

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION

PRESENTED BY: Roy Dobson, Chair, Academic Programs Committee of Council

DATE OF MEETING: March 21, 2013

SUBJECT: College of Medicine admission qualifications

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended:

That Council approve the College of Medicine admission requirement for a four-year baccalaureate degree by Saskatchewan residents at entrance to medicine effective for students applying to be admitted in September, 2015.

That Council approve the College of Medicine admission requirement for out-of-province (OP) applicants that all university courses taken prior to and after application will be considered in calculation of their average, effective for students applying to be admitted in September, 2014.

PURPOSE:

Under the University of Saskatchewan Act 1995, decisions regarding admission qualifications and enrolment quotas for university programs are to be approved by Council and confirmed by Senate. Admission qualifications are defined in the Admissions Policy as follows:

These are the credentials that an applicant must present in order to establish eligibility for admission. They include but are not restricted to objective qualifications such as high school subjects, secondary or post-secondary standing, minimum averages, English proficiency, and minimum scores on standardized tests. Qualifications may vary for some admission categories.

The motions if approved by Council will be presented to the Spring, 2013 meeting of University Senate for confirmation.

SUMMARY:

The change to the Medicine entrance qualifications for Saskatchewan residents replaces the current “best two years” admission qualification with the requirement that students present a four-year degree for entrance. The rationale for this change and specific implementation procedures are described in the attached material.

Out-of-province students already require a four-year degree; the motion to require all classes to be used in calculation of their average will reduce disputes about whether specific classes should or should not be used.

REVIEW:

The Academic Programs Committee discussed this change with the Acting Dean of Medicine, the Director of Admissions and the Admissions Coordinator for the College of Medicine at its meeting of February 27. The committee discussed the schedule for implementing this change and agreed that it was reasonable to require students to meet the revised requirements as soon as possible.

The Committee also noted that the college is changing its selection criteria so that it will no longer use the writing portion of the MCAT. Changes to selection criteria have been delegated to be approved by colleges.

ATTACHMENTS:

Existing college admission requirements as of October 2, 2012

Proposal documentation

Information package on Medicine admissions changes:

1. Admissions Requirements presently in effect
2. Summary of proposed changes and reports to faculty of the College of Medicine
3. Feedback on the changes received from other colleges and individuals, including Star-Phoenix article of February 1, 2013

Admission Requirements

College: Medicine
Program(s): M.D.

Admission Qualifications:

SASKATCHEWAN RESIDENTS

Academic performance for Saskatchewan residents is based on the applicant's two best full undergraduate years of study given that performance has been reasonably consistent or has improved and that the Prerequisite/MCAT requirement has been met.

- Prerequisite requirement or MCAT requirement. One of two options must be met.
 - **EITHER** Minimum average of 78% in required pre-requisite courses with no individual grade in a prerequisite below 60%.
 - Biology 120 and either Biology 121 or BIOL/BMSC 224
 - Chemistry 112 and 250
 - Physics 115 and 117
 - English 110 or any two of 111, 112, 113, 114
 - 6 credit units of Social Science/Humanities
 - Biomedical Science 200 and 230
 - **OR** an MCAT accumulated score of 26 in the Biological Science, Physical Science, and Verbal Reasoning Sections (with no section below 8) and N in the Writing Sample Section. **Note:** An MCAT is required from any student who completed their pre-requisite courses outside of University of Saskatchewan or University of Regina
- Two full years of undergraduate study (60 credit units) within two standard academic years (September - April) with a minimum average of 78% in the two year average for Saskatchewan residents,

OUT-OF-PROVINCE RESIDENTS

****NOTE****

The College of Medicine admission requirements for out-of-province residents are tentative pending approval of the University Senate on October 20th, 2012. Please check the website after October 20th, 2012 for information regarding the final approval of the admission requirements for out-of-province applicants.

Academic performance for Out-of-Province residents will be based on the MCAT Verbal Reasoning + Physical Sciences + Biological Sciences total score along with a required minimum GPA of 83% over all course work

(leading towards a four year degree) that is completed prior to application. Remaining courses completed for the degree after the date of application must minimally average 83%, as well.

- **MCAT Requirement.** All Out-of-Province applicants must complete the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) prior to application. Scores on the Verbal Reasoning, Physical Sciences and Biological Sciences sections must total a minimum of 30 (no score less than 8 on any section), and a minimum writing score of N. Selection of applicants invited to interview will be based on the MCAT Verbal Reasoning + Physical Sciences + Biological Sciences total score (MCAT Sum), with the Verbal Reasoning score being used to break ties. Scores must be obtained in one sitting prior to the application deadline and current within the last 5 years (earliest accepted scores for 2013 entry are 2008). The maximum number of times an applicant may take the MCAT is 5 times (additional sittings will not be accepted unless preapproved in writing by the Admissions Office, College of Medicine). While prerequisites are not mandatory for students applying under the "MCAT" requirement, applicants are strongly encouraged to complete equivalent/similar courses (particularly the biochemistry courses) to ensure readiness for the basic sciences covered in the first two years of the undergraduate medical curriculum. Registration for the MCAT is online at www.aamc.org/mcat.

