



| STUDENT Handbook

2025-2026



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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW & HISTORY

Founded in 2021, Alice L. Walton School of Medicine (AWSOM) is a nonprofit, four-year MD program enhancing allopathic medical education with the arts, humanities, and whole health principles. The School's culture embraces self-care, empowering students to care for their well-being and that of their patients.

The state-of-the-art medical education facility is located on the Crystal Bridges campus, also home to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and Heartland Whole Health Institute.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Students,

Welcome to Alice L. Walton School of Medicine. During your time here, it's our responsibility to help you grow both personally and professionally. The AWSOM team provides you with the resources needed to take the necessary steps to become a physician leader. This handbook is designed to guide you through your educational experience. Inside, you'll find essential policies, procedures, and guidelines to help you navigate each phase of your medical training. We encourage you to read it thoroughly and reach out to our faculty or staff whenever you have questions or need further guidance.

Sincerely,



Sharmila Makhija, MD, MBA
Founding Dean and CEO
Alice L. Walton School of Medicine

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

MISSION

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine trains physicians who are devoted to transforming the health of medically underserved and rural communities in Arkansas, its surrounding states, and beyond. AWSOM physicians make a difference by pioneering whole health principles, deploying contemporary technologies, and developing novel partnerships to bridge the gaps to high quality medical care and to promote health and well-being for all individuals and communities.

VISION

Equip and support physicians and health professionals to successfully tackle the healthcare challenges of the 21st century.

VALUES

- Empathy
- Self-Care
- Humanism
- Entrepreneurialism
- Community Focus

ACCREDITATION

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine has achieved preliminary accreditation with the [Liaison Committee on Medical Education](#) (LCME). AWSOM is certified as an institution of higher education in the state of Arkansas and is authorized to provide degree instruction leading to a Doctor of Medicine (MD) through the [Arkansas Division of Higher Education](#) (ADHE). AWSOM is seeking institutional accreditation with an organization with federal recognition as a Title IV gatekeeper.

Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine has achieved preliminary accreditation with the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). Students graduating from a medical school with preliminary accreditation status with the LCME are considered graduating from an accredited program and are eligible for residency education and to become licensed practitioners. As such, students are eligible to sit for Step 1 and Step 2 of the United States Medical Licensing Exam while enrolled at AWSOM, then complete Step 3 after the first year

of residency medical education. At least one year of residency training is required, along with the successful completion of Step 3 for a physician to practice independently in the United States.

The School's next site visit is planned for the academic year 2026-27 when it seeks provisional accreditation. It will be followed by a site visit in 2029-30 in anticipation of full accreditation.

For more information on the LCME and AWSOM's accreditation status, please visit the [LCME website](#) or contact LCME@AAMC.org.

Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE)

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine has received authorization to enroll students and provide degree instruction leading to a Doctor of Medicine (MD) in the state of Arkansas through the Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE).

According to the ADHE's three-year cycle, the School will seek recertification in the academic year 2026-27.

The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Arkansas Division of Higher Education require the following disclosure to the general public:

Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board certification does not constitute an endorsement of any institution or program. Such certification indicates that specific criteria have been met as required under the rules and regulations implementing institutional and program certification as defined in Arkansas Code §6-61-301.

The student should be aware that these degree programs may not transfer. The receiving institution determines the transfer of course/degree credit.

DISCLAIMER

The contents of this handbook are intended to provide students with an overview of the medical School's policies, procedures, and services. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information, AWSOM reserves the right to make changes at any time to the policies, procedures, programs, or other content outlined in this handbook as deemed necessary by the administration. This handbook does not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between AWSOM and any student. Students are responsible for staying informed of any updates or amendments to the handbook, which will be communicated through official AWSOM channels, including but not limited to e-mail, the

School's website, and other designated platforms. For any questions or clarifications regarding the content of this handbook, students are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Affairs or the appropriate administrative office.

SECTION 2 – THE CURRICULUM

PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

Program Title: Doctor of Medicine Program

Degree Title: Doctor of Medicine (MD)

The degree offered at Alice L. Walton School of Medicine is the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree. The MD program is a four-year post-baccalaureate degree with 157 weeks of instruction and 183 credit hours.

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine offers a four-year MD program that enhances conventional medical education with a whole-person approach to care. The School's unique curriculum, ARCHES, features six elements longitudinally integrated into courses, clerkships, and electives throughout four years of instruction to proactively support a patient's whole health. The evidence-based curriculum takes inclusive and collaborative approaches to care designed to promote resilience, prevent disease, and restore health.

The ARCHES elements are further described below:

ART OF HEALING

This element of the curriculum focuses on the human dimensions of care by merging concepts from the humanities and arts with medicine. Students explore the importance of effective advanced communication, observational and listening skills, ethics, professionalism, professional identity, and cultural aspects of healing. Students learn about creative arts therapies and connect with the community through opportunities created by the School's shared campus with the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art.

RESEARCH

Students learn the basic principles of research and evidence-based medical practice, including how to effectively locate, analyze, synthesize, and apply medical literature. In the process, they are supported in developing the skills and practices needed to become life-

long learners by fostering curiosity and inquiry. Students will design, implement, evaluate, and present a unique scholarly project. Scholarly endeavors will require them to define an area of need, reflect on how to meet that need, research the literature and existing resources, implement a potential solution, evaluate their project, and disseminate their findings. To support them in this activity, students will have access to mentors from a variety of research and clinical venues.

CLINICAL

Early introduction to direct patient care starts in the first year with the Early Clinical Experience (ECE) course, emphasizing whole health principles and comprehensive clinical skills. Within the clinical skills courses, students will learn effective communication, history-taking, physical exams, clinical reasoning, and patient centered planning, and then apply those skills in the ECE course. Students will gain proficiency in preventive care, diagnostics, and therapeutics, and be introduced to procedural skills through simulation before third-year clerkships. In subsequent years, students will build on this foundation through diverse clinical experiences, emphasizing teamwork and exposure to diverse care settings. Focused discipline-specific patient care opportunities will be explored during fourth-year electives.

HEALTH SYSTEMS SCIENCE

Students will be introduced to current health system structures, processes, and their impact, with a focus on developing skills to address them. This includes understanding social determinants of health, health care financing, policy, and errors, alongside systems-thinking and human-centered design competencies. Skills like motivational interviewing will be applied, and leadership will be practiced in interprofessional collaboration. Principles of public, community, and population health will also be integrated.

