissal from the college. Their case will be discussed at their campus promotions committee and College Committee on Student Promotions (CCSP) at the next scheduled meeting. Any courses with unmet requirements will be assigned a failing grade.

REPEAT OF THE D1 YEAR.

See APPS, Section III.B. Repeat of the First 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 as outlined in the College's Assessment policies and each individual course syllabus.

1. Students must pass all requirements of all credit-associated courses of the D2 year and incomplete 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 the Spring term of D2 year with a maximum of 1 unresolved unmet requirement. A student who accrues more than 1 unmet requirement during D2 year must halt their progress in the curriculum and may not proceed. The student must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence. This student is eligible for a repeat year or dismissal from the college. Their case will be discussed at their campus promotions committee and College Committee on Student Promotions (CCSP)

at the next scheduled meeting. Any courses with unmet requirements will be assigned a failing grade.

4. A student who fails a course must halt their progress in 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. The student must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence. This student is eligible for a repeat year or dismissal from the college. Their case will be discussed at their campus promotions committee and College Committee on Student Promotions (CCSP) at the next scheduled meeting. Any courses with unmet requirements will be assigned a failing grade.

REPEAT OF THE D2 YEAR.

See APPS, Section III.B. Repeat of the First 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 as outlined in the College's Assessment policies and each individual course syllabus.
 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.
 4. A student who has accrued two unmet requirements in the D3 year must halt their progress in the curriculum and may not proceed. The student must meet with the Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence. This student is eligible for a repeat year (provided they are not already on or had a repeat year) or dismissal from the college. Their case will be discussed at their campus promotions committee and College Committee on Student Promotions (CCSP) at the next scheduled meeting. Any courses with unmet requirements will be assigned a failing grade.
 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 halt their progress in the curriculum. The student must meet with the

Office of Student Affairs to request a Leave of Absence. This student is eligible for a repeat year (provided they are not already on or had a repeat year) or dismissal from the college. Their case will be discussed at their campus promotions committee and College Committee on Student Promotions (CCSP) at the next scheduled meeting. Any courses with unmet requirements will be assigned 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 First Year.

TIME LIMITS

Students in the Decompression Program must complete the requirements for promotion and graduation within the time limits outlined in the Academic Policies and Professional Standards.

PHASE 1 DECOMPRESSION PROGRAM POLICY	
Owner	Office of Educational Affairs, Senior Associate and Associate Deans
Location	https://medicine.uic.edu/education/md/md-curriculum/educational-policies/
Contact Information	Office of Educational Affairs com-edaf@uic.edu

Approval and Revisions History:	Archived version 2022-07-08: https://uofi.box.com/s/wdd4l1di2xup61dr0is9wp3xsq0bhif1
Forms and Resources	n/a

TABLE 1. PROGRAM CURRICULUM

	Fall term				Spring term			Summer term		
Year 1	B1	S1	B2	B R E A K	B3	S3	Additional time to study for Block 3 final; retake exams for prior blocks; basics of B4 relevant for B5	B	S4* B5	Additional time to study for B5 final
	DoCS1				Attend select recommended DoCS1 sessions related to B3 to improve Block learning			A	DoCS1	
	MC				MC			K	No MC	
Year 2	B6	S6	Additional time to study for B6 final; Additional activities for enrichment	B R E A K	STUDENT SWITCHES CLASS; Prep for B4	B4		B	Finish Synthesis week 4. No registered coursework. Summer activities for enrichment; study & retake B4, if necessary	
	Attend select recommended DoCS2 sessions related to B6 to improve Block learning*				DoCS1*			A		
	MC				No MC			K		
Year 3	Prep for B7	B7		B R E A K	B8 + Step 1		TTC	Phase 2		
	DoCS2				DoCS2					
	No MC				No MC					