Note: The MCAT requirement will be waived for out-of-province applicants that will have completed all of the prerequisite requirements at the U of S/U of R by April 30th, 2013. This exception to the MCAT requirement is for the current application cycle (deadline October 31, 2012) for entry into Medicine the Fall of 2013 **ONLY**. Future applications will require the MCAT by **ALL** out-of-province applicants.

- **Degree Requirement.** Application by out-of-province applicants can be made only during or after the final year of a four year degree. If a four year degree is completed prior to application, course-work for the degree must have been completed within a 48 month period. If applicants are in the final year of a four year degree, a minimum of 90 credit units must have been completed in the 36 months prior to the end of August immediately before application. All courses completed towards the four year degree at the date of application will be used for calculation of the grade-point-average (GPA). The minimum GPA required for application will be 83.0%. The four year degree must be completed by the time study of medicine starts. All remaining courses completed for the degree after the date of application must minimally average 83.0%

Selection Criteria:

1. Weighting

- The weighting of academic performance to personal qualities (College of Medicine Multiple Mini Interview - MMI) for Saskatchewan residents is 35:65. Out-of-province applicants invited for an interview will be ranked for admission based 100% on the applicant's performance in the MMI.

2. References

- Three references are required. Reference forms will be released at the time of interview offers. References are not scored; they are used on a rule in/rule out basis.

3. Criminal Record Check

- All applicants offered admission will be required to submit a criminal record check, including vulnerable sector screening to the College of Medicine by August 15 of the year of entry.

4. Standard First Aid Certificate

- Students accepted into the College of Medicine must provide a copy of a valid Standard First Aid Certificate and proof of certification in CPR for Health Care Providers Level C prior to starting medicine classes in August.

Categories of Applicants:

90% of first year positions are reserved for Saskatchewan residents. To increase the number of Aboriginal physicians, 10% of first year positions are available for qualified, self-identified First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students through the Aboriginal Equity Program (Note: these seats are included in the 90% allocated Saskatchewan positions).

1. Saskatchewan Residents

- Applicants must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants and have lived in Canada for at least three years prior to September 1 of the year in which admission is being sought. Applicants normally must have resided in Saskatchewan for three years directly preceding September 1 of the year in which admission is being sought. However, applicants who have left the province, but have previously lived in Saskatchewan for an accumulated period of 15 years (permanent residency) will be treated as residents.
- Applicants who have previously lived in Saskatchewan for an accumulated period of less than 15 years, and do not qualify under the three year condition, will receive credit of one year toward the three-year requirement for every five years residency in the province.
- Applicants who meet the same criteria based on residency in Yukon, Northwest, or Nunavut territory can apply as a Saskatchewan resident. An exception to the three-year ruling may be made for members of the Armed Forces of Canada or RCMP, or for an applicant whose spouse, parent, or guardian is a member of the Armed Forces of Canada or RCMP, who has moved to Saskatchewan due to being reassigned. In these cases, the applicant **must have resided in Saskatchewan** for at least 12 consecutive months directly preceding September 1 of the year of application and obtained written approval to waive the 3-year requirement.
- Individuals who have been in three years of full time study at the University of Saskatchewan or University of Regina directly preceding the date of entry being sought are considered to be Saskatchewan residents.

2. Canadian Out of Province Residents

- Up to 10% of positions may be offered to out of province applicants. Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents and have lived in Canada for at least three years prior to September 1 of the year in which admission is being sought.

3. Aboriginal Equity Access Program

- Ten percent (10%) of first-year spaces are reserved for persons of Canadian Aboriginal descent (with a preference for applicants meeting the Saskatchewan residency requirement and a maximum of five equity seats open to out-of-province applicants of Aboriginal descent accepted through the equity seats each year).
- Note: Applicants of Aboriginal ancestry are first considered within the Saskatchewan pool, and if not competitive, then within the equity pool. Applicants applying through the Aboriginal Equity Access Program will have the option of either completing the prerequisite requirement or presenting the MCAT.

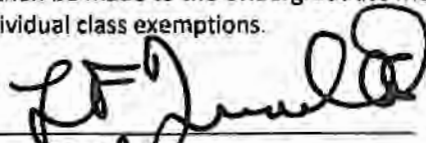
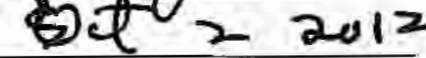
4. Special Case Category

- The Admissions Committee will consider special case entrants submitting requests in writing.
- Note: Advice on the suitability of special case requests should be obtained from the Admission's Office prior to submission. An example would be a single parent whose family responsibilities prevent them from attending university full time or a student involved on a university sports team with a significant time commitment (training, games/competitions, and travel) making it difficult to take a full course load.
- Special case requests should be made prior to each academic year, and previous requests will be taken into consideration when reviewing subsequent requests.

5. Admission with Advanced Standing

- All applicants must follow the complete admissions process. After being accepted into the first year class, formal application may then be made to the Undergraduate Medical Education Committee for any advanced standing, or individual class exemptions.