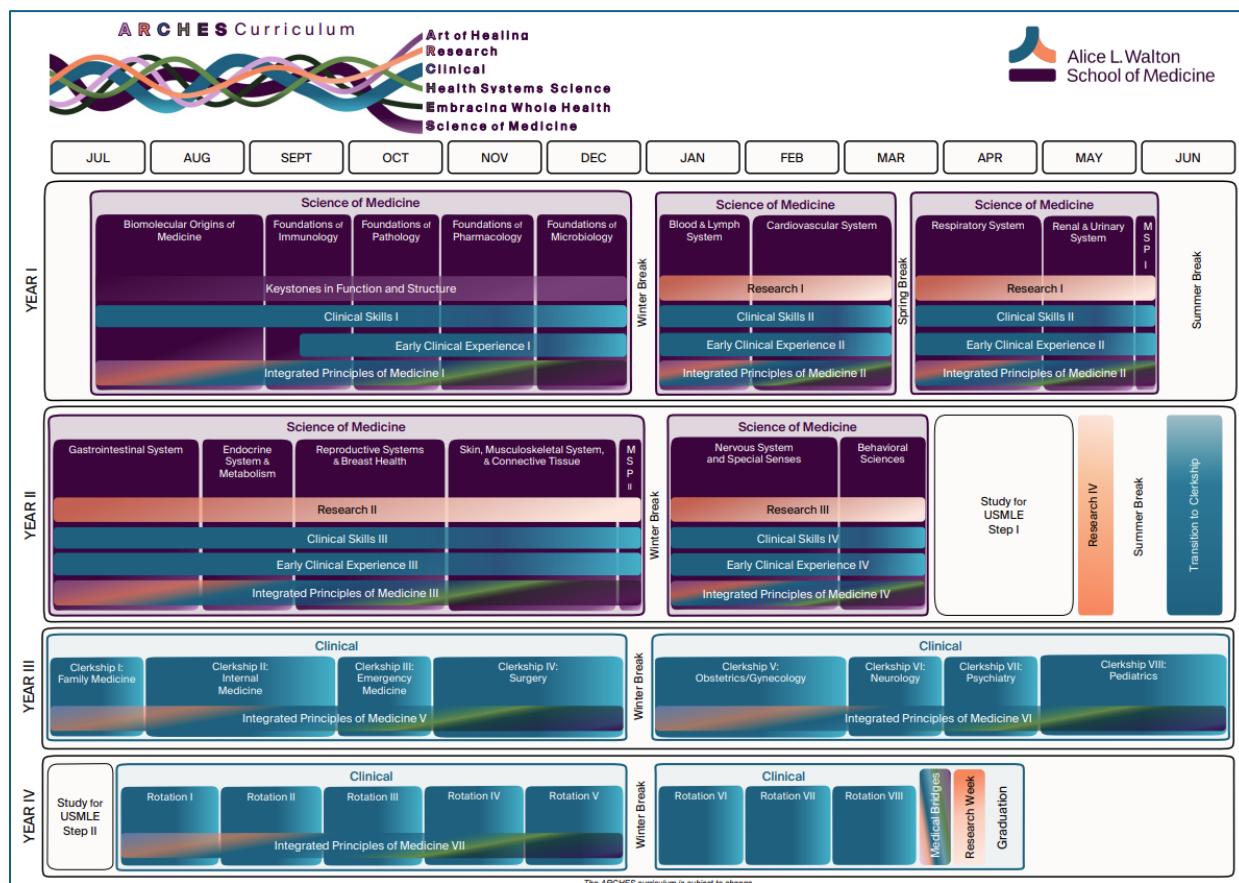
EMBRACING WHOLE HEALTH

Whole health principles and practices will be incorporated throughout the curriculum. Students will learn the fundamentals of whole-person care, taking the physical, behavioral, spiritual, and socioeconomic aspects of a person's life experience into account. With the support of wellness coaches throughout their four-year experience, students will explore how self-care applies to their own lives and practice, and the importance of incorporating shared-care planning into clinical encounters. Self-care, effective teamwork, interprofessional collaboration, and patient empowerment will be key aspects of the whole health component of the curriculum. This element is intended to prepare students to become whole health advocates and leaders who can advance the principles of whole health throughout their future careers.

SCIENCE OF MEDICINE

Foundational sciences are prominently featured and integrated into the curriculum in a horizontal and vertical pedagogical model. Students will learn about the foundational sciences that support an understanding of medical practice, as well as the normal and abnormal functions related to each of the body's organ systems. The longitudinal approach to foundational sciences teaching will allow for subject matter in all basic sciences disciplines to be seamlessly woven in with each organ system, clerkship, elective, and residency preparation experience.

CURRICULUM MAP | [Link to Curriculum Map](#)



PERIODS OF STUDY (PHASES)

The ARCHES curriculum consists of four phases designed to provide a structured, progressive learning experience that ensures students build a solid foundation of medical knowledge and skills. This approach divides the medical education journey into distinct phases, each with specific goals and content tailored to the developmental needs of students at that stage. It also ensures a gradual, comprehensive learning experience, promoting a deep understanding of medical principles and preparing students for the complexities of medical practice. The specific phases are described below:

PHASES 1-2 (Pre-Clerkship Years)

Phase 1 is a 22-week pre-clerkship curriculum that provides students with a strong foundation in the basic sciences, clinical skills, an early clinical experience course, and an Integrated Principles of Medicine (IPM) course that integrates the Art of Healing, Research, Health System Science, and Embracing Whole Health. During Phase 1, students gain foundational knowledge about the body. In Phase 2, students participate in integrated organ-system-based courses, which start halfway through the first year of training and extend to May of the second year for a total of 57 weeks. In this phase, students focus on each organ system's normal and abnormal functions. Additionally, students continue clinical skills training, early clinical experience, IPM course and complete a research project. The pre-clerkship years culminate with dedicated study and testing time for the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 1.

PHASE 3

Phase 3 begins with the Transition to Clerkships course and continued training in Integrated Principles of Medicine. Students experience a robust combination of inpatient, emergency-care, subspecialty, and disciplined-focused clinical clerkships over 48 weeks, divided into four 12-week blocks. Core clerkships include Internal Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Family Medicine, Emergency Medicine, and Neurology.

PHASE 4

Phase 4 begins in July of the fourth academic year and includes USMLE Step 2 preparation, testing time, the final phase of Integrated Principles of Medicine (IPM), and seven required electives over 30 weeks. During this final training phase, students will have some degree of flexibility with their learning. They will also be given time to interview for residency

programs. Students will be offered optional virtual electives during their interview period to add to their knowledge and training. Phase 4 also has a two-week Medical Bridges course, which combines core skills typically required for residency and discipline-driven skills that students may select for additional experience. Phase 4 will conclude with an opportunity to acknowledge research awards and celebrate their four-year journey through the AWSOM curriculum.

MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (MEPOS)

Medical Education Program Objectives (MEPOs) are specific, measurable goals that outline the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students must acquire by the end of their medical training. They ensure a consistent and comprehensive education, guiding curriculum development, student assessment, and program evaluation to produce competent, ethical, and professional physicians. To this end, Alice L. Walton School of Medicine established the medical student competencies listed below:

Undergraduate Medical Education Competencies

- Patient Care
- Knowledge for Practice
- Practice-Based Learning and Improvement
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Professionalism
- Systems-Based Practice
- Interprofessional Collaboration
- Personal and Professional Development
- Whole Health Practice

1. Patient Care

Competent graduates will know how to provide patient-centered care that is compassionate, appropriate, and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health.

- 1.1 Apply methods from the arts and humanities to provide patient-centered care.
- 1.2 Elicit a relevant, culturally sensitive patient-centered medical history and physical examination.
- 1.3 Select, perform, justify, and interpret pertinent clinical procedures, screening, and diagnostic tests.

- 1.4 Develop a patient-centered management plan based on current evidence-based information, patient preferences, and biopsychosocial factors.
- 1.5 Provide patient-centered compassionate care that is appropriate, effective, and personalized for the treatment of patient's health concerns.
- 1.6 Assist and perform focused medical, diagnostic, and surgical procedures aligned with the curriculum's required clinical experiences.

2. Knowledge for Practice

Competent graduates will demonstrate knowledge of established and evolving biomedical, clinical, epidemiological, and social-behavioral sciences, as well as the application of this knowledge to patient care.

- 2.1 Contribute to the expansion of knowledge through scholarly endeavors.
- 2.2 Apply the scientific principles that underpin medicine.
- 2.3 Differentiate between normal and pathological processes by accounting for disease manifestation.
- 2.4 Identify the etiology, incidence, prevalence, risk factors, and pathophysiology of human diseases/disorders.
- 2.5 Recognize human diseases/disorders and utilize medical knowledge and critical thinking to develop differential diagnoses.