Dean's Signature:

Date:

Summary of proposed changes to College of Medicine admission qualifications and selection criteria

1. Changes to admission qualifications:

Admission qualifications are defined as follows:

These are the credentials that an applicant must present in order to establish eligibility for admission. They include but are not restricted to objective qualifications such as high school subjects, secondary or post-secondary standing, minimum averages, English proficiency, and minimum scores on standardized tests. Qualifications may vary for some admission categories.

Changes to Admission Qualifications require approval by University Council and confirmation from University Senate.

At its January 30, 2013 faculty council meeting, the College of Medicine approved the following changes to admission qualifications:

That the College of Medicine implement the requirement for a 4-year baccalaureate degree by Saskatchewan residents at entrance to medicine according to the framework as described [in the documentation]

This change will be effective for students applying to be admitted in September, 2015.

That for out-of-province (OP) applicants, all university courses taken prior to and after application will be considered. Courses taken before and after application must both average 83.0% for an application and an offer of a seat in medicine to stand, respectively.

As previously, a 4-year degree must be completed by the time study of medicine starts.

This change will be effective for students applying to be admitted in September, 2014.

Following review by the Academic Programs Committee, these changes will be submitted for approval to the March 21 meeting of University Council and for confirmation to the April 20 meeting of University Senate.

2. Change to selection criteria:

Selection criteria are defined as follows:

These are the means by which a college assesses and ranks its applicants for admission. They include but are not restricted to admission test scores, cut-off averages, interview scores, departmental recommendations, auditions, portfolios, letters of reference, admission essays, definitions of essential abilities for professional practice, and the relative weighting to be given to the various requirements. Selection criteria may vary for some admission categories.

Authority to approve changes to selection criteria has been delegated by University Council to colleges.

At the faculty council meeting, the College of Medicine also approved this change to selection criteria:

That as of the 2013 application cycle, the writing sample of the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) no longer be considered for any applicant to the College of Medicine.

This change will be effective for students applying to be admitted in September, 2013.

It does not require any further approval.

FACULTY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORT FORM

COMMITTEE: Admissions Committee

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dr. Barry Ziola

This Report should be placed on the Faculty Council Agenda for:

- ☐ No Report
- ☐ Information Only
- ☐ Discussion
- ☒ Decision

☐ The following items are of particular interest to the Faculty Council, but do not require any action.

☒ The following items require action/approval by Faculty Council.

Signature



Date 2013.01.14

REPORT TO FACULTY COUNCIL 2013.01.30

MOTION

That the College of Medicine implement the requirement for a 4-year baccalaureate degree by Saskatchewan residents at entrance to medicine according to the framework described below.

On behalf of the Admissions Committee,



Dr. Barry Ziola
Director of Admissions

PREAMBLE: The implementation framework attached to the notice-of-motion tabled at the 2012.11.28 Faculty Council Meeting had been reached by the Admissions Committee through seven hours of discussion spread over three meetings held September 6, October 9, and November 9, 2012. The implementation framework was distributed to academic units at the U. of Regina and the U. of S. immediately upon the notice-of-motion being tabled with Faculty Council in November. This was done to get as wide a range of feedback on the details of the proposal as possible. Feedback received as of January 4 contained three consistent themes. First, moving to the 4-year degree requirement was viewed as positive. Second, the two proposed transition years were viewed as negative (nightmare for advising of students!). And third, the proposed 60 months of enrollment time to complete the degree was viewed as too long.

Based on this input, the 4-year degree implementation framework was revised within the Admissions Office and then sent out to Admissions Committee members via email for consideration. The Admissions Committee currently has 19 sitting members and replies were received from 16, with all being in favour of the revised 4-year degree implementation framework. Consequently, the revised implementation framework for the 4-year degree requirement, as provided below, is being brought forward for decision.

FRAMEWORK FOR MOVING TOWARDS A 4-YEAR DEGREE REQUIREMENT FOR ENTRANCE TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES IN MEDICINE AT THE U. OF S.

[1] The admission requirements for 2013 applicants remain unchanged.

[2] For 2014 and later applicants, ≥ 90 CU must be completed before application and, if an applicant is offered a seat in medicine, the degree requirements for a 4-year Bachelor's degree must be completed by the end of June prior to entry to medicine [the only exception to the degree requirement is described immediately below]. The degree must have been completed in ≤ 40 months of university enrollment¹. All university courses completed as of the end of December following application will be used in the GPA calculation for admission purposes. Although courses completed in the calendar year following application

¹ Based on a 4-year Bachelor's degree being comprised of at least 120 credits, the following will apply. If 18 or more credits are taken during September through April, this will be considered to be equivalent to 8 months of enrollment time. If fewer than 18 credits are taken during September to April, or for course-work taken outside of the September to April period, each 3 credits will be considered as 0.8 month of enrollment time. No more than 6 credits of distance education are allowed per 30 credits and the expectation is that the 4-year degree will be completed in a time period of not more than 6 years.

will not be used in calculating an applicant's GPA for admission purposes, academic performance in these courses must average $\geq 78\%$.

[3] Individuals in a non-direct entry college can apply if prior to application ≥ 90 CU have been completed in ≤ 32 months of university enrollment and the initial coursework started no more than 6 years earlier. At least 120 CU must be completed by the end of June prior to entry to medicine. If in later years of or having finished a non-direct entry program, the enrollment time for completed coursework will be based on ≥ 24 CU per 8 months. GPA calculation for admission will be done as in [2].

[4] Students in non-direct entry colleges who are within one year of degree completion can request a one year deferral if offered a seat in medicine.

[5] In all cases, the maximum number of introductory (junior) courses allowed will be what is permitted by the degree granting institution the applicant is studying at. Any introductory courses completed beyond the numerical maximum allowed for the 4-year degree will not be considered for admission purposes. If requested, applicants must provide a program monitor signed by an academic advisor for the degree program that a student is registered in, confirming courses completed and to be completed to meet the 4-year degree program requirements.

[6] Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) course transfer credits only will be considered towards meeting the prerequisite requirement and will not be included when calculating the GPA for admission purposes. The start and completion date for AP/IB courses will be as if they had been taken during the 1st year of university, not the last year of secondary school.

[7] Students starting a 2nd degree program within one year of completing a 4-year degree must be within 30 CU of completing the new degree program at the time of application and complete the degree requirements by the end of the following June to have courses in their 2nd degree also count towards the GPA calculation for admission purposes as described in [2]. The 1st degree (≥ 120 CU) must have been completed within ≤ 40 months of enrollment. The enrollment time for the 2nd degree will be based on ≥ 24 CU per 8 months. Any introductory courses taken beyond the first degree must be a requirement of the 2nd degree program.

[8] For students returning to university after at least one year away and starting a new 4-year degree program, only courses completed previously that are used in their current degree program will be carried forward and used in the GPA calculation for admissions purposes. Applicants must be within 30 CU of completing the new degree program at the time of application and complete the degree requirements by the end of the following June. GPA calculation for admission purposes will be as described in [2]. Enrollment time for completion of the new degree program will depend on the number of CU carried forward and based on ≥ 24 CU per 8 months.

[9] The requirement to complete either prescribed prerequisite classes at the U. of Regina or the U. of S., or the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) remains in place.

[10] For applicants with an incomplete or complete post-graduate degree at application, all courses taken prior to entering graduate school will be used (the time requirements for completion of the 4-year degree needed to start graduate studies will be the same as if the applicant were applying to medicine), as will all graduate classes completed by the end of December of the year of application. For applicants with a completed post-graduate degree at application, if the degree completed is a Master's degree, remove 9 CU worst marks, then calculate the GPA. If the degree completed is a Ph.D., remove 15 CU worst marks, then calculate the GPA.

NOTE Current requirements for Saskatchewan residents are found in [2] below.

[1] RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGES:

The U. of S. College of Medicine (CoM) currently has the least strenuous academic entrance requirement of the 14 English-speaking Canadian Medical Schools. Applicants who will have only two years (60 CU) of university completed at the point of entry to medicine can be accepted. Like us, the U. of Alberta still allows “2-year” students to apply, but such applicants must have a much higher minimum application GPA of 3.7 compared to others with more university training at 3.3. Six schools allow entrance with three years of university completed, while the other six require an undergraduate degree completed at the point of entry. The University of Western Ontario Medical School even goes further by requiring an honours degree at the point of entry. Moving to a 4-year undergraduate degree required at the point of entry to our medical school thus will better align with what is required at the other Canadian English Medical Schools.

Our current “best 2-year” requirement, which has been in place for 25 years, allows students to literally “work” towards getting “two best” academic years for GPA calculation for admission purposes. Increasingly, the Admissions Office is seeing applicants who have changed degree programs, including changing colleges, in order to get to two academic years that give a high enough GPA to, initially, be granted an interview and, subsequently, be competitive for admission. Due to degree requirements in the individual’s so-called new program, applicants are becoming increasingly aggressive in asserting that junior-level classes are needed for the program they are now in. This loading of two academic years with even a few additional junior levels classes provides an unfair advantage compared to those students who enter a degree program and progress steadily towards completion. Moving towards and ultimately requiring a 4-year degree be completed at the point of entry to medicine will stop this manipulation of academic requirements due to how our current academic requirements are defined.

Moving to a 4-year degree required at entry to medicine will also bring to the CoM not only better educated students, but also students who have shown they can persist and, more importantly, succeed, in completing an academic program at a high academic level. Five years ago, we had 46.4% of our incoming class have a Bachelor’s degree. This has steadily declined to a low of 36.0% this year. As the average age of our incoming students over the same five years has remained relatively constant at 22.3 to 23.3, it is clear that more students are obtaining entrance on two “good” academic years, without having completed a degree. With the move to a 4-year degree requirement, the average age of our incoming students will move closer to 24.0-24.5 years, with the added 1.5-2.0 years bringing desirable increased maturity in our incoming students. As only some 20% of applicants get accepted into medical school each year, individuals unsuccessful in getting into medicine will have a broader spectrum of career opportunities with a completed baccalaureate degree. This is the so-called “plan B” that we strongly advise individuals to have should they not be able to achieve a seat in medicine. Our requiring a 4-year degree to enter medicine thus indirectly will facilitate career alternatives for those not successful in getting into medicine.