3. Practice-Based Learning and Improvement

Competent graduates will demonstrate the ability to investigate and evaluate one's care of patients, to appraise and assimilate scientific evidence, and to continuously improve patient care based on constant self-evaluation and life-long learning.

- 3.1 Identify one's strengths, deficiencies, and limits to one's knowledge and expertise.
- 3.2 Incorporate feedback into daily practice.
- 3.3 Effectively locate, appraise, and interpret research and guidelines to inform patient care and advance whole health.

4. Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Competent graduates will demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals.

- 4.1 Communicate effectively with patients, family, and health care professionals.
- 4.2 Demonstrate effective handoff communication and transition of care.

4.3 Demonstrate emotional intelligence in interpersonal interactions.

5. Professionalism

The competent graduate will demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles.

5.1 Demonstrate professional behavior and accountability by abiding with ethical, legal, and health care regulations.

5.2 Demonstrate inclusive approaches while interacting with others.

6. Systems-Based Practice

The competent graduate will demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context and system of health care and the ability to call effectively on other resources in the system to provide optimal health care.

6.1 Demonstrate safety through patient advocacy, leadership, self-directed, and lifelong learning.

6.2 Describe the various structures, processes, and activities of health systems and their impact on health care delivery and health outcomes.

6.3 Apply value-based, human-centered principles to patient care and system design.

7. Interprofessional Collaboration

The competent graduate will demonstrate the ability to engage in an interprofessional team that optimizes safe, effective patient- and population-centered care.

7.1 Apply teamwork principles to achieve organizational goals.

7.2 Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of an interprofessional healthcare team to facilitate patient-centered care.

8. Personal and Professional Development

The competent graduate will demonstrate the qualities required to sustain lifelong personal and professional growth.

8.1 Instruct and apply methods from the arts and humanities to promote self-care and well-being.

8.2 Identify and adopt the skills, habits, and behaviors that correlate to life-long learning.

9. Whole Health Practice

The competent graduate will demonstrate a holistic approach to patient-centered care and a commitment to self-care.

- 9.1 Provide whole-person care that encompasses each person's aspirations, self-awareness, self-care, and connections to care teams and communities.
- 9.2 Describe how self-care practices increase resilience and promote personal and professional well-being.

GRADING SYSTEM

Students are assigned grades based on a competency-based system, consisting of Pass/Fail (P/F) for all pre-clerkship courses, and the additional grades of High Pass (HP) and Honors (H) for clerkship courses. Specific grades and definitions are as follows:

Pre-Clerkship Curriculum (Phase I & Phase II)

Student performance in the pre-clerkship phases will have one of the following grades assigned.

- **Pass (P):** The student demonstrated satisfactory achievement of all required competencies and course objectives on the first attempt.
- **Fail (F):** The student did not meet the requirements to pass the course on the first attempt or during remediation.
- **Pass Remediated (PR):** The student did not pass on the first attempt but successfully remediated the course.
- **Incomplete (I):** A temporary grade indicating that the student has completed a significant portion of the course requirements and is unable to finish due to extenuating circumstances.
- **Withdrawal (W):** The student has officially withdrawn from the course after the add/drop period.

Clerkship Curriculum (Phase III)

In addition to the grades assigned during the pre-clerkship curriculum, the following grades are available to measure student performance:

- **Honors (H):** The student has demonstrated exceptional performance as outlined in the course/clerkship syllabus.
- **High Pass (HP):** The student has demonstrated above-average performance as outlined in the course/clerkship syllabus.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

AWSOM has a single graduation standard for all students. All the following requirements must be met to graduate with an MD degree.

1. Academic Coursework – Successfully complete all courses, clerkships, and electives with a passing grade.
2. Competency Requirements—Demonstrate proficiency in all AWSOM medical education program objectives (MEPOS), including achieving professionalism standards.
3. Licensure Examinations – Pass the USMLE Step 1 before commencing clerkships and the USMLE Step 2 (CK) as per institutional deadlines.
4. Timeframe for Completion – Complete all MD degree requirements within a six-year period from the date of matriculation, excluding approved leaves of absence.
5. Administrative Compliance—Meet all financial obligations, maintain up-to-date immunizations and health clearances, and complete mandatory training and attestations, such as HIPAA and safety protocols.
6. Degree Conferred – Recommendations for graduation are made by the Student Promotions Committee, and approval is obtained from the Faculty Assembly.

SERVICE LEARNING

Service learning and community service will be required of all students, who can choose from a variety of options. Service learning educational experiences will meet all required criteria, including that they serve the community with community-identified concerns, are linked to student preparation, and require students to self-reflect on how their experiences tie in with AWSOM's curriculum and mission and their roles as medical professionals and citizens. Community service will complement and reinforce the educational program through opportunities such as team-based community service projects, the creation of public-facing educational materials, or clinical services at locations such as local federally qualified health centers (FQHCs). Students can select an organization or community that aligns with their values and passions and give back to the community through volunteerism. Hours and location of the community service will be logged through the School's learning management system (LMS).

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Fall 2025 (Year I)

- **July 14 - July 18:** Orientation Week (Mandatory Attendance)
- July 18: Fall Convocation, White Coat & Pinning Ceremony
- July 21: Fall Classes Begin (Start of Phase I)
- September 1: Labor Day (No Classes)
- November 26 – 28: Thanksgiving Break (No Classes)
- December 19: Last Day of Fall Classes (End of Phase I)
- December 20 - January 4: Winter Break (No Classes)

Spring 2026 (Year I)

- January 5: Spring Classes Begin (Start of Phase II)
- January 19: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Classes)
- March 16 - March 20: Spring Break (No Classes)
- May 25: Memorial Day (No Classes)
- May 29: Last Day of Spring Classes
- May 30 - July 5: Summer Break (No Classes)

Fall 2026 (Year II)

- July 6: Fall Classes Begin
- September 7: Labor Day (No Classes)
- November 25 – 27: Thanksgiving Break (No Classes)
- December 18: Last day of Fall Semester
- December 19 – January 3: Winter Break (No Classes)

Spring 2027 (Year II)

- January 4: Spring Semester Begins (Continuation of Phase II)
- January 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Classes)
- May 31 – June 18: Semester Break (No Classes)
- July 2: Last day of Spring Semester

Fall 2027 (Year III)

- July 4: Independence Day Observed (No Classes)
- July 5: Fall Semester Begins (Continuation of Phase III)
- September 6: Labor Day (No Classes)

- November 24 – 26: Thanksgiving Break (No Classes)
- December 17: Last Day of Fall Semester
- December 11 - January 2, 2028: Winter Break (No Classes)

Spring 2028 (Year III)

- January 3, 2028: Spring Semester Begins (Continuation of Phase III)
- January 17: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Classes)
- May 29: Memorial Day (No Classes)
- June 23: Last Day of Spring Semester (End of Phase III)
- June 24 – July 2: Summer Break (No Classes)

Fall 2028 (Year IV)

- July 3: Fall Semester Begins (Start of Phase IV)
- July 4: Independence Day Observed (No Classes)
- September 4: Labor Day (No Classes)
- November 22 – 24: Thanksgiving Break (No Classes)
- December 15: Last Day of Fall Semester
- December 16 – December 31: Winter Break (No Classes)

Spring 2029 (Year IV)

- January 2: Spring Semester Begins (Continuation of Phase IV)
- January 15: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Classes)
- April 9 – April 13: Research/Awards Week
- April 20: Last Day of Spring Semester
- April 21: Commencement

SECTION 3 - PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism is of the utmost importance in the medical profession and begins in medical School. Students will be evaluated not only on their academic performance but also on their ability to behave and communicate professionally with faculty, peers, and patients. The Student Code of Professional Conduct encapsulates the expectations, and students are expected to attest to their understanding and willingness to abide by them.

STUDENT CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine is committed to educating health professionals who embody ethical behavior and professionalism. Recognizing that professional conduct is fundamental to medical training, students pledge to adhere to all regulations and standards set by the School. Professionalism is an academic competency, and failing to meet these standards may impact a student's progression and graduation, similar to other academic requirements. These expectations align closely with those of the medical profession, preparing students to meet the responsibilities and ethical standards they will face in their future careers.

Professional behaviors include the following:

- **Compassion, Respect, and Altruism** – Exhibit empathy, compassion, respect, and a commitment to prioritizing the well-being of others through thoughtful, emotionally intelligent interactions.
- **Ethical Principles and Moral Reasoning** – Consistently uphold ethical principles and demonstrate sound moral reasoning in decision-making and interactions.
- **Self-Awareness** – Actively engage in self-reflection and utilize tools to develop self-awareness, recognizing personal strengths, limitations, and biases.
- **Detail Orientation** – Exhibit meticulous attention to detail and conscientiousness, ensuring precision in documentation, communication, and patient care.
- **Accountability** – Demonstrate responsibility and accountability to patients, society, peers, the medical profession, and oneself by fulfilling obligations reliably and transparently.
- **Integrity** – Uphold honesty, trustworthiness, and ethical consistency in all professional and personal actions, whether public or private.
- **Confidentiality** – Safeguard patient confidentiality and respect privacy in all professional interactions in compliance with legal and ethical standards.
- **Situational Awareness** – Ability to perceive, understand, and respond effectively to the surrounding environment.
- **Commitment to Diverse Needs** – Recognize and respectfully respond to the diverse cultural, social, and individual needs of patients, peers, and the community.

- **Resiliency and Adaptability** – Maintain composure and flexibility in the face of challenges, adapting to changing circumstances while prioritizing professional responsibilities.
- **Collaboration and Teamwork** – Actively contribute to collaborative environments, demonstrating respect, communication, and shared responsibility in team-based settings.

Specific examples of professionalism include:

- Submit original work for all assignments and learning tasks.
- Admit errors and avoid knowingly misleading others in any academic or clinical setting.
- Respond promptly to official communications, comply with attendance standards (including call duties), and meet all mandatory deadlines.
- Show respect for faculty, value their teaching role, and provide constructive feedback on courses and instructors.
- Collaborate effectively in teams, respecting contributions, sharing responsibilities equitably, and fostering a cooperative environment.
- Conduct research ethically, adhering to principles of integrity and accountability.
- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity, maintaining confidentiality and privacy in all professional interactions and communications.
- Recognize personal limitations in knowledge, skills, or emotional state, seeking supervision or help before acting when necessary.
- Take responsibility for personal well-being, asking for help or notifying supervisors when unable to perform tasks safely or effectively.
- Engage respectfully with colleagues, avoid offensive language, gestures, or behavior, and treat everyone fairly regardless of background or identity.
- Promote equity and inclusivity, actively contributing to a positive and supportive learning environment.
- Maintain a professional appearance, dressing appropriately for the patient population or learning activity (consulting instructors if unsure).

- Comply with school policies, demonstrating adherence to established rules and expectations.
- Report violations of the Student Code of Professional Conduct promptly to school administrators.

Examples of unprofessional behavior include:

- Cheating in any academic, clinical, or research context.
- Lying or knowingly providing false information.
- Falsifying documents in any format, including academic, research, or patient records.
- Committing plagiarism or submitting work that is not your own unless explicitly part of an instructor-defined group exercise.
- Participating in academic or clinical activities under the influence of non-prescribed substances (including alcohol) or misusing prescribed medications.
- Engaging in romantic or sexual relationships with patients or their family members, regardless of consent or request.
- Disrupting the learning or clinical environment through behavior that interferes with others' work, learning, or patient care.
- Accessing or sharing unauthorized information, including academic, administrative, patient, or research records, through any means.
- Misrepresenting oneself as a licensed or certified health care provider.
- Discriminatory behavior, including treating others unfairly based on race, gender, religion, or other protected characteristics.
- Harassment, such as engaging in verbal, physical, or psychological harassment of colleagues, patients, or others.
- Breaching confidentiality by sharing private patient, peer, or institutional information without appropriate authorization.

SCOPE OF THE STUDENT CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The Student Code of Professional Conduct fosters the professional growth of all students in the School of Medicine. These guidelines establish expected standards of conduct while acknowledging that they cannot foresee every possible instance of unprofessional

behavior. Even if not explicitly outlined in this code, actions deemed unprofessional may still result in academic sanctions. Each case will be evaluated within its specific context, considering the severity and recurrence of any infractions.

Students must recognize that professionalism in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings is integral to academic performance.

This code applies to all aspects of a student's academic and professional pursuits within health professions programs. While it is not designed to govern private conduct unrelated to their studies, students should be mindful of society's high expectations for medical professionals. Behavior inconsistent with these expectations, even outside the academic setting, may come to the School's attention and prompt a review by the Student Promotions Committee.

The code also extends its authority to students throughout their enrollment and beyond graduation in matters related to credential certification, transcript issuance, and degree verification. Any violations of the Student Code of Professional Conduct—whether by current students or graduates—may result in significant sanctions, including dismissal from the School of Medicine or revocation of a degree.

PROFESSIONAL DRESS GUIDELINES

As representatives of the medical profession, all medical students at AWSOM are expected to convey a professional demeanor, not only in their behavior but also in their dress and appearance. A professional image conveys credibility, trust, respect, and confidence to one's colleagues and patients. In all educational settings—classroom, laboratory, and clinical environment—students are expected to be clean, well-groomed, and dressed in a manner appropriate to their responsibilities and the standards of their assigned clinical sites.

When patient contact is part of the educational experience (including interactions with standardized patients), students are expected to dress professionally and wear a clean white coat unless otherwise instructed by AWSOM faculty. Site-specific dress codes may apply for compliance with institutional infection control, legal, and safety requirements. Medical students are expected to wear their AWSOM identification badges to all academic functions and on the premises of AWSOM.

SECTION 4 – FACILITIES

CAMPUS OVERVIEW

Located in the heart of Bentonville, Arkansas, the newly constructed Alice L. Walton School of Medicine sits on the 134-acre Crystal Bridges Campus, also home to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and Heartland Whole Health Institute. Nestled in the Ozark woods, the campus has more than five miles of multi-use trails, allowing students to easily access nature, art, downtown Bentonville, and the greater Northwest Arkansas region.

The 154,000-square-foot AWSOM facility includes learning halls, small group rooms, a library, clinical teaching spaces, dedicated simulation areas, a café, administrative offices, a student lounge and amenities, and parking for vehicles and bicycles.

CLASSROOMS

The flexible nature of the learning spaces throughout the building allows students and faculty to utilize the space to meet learning objectives as they see fit. The second floor of AWSOM includes two large learning spaces accommodating up to 96 students, two medium classrooms for up to 24 students that can be converted into one classroom for 48 students, and nine multipurpose small group rooms. An additional finished space on the second floor is designed to be outfitted as a third large classroom to accommodate the School's growing capacity.

CLINICAL SKILLS CENTER

The Clinical Skills Center is 16,900-square-foot facility on the first floor used for teaching and assessment of clinical skills and includes 12 clinical examination rooms with a central observation space, four debriefing rooms, two patient triage rooms, and one point-of-care testing room. The exam rooms are fully equipped to emulate a real clinic environment with ultrasound and other diagnostic devices to perform patient-centered history, physical examination, and shared clinical assessment on standardized patients (SPs). All exam rooms are equipped with audio-visual hardware to enable live streaming and recording, providing students the opportunity to observe and receive formative and summative feedback of their communication and clinical skills while working with SPs and faculty. Task trainers are available for use in small activity groups to support clinical skills prior to practice on SPs. Simulated electronic medical record software is provided for documentation, note-taking, and order and review of screening/diagnostic laboratory tests and imaging.