Waiting one year to implement the 4-year degree requirement at the point of entry will allow transitional planning by students who have recently changed programs or who have already started university recently without a focused program of study. Students currently in their second full year of a degree program and progressing through their program at the usual 30 CU per year will form the bulk of the initial cohort of applicants able to apply in October 2014 for entry in August 2015 with a just-completed 4-year degree.

The relaxation of doing 30 CU over the September-April time frame and instead allowing a degree to be completed in 40 months of total enrollment time is intentional. This is being recommended to allow students to plan their undergraduate degree studies to accommodate work, travel, collegiate/national/Olympic team sports, or events occurring in their lives that require a reduced study load at any given time. Up to now, students were only allowed to undertake a reduced course load through a special case request (as described below in 2.3). Special cases accepted by the Admissions Committee allow students to do 24 CU rather than

the usual 30 per 8 months of enrollment time. The Admissions Committee has had to deal with an increasing number of such special requests over the past few years. By relaxing the time frames for completion of a 4-year degree to 40 months of enrollment (i.e., what has been allowed upon application: 24 CU/8 months = a 120 CU degree completed in 40 months), most of these special case requests will no longer be needed as individuals will be able to plan their baccalaureate studies based on their own circumstances, including the increasing need to work to finance their education.

Many individuals start university and for numerous reasons do not do well initially. Often such individuals later come back to university and then do well. The provision of allowing individuals who have been away from university for at least one year to essentially initiate a new 4-year degree program (i.e., an academic “restart”) and leave most (perhaps all) of their earlier “bad” academic performance behind is based on recognition of these facts. Such “restart” students generally are a bit older and more mature, ultimately coming to medicine with a diversity of experiences and having had to overcome an initial difficult start to their post secondary education. These individuals have historically shown they have a high probability of being very good to exceptional students in medicine.

Currently, only students who are in their final year of their MSc or PhD programs can request a year deferral on entry. The proposal to extend this same deferral possibility to students in non-direct entry colleges (law, pharmacy, nursing, nutrition, veterinary medicine) who are within one year of degree completion is based on students with such completed degrees bringing diversity and a unique perspective to the study of medicine. It will also allow the CoM to counter criticism from our sister colleges that we “poach” their students with no regard for impact this has on those colleges.

Lastly, the provision of removing the lowest 9 or 15 CU for applicants with completed MSc or PhD degrees, respectively, is based on continuing to acknowledge the time commitment needed to achieve these degrees and the desirability of having such individuals undertake medical training. Individuals with post-graduate training bring diversity to our medical classes and increasing their number in our incoming classes should contribute to the research mandate of the college.

[2] CURRENT REQUIREMENTS FOR SASKATCHEWAN RESIDENTS:

[2.1] Competitive Average for Admission.

To establish an academic average for consideration by the Admissions Committee, students must complete two full undergraduate years of study. A full course load is defined as thirty credit units, or 10 one-term courses, taken between September and April at the University of Saskatchewan or the University of Regina. Saskatchewan residents must attain a minimum of 78% in the two-year average to be considered for admission. Courses taken during summer (May to August) are not considered in the two-year average. Students questioning whether they meet the two full course load years should contact the Admissions Office.

For Saskatchewan residents (as defined in the Residency and Citizenship Section), the current academic year will be considered on the assumption that he/she will satisfactorily complete the April examinations. In other words, the current year may be used in the two full-year (competitive) average for admission. Saskatchewan residents attending universities outside Saskatchewan must have official transcripts with final grades reported sent to the Admissions Office by May 31 in order to have the current year considered for inclusion in the Competitive Average. Offers of acceptance made to Saskatchewan residents attending non-SK universities will be conditional upon timely receipt of the final transcripts.

Applicants may improve their average for admission by taking (an) additional full year(s) of university study. However, all full years must lead to a degree or, where students already have (an) undergraduate degree(s), to a degree in another discipline. It is not acceptable for students who have already spent two years at university to subsequently take largely 100-level introductory courses to improve their average, nor is it

acceptable for students to repeat a course they have already taken and use the new grade for competitive purposes. Students working toward a second/subsequent degree or students taking more than three or four years to complete a 3- or 4-year degree, respectively, must obtain preapproval of additional full years of university from the Admissions Office to confirm suitability for use in the competitive two full year average. It is a student's responsibility to ensure all courses within a full year count toward their current declared degree/program.

[2.2] Graduate Students.

In considering graduate students, the average may be based on the following, or the two best full undergraduate years, whichever works to best advantage. Course-based graduate program, which may or may not include a research project. The average of all grades in the program will count as one full year combined with the best two full undergraduate years. The post-graduate program must be comparable to at least one full academic year (30 credit units). Master's thesis-based program. The average of all Master's grades (minimum of 9 credit units) will count as one full year combined with the best two full undergraduate years. Ph.D. thesis-based program. The average of all graduate grades (minimum of 15 credit units) will count as one full year combined with the best full undergraduate year.