SIMULATION CENTER

The School's Simulation Center is a 7,500-square-foot space located on the first floor of the medical school building and fully equipped to emulate a hospital setting. It has four high-fidelity simulation rooms, each with a control room for direct and indirect observation of scenarios, an interprofessional education support area, and four debrief rooms, allowing for student self-reflection following each scenario. The Simulation Center is equipped with an audio-visual recording system, 3D models, virtual, augmented, and mixed reality headsets, and high-fidelity mannequins, allowing students to train within a mock-sterile environment emulating settings such as emergency departments, operating rooms, labor and delivery, intensive care units, and outpatient clinic procedural settings.

MAKERSPACE

The Makerspace is a 460-square-foot space dedicated to 3D printing and postproduction. It is equipped with large 3D printers and several tabletop printers, workbenches for postproduction, and software that allows models to be modified and incorporated into virtual reality headsets.

ANATOMY RESOURCE CENTER

The Anatomy Resource Center (ARC) is a 3,010-square-foot space located on the first floor of the medical school building. The space offers an immersive experience that combines cutting-edge technology with hands-on learning. The ARC includes a comprehensive collection of 100 plastinated specimens, providing students with a detailed, realistic view of human anatomy. Additionally, the ARC is equipped with advanced tools, including virtual reality, which brings anatomical structures to life, allowing students to delve into surface, regional, and cross-sectional anatomy, as well as embryology and histology, all within a dynamic and supportive environment.

STUDENT LOUNGE

The Student Lounge provides a welcoming, comfortable space designed to support student well-being and foster a sense of community. Equipped with various seating options and collaborative spaces, the Lounge offers students a relaxing environment for unwinding between classes, catching up on study materials, or connecting with peers. The Lounge also contains exercise/yoga space, recreation space, a mother's room, a quiet room, a theater, lockers, and an outdoor balcony. Amenities include complimentary coffee and tea, charging stations, and a kitchenette with refrigerator and microwave. The Student

Lounge is a hub for informal gatherings and a retreat where students can recharge and enjoy time with friends.

STUDY AND QUIET SPACES

Study and quiet spaces are located throughout the building and on all floors. Both group and private study rooms and open seating within the library are available. A large study room and a dedicated "quiet room" are located on the 3rd floor.

ADDITIONAL ON-SITE AMENITIES

In addition to the learning spaces and Student Lounge mentioned above, the AWSOM facility offers a gym, a wellness center, and a café.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Student safety is a top priority at AWSOM. The facility is equipped with a security system with cameras, a campus-wide emergency notification system, a dedicated security control room, emergency lockdown capabilities, and 24/7 security personnel. An ID badge is required to access specific floors within the building.

CLINICAL AFFILIATES

Students will have the opportunity to learn at local clinical affiliate sites during their required clinical experiences, including the following:

- [Mercy Hospital Northwest Arkansas, Rogers AR](#)
- [Washington Regional Medical Center, Fayetteville AR](#)
- [Arkansas Children's Northwest Hospital, Springdale AR](#)
- [Springwoods Behavioral Health, Fayetteville AR](#)
- [Veterans Administration Medical Center, Fayetteville AR](#)
- [Arisa Health, Springdale AR](#)
- [Highlands Oncology, Rogers AR](#)
- [Community Clinic, Springdale AR](#)

SECTION 5 – STUDENT SERVICES

AWSOM takes a comprehensive approach to medical student development, providing various supportive resources that maximize students' educational experiences and enhance their professional and personal growth as future physicians.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Learning Specialists are available to work one-on-one with students to identify their unique learning styles. In addition, students will receive specific guidance, including assistance with study strategies, time management, test-taking skills, and more. Students are encouraged to meet with their Learning Specialist regularly to fine-tune their study skills. Academic support at AWSOM also includes a variety of workshops and time-specific training, such as USMLE exam preparation. In preparation for the USMLE Step 1 exam, students will receive resource materials, practice tests, and facilitated small group tutoring sessions. There will also be dedicated study time prior to the board exams. Additional information about academic support is available on the [Academic Support webpage](#). For specific questions, e-mail learningspecialist@alwmed.org.

TUTORING

AWSOM offers tutoring services to help students achieve academic success. For the inaugural class, tutoring will be provided by faculty, including course and clerkship directors, to provide content-specific tutoring. In subsequent years, peer tutors who have demonstrated strong performance in their coursework will provide one-on-one and group tutoring sessions. Tutoring reinforces key concepts, improves study strategies, and builds confidence. The Learning Specialist is responsible for managing the tutoring program within the Office of Student Affairs. Please contact them with any questions. Email: learningspecialist@alwmed.org.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

AWSOM offers a variety of academic and career advising services, ensuring that students receive comprehensive support throughout their education. The advising team includes the Director of advising, specialty advisors, and career mentors.

- Director of Academic Advising – Students will meet with the Director each semester and receive assistance in course selection and information needed to apply for residency. The Director is also responsible for developing and organizing advising programs, such as career workshops and seminars.
- Career Mentors – Practicing or recently retired physicians provide guidance and support for students' professional development. Following a learning community model, career mentors regularly meet with their assigned students in groups and individually and share first-hand knowledge of the “day in the life of a physician.” They will also encourage peer-to-peer support and reflection and promote professional identity formation.
- Specialty Advisors—Selected from the faculty and local community, specialty advisors provide targeted advice to students interested in specific medical fields and support for residency applications.

Student interest groups are also available to promote career exploration along with opportunities to participate in national student organizations. Online resources are available to AWSOM students to support their career investigation, including the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) *Careers in Medicine* Program website, recordings of AWSOM town hall meetings and other career activities, and a *Pathway to Residency* online course. Students are encouraged to contact the Director of Academic Advising for specific questions or to facilitate access to career advising resources. Email: advising@alwmed.org.

STUDENT LIFE

Student life extends well beyond the classroom. From student groups to social events, students are encouraged to get involved, stay healthy, and get to know the local area. Overseen by the Director of Student Life & Development, the inaugural class will have the opportunity to establish new traditions, create new student groups, and help create a foundation of co-curricular activities and support, including the following:

- **Student Organizations** – Various student organizations for leadership, networking, and personal growth, including student government, student interest groups, and involvement in national student organizations.
- **Milestone Events**—The School will celebrate important milestones and achievements, including Orientation, the White Coat Ceremony, Match Day, and Graduation.

- **Student Wellness** - Prioritized through mental health support, wellness programming, peer support, and wellness coaching. In addition, a variety of fun activities will be planned to relieve stress and build rapport.
- **Community Service**—Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of service opportunities with faculty and staff and network with local community service organizations.

ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES

All students are required to have health insurance, and the School will cover half the cost. Students who opt out of school-provided insurance may request a refund equivalent to the insurance benefit. Specific health insurance and coverage information will be provided during the admissions process and at new student orientation. Specifically, the following services have been arranged to support student wellness:

- **Physical Health** – Students may choose to use a provider within their health insurance network. Additionally, AWSOM has negotiated with local healthcare providers who prioritize the care of AWSOM students at two primary care clinics: Mercy Clinic Primary Care (Bella Vista) and Mercy Clinic Primary Care (Centerton).
- **Mental Health** – Students will be provided with local counseling services information for diagnostic, preventative, and therapeutic mental health services by licensed mental health professionals who maintain the highest standards of ethical, competent, and confidential care. In addition, students will have 24/7 access to telehealth providers through the school-provided health insurance, including psychiatrists, therapists, and counselors for a wide range of mental health issues.
- **Crisis Support** – Students in immediate need of physical or mental health support are encouraged to use this contact information:
 - Emergency Services: Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room
 - National Suicide Prevention Hotline: Call 988 or text “HOME” to 741741
 - Substance abuse or mental health services: Call the SAMHSA National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

For additional information relating to health services, students are encouraged to contact the Director of Student Life and Development at studentlife@alwmed.org.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

AWSOM has an institutional commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Equal access for students with disabilities includes providing reasonable accommodations such as auxiliary aids and services. Each student is entitled to an individualized, interactive process with the School of Medicine's Disability Resources Representative. Accommodations aim to address specific, documented functional limitations, remove or mitigate barriers to access, and ensure that disabled students are not excluded from learning opportunities available to their peers. Medical students who need academic accommodation based on the impact of their disability must initiate a request by completing an online form and including appropriate medical documentation. Admitted and current students are encouraged to apply when they become aware of their disability. For additional information, please contact Student Affairs by email at studentaffairs@alwmed.org.

ADMISSIONS

The Office of Admissions plays a vital role in supporting prospective students throughout the admissions process. Services include personalized guidance on application requirements, timelines, and prerequisites, ensuring applicants are well-prepared to present their best selves. The admissions team is committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, providing resources for interviews, financial aid, and understanding the School's whole health mission.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- MCAT score of 500
- Overall GPA of 3.4
- United States Citizen or Permanent Resident

Highly recommended requirements*:

- Preview Score

**Although highly recommended for the class of 2029, this will be a requirement for subsequent classes.*

Applicants should complete a minimum of 24 credit hours in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math (BCPM), with the following GPA requirements:

- Cumulative undergraduate BCPM GPA of 3.4 with at least 24 credit hours OR
- Cumulative post-baccalaureate BCPM GPA of 3.5 with at least 24 credit hours in math and sciences OR
- Cumulative graduate BCPM GPA of 3.5 with at least 24 credit hours in math and sciences

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) coursework will not count toward the required credit hour total.

For additional information regarding the admissions requirements, please refer to the [admissions webpage](#), call (479) 441-0064, or email admissions@alwmed.org.

FINANCIAL AID

The Office of Financial Aid, located within the Admissions department, provides support to help students achieve their educational aspirations while successfully managing their finances. Services include personalized financial counseling, assistance with scholarship applications, and guidance on federal, state, and private funding opportunities.

Workshops and information sessions are also offered to educate students about budgeting, loan management, and repayment options, empowering them to make informed financial decisions. For additional financial aid information, please refer to the [financial aid webpage](#) or contact the financial aid office at (479) 397-1504 or email Finaid@alwmed.org.

LIBRARY

The AWSOM Library, located in the center of the medical school building, is a robust 4,000 square feet of resources and assistance. It houses an extensive collection of online resources curated to support medical education and research, including electronic and print books and journals, online databases, and clinical information sources.

Individualized study space and full-time library staff are also available to provide comprehensive services.

Library resources are accessible online to medical students and faculty on and off campus. Students will have 24/7 access from anywhere through a secure online portal.

Virtual consultations with a reference librarian are also available.

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

The Registrar's Office is responsible for maintaining accurate student records, managing course registration, and ensuring compliance with academic policies. Key services include enrollment verification, transcript requests, scheduling, and degree audits. The office works closely with students, faculty, and staff to support academic progress and uphold institutional standards. Students may email the Registrar's Office for assistance with registration, academic calendars, grading policies, and graduation requirements at registrar@alwmed.org.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology Services (ITS) department provides comprehensive technical support and resources to enhance the student learning experience. ITS manages the School's digital platforms, including the learning management system and student information system, as well as various academic, collaborative, productivity, and research software systems. Key services include troubleshooting technical issues, ensuring secure access to online resources, and maintaining campus Wi-Fi. Students will be provided with a computing device and can contact ITS for assistance with software installations, password resets, and device connectivity.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

The SGA is committed to fostering a collaborative and supportive community by addressing student concerns, organizing events, and promoting student engagement in school governance. The SGA works closely with administration, faculty, and staff through its elected representatives to enhance the overall student experience. The SGA also oversees student organizations, helps allocate funding for activities, and advocates for initiatives that support student well-being and academic success. The inaugural class will help create the SGA bylaws and establish new student organizations. The Director of Student Life and Development is the advisor for the SGA.

TUITION & FEES

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine will waive tuition for the first five cohorts of students. Specific student fees will still be required. For more information, including the estimated cost of attendance, please visit the [Financial Aid webpage](#).

SECTION 6 – STUDENT POLICIES

The policies in this section represent a foundational framework for student conduct, academic expectations, and institutional guidelines at AWSOM. This list is not exhaustive, and additional policies will continue to be added in preparation for the first day of classes.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR STUDENTS

This policy ensures the responsible, ethical, and secure use of AWSOM's technology resources to support education, research, and administration, maintaining accessibility, functionality, and data security for all users.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

AWSOM's Anti-Discrimination Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on protected characteristics, ensuring equal opportunities for all. It complies with Title IX, with a designated coordinator to oversee adherence. Complaints are thoroughly investigated, and violations may lead to disciplinary action.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN & ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE POLICY

To educate about, prevent, and address steps to be taken if a student is exposed to bloodborne pathogens, body fluids, or environmental hazards. This policy is to assure compliance with Element 12.8 of the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accreditation standards: "A medical school has policies in place that effectively address medical student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards."

[Link to Full Policy](#)

BREACHES IN STUDENT PROFESSIONALISM

The purpose of this policy is to describe the procedures governing breaches in medical student professionalism standards outlined in the Student Code of Professional Conduct and course and clerkship syllabi, if applicable.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

CLERY ACT COMPLIANCE POLICY

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998, a part of the Higher Education Act of 1965, was extended by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (collectively known as the "Clery Act") and requires colleges and universities receiving federal financial assistance to gather and make public information about certain crimes on or near their campuses and publish policy statements concerning campus safety and security.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

CLINICAL DUTY HOURS POLICY

To provide students and faculty with guidelines related to clinical duty hours of the medical education curriculum and ensure safe and professional learning and clinical environments for all medical students, healthcare providers, and patients.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

CLINICAL ROTATION SCHEDULING POLICY

To ensure equitable scheduling so that all students meet their clinical educational goals Phase 3 required clerkships. To ensure that all students are prepared and aware of the planning necessary to participate in the Phase 3 required clerkships of the AWSOM curriculum.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

CLINICAL SUPERVISION POLICY

To ensure that medical students are appropriately supervised at all times in clinical learning situations involving patient care; to ensure student and patient safety; and that the level of responsibility delegated to the student is appropriate for the student's level of training and ability. To ensure that the activities supervised are within the scope of practice

of the supervising licensed health professionals.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

CREDIT HOUR POLICY

AWSOM's Credit Hour policy ensures accurate workload reflection and compliance with guidelines. It defines credit hours, outlines the Curriculum Committee's approval process, and details calculations based on instruction, preparation, and experiential learning, including one credit hour per clinical rotation week.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

FERPA STUDENT RIGHTS AND PRIVACY POLICY

This policy outlines FERPA rights, ensuring students can access, review, and amend records while AWSOM protects their confidentiality. Students may restrict directory information disclosure and file complaints for rights violations. Information is disclosed only as legally authorized.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

GRADE APPEAL POLICY

AWSOM's Grade Appeal Policy allows students to formally challenge final grades due to mistreatment, criteria deviations, or calculation errors. After informal resolution attempts, appeals must be filed within four weeks of grade posting. An ad hoc committee reviews evidence and determines outcomes, notifying all relevant parties of any grade changes.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