If an applicant with a M.Sc. or a Ph.D. degree has completed fewer than 9 credit units of graduate classes at the point that their program has been completed, then their post-graduate academic course work will be calculated on a course-weighted basis together with their two best full undergraduate years. If an applicant with a Ph.D. degree has completed 9 or more, but fewer than 15 credit units of graduate classes, then their post-graduate academic course work will be weighted as equivalent to a full year and combined with their best two full undergraduate years.

For all graduate programs, students must have completed all requirements for their degree, including successful defense of the thesis, if applicable, by May 31, 2013. Graduate programs not complete by the required date will not invalidate an application, but will result in the competitive average being based on the best two undergraduate years.

[2.3] Special Cases.

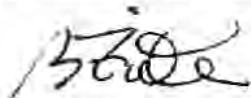
The Admissions Committee will consider special case entrants submitting requests in writing. Note: Advice on the suitability of special case requests should be obtained from the Admission's Office prior to submission. An example would be a single parent whose family responsibilities prevent them from attending university full time or a student involved on a university sports team with a significant time commitment (training, games/competitions, and travel) making it difficult to take a full course load. Special case requests should be made prior to each academic year, and previous requests will be taken into consideration when reviewing subsequent requests.

REPORT TO FACULTY COUNCIL
2013.01.30

MOTION

That for out-of-province (OP) applicants, all university courses taken prior to and after application will be considered. Courses taken before and after application must both average $\geq 83.0\%$ for an application and an offer of a seat in medicine to stand, respectively. As previously, a 4-year degree must be completed by the time study of medicine starts.

On behalf of the Admissions Committee,



Dr. Barry Ziola
Director of Admissions

Current wording: All courses completed towards the four year degree at the date of application will be used for calculation of grade-point-average (GPA, the minimum GPA required for application will be 83.0%, the four year degree must be completed by the time study of medicine starts, and remaining courses completed for the degree after the date of application must minimally average 83.0%.

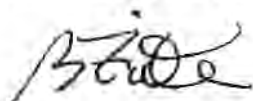
Rationale: Determining exactly which classes have been used for granting of a 4-year degree has proven difficult with some OP transcripts. The motion moves the assessment of GPA to include all classes taken prior to and after application, obviating the need to determine which classes are and are not related to the required degree. For the majority (> 90%) of OP applicants, this change will have no effect. It will only affect those OP applicants who have taken extra classes or who have changed programs part way along the path to a 4-year degree.

**REPORT TO FACULTY COUNCIL
2013.01.30**

MOTION

That as of the 2013 application cycle, the writing sample of the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) no longer be considered for any applicant to the College of Medicine

On behalf of the Admissions Committee,



Dr. Barry Ziola
Director of Admissions

Current requirements: To pass the MCAT, a Saskatchewan resident's verbal reasoning, biological sciences, and physical sciences scores must total ≥ 26 with no score below 8, and the writing score must be N or higher. To pass the MCAT, an out-of-province resident's comparable MCAT scores must total ≥ 30 with no score below 8, and the writing score must be N or higher.

Rationale: The new MCAT to be used as of January 2015 will not contain a writing sample. As a lead-in to the new 2015 MCAT, the current MCAT as of January 2013, similarly will no longer include the writing sample. The motion intent is to remove the writing sample from any further consideration, as applicants going forward will not be writing it.

Note that applicants already having written the MCAT with the appropriate required MCAT sum and no score less than 8, but with a prior writing sample of M or lower will now be considered to have passed their MCAT. Such individuals will be few in number, declining to none as the 5-year window for MCAT results moves forward.

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Here is the feedback provided by various academic units at the University of Regina and the U. of S. Comments were initially solicited on the notice-of motion that was tabled with the Faculty of Medicine Council on November 28th. The revised proposal approved by Faculty of Medicine Council on January 30 was sent out to the same academic units as initially, but few additional comments were returned. The additional comments that were provided are included as a NOTE at the end of the appropriate section.

[1] B. Roesler; Head, Dept of Biochemistry, U. of S.

The Department of Biochemistry reviewed the proposal and commented back that (i) the Department Faculty are in general agreement with moving to a degree requirement.

[2] Daphne Taras, Dean and Professor, Edwards School of Business; U. of S.

I can't see any implications for Edwards other than this actually will make it just a little easier to have a qualified applicant pool for our joint MD-MBA.

[[3] Nick Ovsenek; Associate Dean, Biomedical Sciences and Graduate Studies, College of Medicine U. of S.

I think it is safe to assume, from many conversations I have had over the years with department heads and faculty in the Biomedical Sciences, that there is strong support for the requirement of a 4 yr Bachelor's degree for admission into the MD program, as is being proposed by the Admissions Committee.

NOTE: Dr. Ovsenek provided the following comment on the revamped proposal approved by the Faculty of Medicine Council --- *Very thorough and I agree, essentially, with all of it.*

[4] Peta Bonham-Smith; Vice Dean Science, College of Arts and Science, U. of S.

Just before the break, I took the Notice of Motion to my heads table, that was all six Division of Science dept heads plus the five BMSC heads. There was unanimous support for the motion.....

There was agreement around the table that there is capacity in the 3rd and 4th years of our degree programs to accommodate the extra students.

.....We are excited that the Admissions Committee has determined to move forward in this direction.

NOTE: Dr. Bonham-Smith provided the following comment at the end of January --- *I like the revamped proposal.*

[5] Kevin O'Brien; Academic Program Coordinator, Faculty of Arts, U. of Regina

Our team of academic advisors have reviewed the proposal and find that it is positive overall. We think it treats our students fairly. We also believe the relaxation of the 30 credit hours between September and April will be well-received by our students.

[6] Nurul Chowdhury; Associate Dean, Student Affairs, College of Engineering, U. of S.

In general, we support the admissions requirement proposal from the College of Medicine. If approved, it will encourage students to complete a full 4-year university degree rather than picking courses just to boost the average. Individuals unsuccessful in getting into medicine will still have other career opportunities with a 4-year university degree.

The proposed admissions requirement will be good for the engineering students. Based on the increasing interest shown by our students for biomedical engineering, we anticipate that many students would like to finish an engineering degree before getting into medicine. Even if they are unsuccessful, they have established a very good career potential.

NOTE: Dr. Chowdhury recently provided the following comment --- *I have reviewed the alterations and..., our earlier correspondence still stands.*

[7] Responses from ten Anatomy and Cell Biology faculty were compiled and forwarded by Dr. Jennifer Chlan.

All ten faculty were strongly in favour of requiring that Saskatchewan applicants have a 4 year undergraduate degree. The primary reasons for this were as follows.

A. Increased personal and academic maturity of the Year 1 medical student cohort: Increased personal maturity was the most common reason listed by faculty as a good reason to require that applicants have completed a 4-year undergraduate degree. Other faculty commented that increased academic maturity would increase medical students' ability to assimilate the large amount of information they encounter in medical school.

B. Reduction in the number of students who only select "easy" grade" courses to incongruously manipulate the current admissions process. An overhaul of the old admission requirements was thought to be long overdue for this particular reason.

C. These new admission requirements reflect the importance and value that graduate students (i.e. those with an MSc or PhD) have as future MD/

clinical scientists, and allow for their graduate school marks to be accounted for in a meaningful way during the application process.

[8] M. Louise Humbert; Associate Dean, Undergraduate Program, College of Kinesiology

Keeran Wagner and I have reviewed the proposed changes and we are in complete support of them. We believe that this will help us as students will be required to have Keeran (our program monitor) confirm that they are working towards a degree. We have been able to do this with Sherrill [College of Medicine Admissions Coordinator] over the past year, and we feel this has really helped us limit the tactics of some students.

We anticipate increased demand for our College and this will pose some challenges for us. We have discussed this at our Undergraduate Program Committee and we will continue to do so.

[9] Yvonne M. Shevchuk; Associate Dean, Academic, College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, U. of S.

Myself, Dean David Hill and Diane Favreau, our Academics Advisor have reviewed the document and we do not have any concerns with the proposal.

[10] Nader Mobed; Associate Dean (Academic), Faculty of Science, University of Regina

I am writing to confirm that I fully support the proposal as it now stands.

[11] Angela Busch; Chair, Admissions Committee, School of Physical Therapy, U. of S.

The School of PT Admission Committee reviewed this motion at our meeting on Tuesday. We have no concerns or suggestions. We agreed that there is good rationale for the motion.

[12] Phil Woods, RPN, Associate Dean Research, College of Nursing, U. of S. on behalf of the College's leadership Team.

Thank-you for the opportunity to review and provide feedback for the proposed framework for moving towards a 4-year degree requirement for entrance into undergraduate studies in Medicine at the U of S. The College of Nursing has reviewed the framework and is in support of this more rigorous entrance requirement which will align the College with other Medical schools across the country.

The proposed changes to the entrance requirement will level the playing field for all applicants (i.e., those who are working towards a degree vs. those manipulating the two best academic years for GPA calculation). The result will be a slightly more mature student with increased likelihood of success. The College of Nursing has witnessed a similar success in the Post-Degree BSN program where the students have demonstrated success with their previous degrees and as a result can manage the demanding program with less attrition rate than our previous NEPS students.

We are also in favour of the one year deferral for students who are near completion of their previous degree. This may have a positive effects on our Post-Degree BSN seats as there are typically a few students each year that leave the program once they have received an acceptance letter into Medicine. Under this new admissions requirement, these students may choose to stay to complete the two year Post-Degree Program.

From a research perspective, it was welcoming to see the continued desirability to attract students who have MSc or PhD degrees. We agree this foundation in research training should contribute to the research mandate of the college.