GRADUATION POLICY

This policy establishes clear and consistent standards for academic advancement and graduation and ensures that students are evaluated according to a single standard for academic promotion, graduation, and awarding of the MD degree.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

HIPAA USE AND BREACH POLICY

To provide governing principles and standards on the use of protected health information (PHI) in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

LACTATION SUPPORT POLICY

AWSOM supports student parents by providing lactation spaces, flexible scheduling, and secure milk storage. Training is offered to create a supportive environment. Students must submit a written request to Student Affairs to access accommodations. The policy is regularly reviewed to ensure effectiveness and confidentiality.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT STATEMENT

AWSOM is committed to fostering a positive, respectful, and equitable learning environment. This policy outlines expectations for mentorship, teamwork, and ethical conduct among students, faculty, and staff. Regular reviews will address any issues related to professional standards and ensure a supportive, inclusive environment.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

MEDICAL STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION (MSPE) LETTER POLICY

This policy provides a summary of what is included in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) letter, ensures that students have the right to review and challenge the content and the opportunity to request an alternative letter writer.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

NARRATIVE AND FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT POLICY

To ensure students receive various types of feedback through the AWSOM assessment system so students can gauge their progress in achieving the educational program objectives defined by the school.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

PHASE 1 AND 2 WORKLOAD POLICY

Phases 1 and 2 of the curriculum focus on active learning and developing lifelong learning skills. Students engage in in-class activities, pre-work, and post-session study. Faculty and the Curriculum Committee monitor time spent to ensure the weekly workload does not exceed 60 hours, including in-class and out-of-class activities, exams, and study time.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

PREPARATION FOR NON-FACULTY INSTRUCTORS

This policy ensures that non-faculty instructors engaged in teaching and assessing medical students are prepared for those roles.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

REMEDIATING A COURSE POLICY

This policy outlines a process for addressing student deficiencies and achieving a passing grade. It provides a framework for addressing student academic deficiencies and provides a pathway for remediation.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR STUDENT LOAN ELIGIBILITY

To ensure compliance with various financial aid regulations and requirements for student loans.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Social Media Policy sets expectations for online conduct, promoting responsible use while protecting AWSOM's reputation and professional standards. It emphasizes confidentiality (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA), respect, honesty, and avoiding harassment. Members should share official content or label personal views and refrain from unauthorized use of school resources for personal posts.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

This policy ensures that Alice L. Walton School of Medicine complies with accreditation standards and laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 2008 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and is also intended to assist students seeking accommodations.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT ASSESSMENT RECUSAL POLICY

Faculty members who provide health or psychiatric care to medical students must recuse themselves from assessing, grading, or making promotion decisions to prevent conflicts of interest and protect student privacy. Any potential conflicts should be reported to the course director, and exceptional cases will be addressed individually. Faculty must also attest on evaluation forms that they have not provided such care for the student being assessed.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

To specify attendance expectations and procedures for students at Alice L. Walton School of Medicine (AWSOM).

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Recognizing that professional conduct is fundamental to medical training, students pledge to adhere to all regulations and standards set by the School. Professionalism is regarded as an academic competency, and failure to meet these standards may impact a student's progression and graduation, just like other academic requirements. These expectations align closely with those of the medical profession, preparing students to meet the responsibilities and ethical standards they will face in their future careers.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

The Alice L. Walton School of Medicine (AWSOM) is committed to fostering a safe and secure learning environment for its students, staff, faculty, and partners. The policy is in support of LCME Standard 6.2. Required Clinical Experiences.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT DRUG SCREENING POLICY

The School of Medicine is committed to protecting the safety, health and well-being of all students, faculty, staff and patients. It is the policy of the School of Medicine to establish and maintain a drug-free working and educational environment for medical students and a safe clinical environment for patients, and to provide for compliance with federal law regarding prevention of illicit use of drugs and the abuse of alcohol.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT GRIEVANCE AND APPEALS POLICY

This policy outlines the procedures for medical students to appeal a decision that adversely impacts their academic progress at the Alice L. Walton School of Medicine (AWSOM), except for grade appeal. Refer to the Grade Appeal Policy for guidance on appealing course or clerkship grades.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH SCREENING POLICY

This policy identifies the immunizations and other safety measures to ensure the safety and health of students, faculty, staff and the communities we serve. It is essential that all

students are up to date with the required immunizations. These immunizations protect against various infectious diseases students may encounter during clinical training or volunteering and are crucial for preventing the spread of infectious diseases within healthcare settings.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT MISTREATMENT POLICY

This policy fosters a respectful learning environment, prohibiting mistreatment such as harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate behavior. Examples include public humiliation, physical harm, unwanted advances, or discriminatory treatment. Students can address concerns directly, report to faculty, administration, or the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, or file anonymous complaints online without fear of retaliation. Formal complaints are reviewed confidentially, with investigations completed within 14 days. Retaliation is prohibited, with penalties up to expulsion or termination.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT PROFESSIONALISM POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to describe the expectations in medical student professionalism standards outlined Student Code of Professional Conduct and in course and clerkship syllabi as applicable.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

STUDENT PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

This policy serves to ensure that the Student Promotions Committee (SPC) follows a fair and formal process taking any action that may adversely affect a medical student's status within the MD program. The composition and charge of the Student Promotions Committee are defined in the Faculty Bylaws and SPC Charter.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSIONS, PROGRESSION, AND GRADUATION

AWSOM's technical standards ensure MD candidates possess cognitive, emotional, and physical abilities essential for success. Candidates must demonstrate competencies across five domains: intellectual abilities, communication, observation, motor and sensory functions, and behavioral and social attributes. Annual attestations and evaluations confirm readiness for medical education and patient care, fostering excellence, resilience, and inclusivity in a rigorous academic and clinical environment.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

TIMELY GRADE SUBMISSION POLICY

To ensure that a system is in place for timely summative assessment of medical student achievement in each course and clerkship, and that final grades are available within six (6) weeks of the end of a course or clerkship.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

TITLE IX POLICY

This Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment, and misconduct based on sex and gender. As used in this policy, the term "sex" includes birth/biological sex and sexual orientation, and gender includes gender identity and expression. AWSOM strongly encourages the prompt reporting of, and is committed to timely and fair resolution of, complaints of sex and gender discrimination, harassment, and misconduct.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine does not accept transfer or advanced standing students due to its integrated curriculum. AWSOM has no articulation agreements and does not award transfer credit for coursework or prior learning. Credit transferability to other institutions is at their sole discretion, potentially requiring repetition of coursework. Students should confirm AWSOM aligns with their educational goals, including transfer eligibility.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

TUITION REFUND POLICY

AWSOM offers prorated tuition refunds for students who withdraw from the medical program. The refund amount depends on when the student withdraws, with earlier withdrawals resulting in larger refunds. Students must submit a written notice of withdrawal to the Registrar, and refunds are typically issued within 45 days. For specific details and exceptions, please refer to the full policy.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

UNSATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE POLICY

This policy establishes the process for addressing unsatisfactory academic performance by medical students enrolled in the MD program of the Alice L. Walton School of Medicine (AWSOM).

[Link to Full Policy](#)

USE OF INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency of the use of Incomplete Grade “I”.