NOTE: The College of Nursing Leadership Team provided the following comment in mid February --- *After review of the revised motion, the only potential issue that the team identified was around the tight timelines which may become a barrier for students with extended illness, or family situations. However, the Team noted that the “special cases” clause could allow for a greater flexibility to accommodate these students.*

[13] Here is a copy of an unsolicited email received from Mark Taylor, MD. Ironically, he is not one of our College of Medicine alumni from either the undergraduate training or residency training perspective.

I wanted to personally thank you and your colleagues for making a wise decision in regards to the U of S medical school admissions process.

Implementing a degree requirement will ensure a steady stream of quality medical school entrants that have both the skills and maturity that it takes to become excellent physicians. This is exactly the direction that the U of S needs to go if it is to rebuild its greatness.

Good work.

[14] From: <Wasylow-Ducasse>, Andrea <andrea.wasylow@usask.ca>
Date: Tuesday, February 19, 2013 11:50 AM
To: Barry Ziola User <brz415@campus.usask.ca>
Cc: "Bueckert, Sherrill" <sherrill.bueckert@usask.ca>, "Stoicheff, Peter" <peter.stoicheff@usask.ca>, "Bonham-Smith, Peta" <peta.bonhams@usask.ca>, "Parkinson, David" <david.john.parkinson@usask.ca>, "McMullen, Linda" <lm039@mail.usask.ca>
Subject: RE: 4-year degree at entrance to medicine

Good morning Dr. Ziola,

I am writing on behalf of Dean Stoicheff and Vice-Deans Parkinson, Bonham-Smith, and McMullen, to convey their support of the proposal.

Please let me know if the Dean's Office can offer anything further.

Best,
Andrea

Andrea Wasylow-Ducasse
Executive Assistant to Dean Peter Stoicheff
and Projects Officer

College of Arts & Science, University of Saskatchewan

Attachment: Star Phoenix article February 1, 2013

Medical school moves to change entrance requirements to stop "games"

BY JANET FRENCH, THE STARPHOENIX FEBRUARY 1, 2013

Applicants to the province's sole medical school are manipulating the current system of entrance requirements, and the admissions office wants it to stop.

The University of Saskatchewan's medical school currently has the least-stringent entry requirements of any English medical school in the country, says a college report. It's prompting applicants fighting for a spot to "hedge hop" around the university in pursuit of easy A-grades rather than adequately prepare for medical school.

Barry Ziola, director of admissions for the college of medicine, wants new applicants to medicine to have completed an undergraduate degree, effective for the class beginning in September 2015. Right now, entrance marks for the highly-competitive program are calculated based on a student's two best years of undergraduate study.

"We found students were hopping from college to college, even though they're supposed to be progressing toward a degree," Ziola said. "We had one applicant last year, who, we just simply refused to accept the application because they had done one year in one college, one year in another college, and one year in another college and they wanted us to take the best two years and say, 'Now we're good to go.'"

Ziola, who has headed admissions for about eight years, says the stakes are high when 900 people apply annually for 100 spots in medical school. Although the admission requirements have been the same for 25 years, the "gaming" is only recently on the rise.

Five years ago, about eight-to-12 per cent of first-year students were admitted with two years of undergraduate classes (the rest have undergraduate or graduate degrees). That has now risen to more than 20 per cent, he said, as students manipulate the system to obtain higher averages.

Students were also becoming more aggressive in pushing for more introductory-level courses to be allowed in the calculation of their grade point average (GPA), again, conferring an unfair advantage over those taking more challenging classes each year, Ziola said.

"Moving to a four-year degree required at entry to medicine will also bring to the (college) not only better-educated students, but also students who have shown they can persist and, more importantly, succeed, in completing an academic program at a high academic level," the college report said.

Saskatchewan applicants must have a GPA of at least 78 per cent to be considered for med school.

Ziola can't say whether some current medical students at the U of S aren't the best candidates — the system is set up for them to succeed once enrolled, he says. Just one student has been asked to

leave the program in 11 years due to poor performance. The changes, which were approved earlier²¹ this week by the college's faculty council, would also bring Saskatchewan in line with many other Canadian medical schools. Six require an undergrad degree, and the University of Western Ontario wants an honours degree. The University of Alberta will allow students in with two years of undergraduate training, but their minimum GPA requirement is higher. Other Canadian schools require at least three years of undergraduate classes.

The proposed changes have some critics. After word spread earlier this week, angry parents whose kids intend to apply to medical school called Ziola's office upset, saying it's unfair their kids will have to wait longer, and pay more tuition, before applying.

"The helicopter parents out there are sometimes as aggressive, or even more aggressive, than their kids," he says.

Ziola points out that since most applicants will not be admitted to medical school, it would serve them better to work toward an undergraduate degree for their plan B career. The first cohort of students subject to the new rules would be those students currently in their first year of university.

Another proposed change is to allow students to complete their four undergraduate years within five years, allowing some flexibility for part-time workers, parents, and high-level athletes. Applicants who are finishing Masters or PhDs would also be allowed to drop a few of their lowest grades from their entrance GPAs in an effort to attract these desirable candidates.

Ziola hopes the proposal will go before University Council for approval in March. The changes also require the blessing of the university senate.

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