[Link to Full Policy](#)

DEFINITIONS

- **AAMC** – The Association of American Medical Colleges is a nonprofit association based in Washington, D.C. that represents medical schools, teaching hospitals, and academic and scientific societies.
- **Academic Standing** – A measure of a student's academic performance and progress in meeting the medical School's requirements. Academic standing categories typically include "Good Academic Standing," "Academic Warning," or "Academic Probation," as determined by the Student Promotion Committee.
- **Academic Year** – The MD degree program is divided into four academic segments, also known as academic periods or simply “periods.”
- **Accreditation** – The process by which a medical school is officially recognized and meets the standards set by a governing body, such as the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME).
- **ACGME** – The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) is a nonprofit organization that establishes and oversees the accreditation of residency and fellowship programs in the United States to ensure high standards of medical education and training.
- **ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act. A federal law that prohibits discrimination based on disability and ensures equal access to public accommodations, including educational institutions.
- **Adverse Action or Adverse Recommendation** – Any recommendation of the Student Promotion Committee (SPC), unless stated otherwise, arising out of a medical student's failure to meet academic requirements or professionalism standards. An adverse recommendation mandates that a student takes specific actions or refrain from taking specific actions.
- **ADHE** – Arkansas Division of Higher Education responsible for determining whether to authorize a graduate degree program in the state of Arkansas.
- **Allopathic** – An allopathic or "conventional" medical School trains doctors using a science-based curriculum focusing on diagnosing and treating patients. Graduates receive an MD.
- **AMCAS** – The American Medical College Application Service is the main allopathic medical school application service in the United States.
- **AMSA** – American Medical Student Association is an organization that aims to support med students worldwide with independent resources.
- **AOA** – Alpha Omega Alpha (AΩA) is a national medical honor society that recognizes medical students, residents, and physicians for excellence in scholarship, leadership, professionalism, and service to the medical field and society.

- **ARCHEs** – The unique curriculum at AWSOM, with six core elements interwoven throughout the full program: Art of Healing, Research, Clinical, Health Systems Science, Embracing Whole Health, and Science of Medicine.
- **Attending Physician** – An attending physician is a board-certified doctor who has completed med School and residency and is practicing medicine in a hospital/clinic.
- **AWSOM** – Alice L. Walton School of Medicine.
- **Basic Sciences** – The foundational medical sciences covered during the preclinical years, including anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, and pathology.
- **Board Exams** – Certify a physician in a specific medical specialty.
- **CBSE** – Comprehensive Basic Science Examination (CBSE) is a standardized test that assesses medical students' knowledge of foundational biomedical sciences, often used to evaluate readiness for the USMLE Step 1 exam.
- **CBSSA** – Comprehensive Basic Science Self-Assessment is a practice tool provided by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) that helps medical students evaluate their knowledge and preparedness for the USMLE Step 1 by simulating the content and format of the exam.
- **Chief Resident** – A resident in their final year of residency who is the appointed leader of a group of residents. Chief Residents supervise clinical duties, administrative functions, and more. Program directors or senior physicians appoint their responsibilities.
- **Clerkship** – A period during medical School, typically in the third or fourth year, where students gain hands-on experience in various medical specialties through clinical rotations.
- **Clinical or Shelf Exams** – Exams conducted during a third-year medical student's clinical rotations to assess their knowledge.
- **Clinical Preceptor** – A practicing physician or health care provider who supervises medical students during their clinical rotations and provides feedback on performance.
- **Clinical Reasoning** – The process by which medical professionals analyze data and make decisions related to patient care.
- **Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME)** – An approach to medical education that focuses on the outcomes or competencies students must achieve to progress and graduate.
- **Comprehensive Medical Student Evaluation (CMSE)** – A detailed review of a student's academic and professional progress throughout medical School.
- **Confidentiality Breach** – When private or sensitive information is disclosed to unauthorized individuals or entities without proper consent.

- **Consent Agreement** – An agreement voluntarily entered into by AWSOM and a medical student arising from alleged violations of Professionalism Standards.
- **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** – A document summarizing a student's academic and professional achievements, often used for applying to residencies, fellowships, or research opportunities.
- **Direct Patient Care (DPC)** – Hands-on interaction with patients, including history-taking, physical examinations, and procedures.
- **Duty Hours** – The maximum number of hours per week a resident or medical student is allowed to work, as regulated by accreditation bodies.
- **EHR** – Electronic Health Record. A digital version of a patient's medical history used for clinical care and documentation.
- **Elective Rotation** – A clinical rotation chosen by the student based on their interests, typically during the fourth year of medical School.
- **ERAS** – The Electronic Residency Application Service (or “the Match”) is the main application service used to apply for medical residency training following graduation from medical School.
- **Fellow** – A medical fellow is a doctor who has completed residency and is sub-specializing through a fellowship program.
- **FERPA** – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and grants students certain rights regarding access and control of their educational record.
- **Formative Assessment** – Assessments used during training to provide feedback and guide learning rather than determine a final grade.
- **Good Academic Standing** – Students who are registered and have met minimum requirements, as defined by the Student Promotion Committee, to progress in the curriculum.
- **Graduate Medical Education (GME)** – Post-medical school training, including residency and fellowship, required to practice medicine independently.
- **HIPAA** – Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act. Federal law protects the privacy and security of individuals' medical information and sets standards for the confidentiality of health data.
- **Incident Reporting Form** – Online form completed by a member of the AWSOM community to identify a possible breach of professionalism.
- **Integrated Curriculum** – A curriculum design where basic sciences and clinical sciences are taught in a unified, cohesive manner.

- **Interprofessional Education (IPE)** – An educational approach where students from different healthcare professions learn together to foster collaboration and improve patient care.
- **ISA** – Independent Student Analysis, a survey completed by medical students as part of the accreditation/reaccreditation process that is submitted to the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME).
- **Junior Resident** – A resident who has completed less than half of their residency program.
- **LCME** – Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the notable authority for the accreditation of medical education programs leading to the MD degree. **Match** – Refers to the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP), where medical students are paired with residency programs based on their preferences and program selections.
- **MEPO** – Medical Education Program Objective. Statements of the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that medical students are expected to exhibit as evidence of their achievement by completion of the program.
- **MS-1-4** – This stands for “medical student” (MS) and the year of the program in which they are currently enrolled (e.g., MS1 would be students in their first year of medical School.)
- **MSPE (Dean's Letter)** – Medical Student Performance Evaluation. Objective assessment of a medical student's academic and clinical performance, submitted with their residency application.
- **Narrative Assessment** – A written evaluation providing detailed feedback on a student's performance and progress.
- **NBME** – The National Board of Medical Examiners offers evaluation products and tools to assess American allopathic medical students, such as the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) and Shelf Exams.
- **OSCE** – In an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (aka “clinical performance exam”), students are asked to demonstrate clinical skills and patient assessments on actors, real patients, or volunteers.
- **OSHA** – Occupational Safety and Health Administration. A federal agency ensuring safe and healthful working conditions, including for students in clinical environments.
- **PBL** – Problem-based learning, a learning method where students work in small groups to solve clinical case studies, fostering critical thinking and self-directed learning.
- **Preclinical Years** – Refers to the first phase of medical education, usually covering the first two years, focusing on classroom-based learning of basic sciences like biochemistry, physiology, and pathology.

- **Probation** – The SPC may place a student on probation, which signals to the student that the SPC is carefully scrutinizing performance due to academic failure or breaches of Professionalism Standards. AWSOM Probation is an adverse action.
- **Professionalism** - Professionalism in medicine encompasses the commitment to ethical practice, accountability, integrity, respect for patients and colleagues, and a dedication to continuous learning and excellence in patient care.
- **Professionalism Standards** – The standards of professionalism as set forth in this AWSOM Medical Student Handbook.
- **Residency** – Postgraduate training in a specialized field of medicine, lasting between 3 to 7 years, practicing under supervision.
- **Resident** – A medical school graduate in a residency program training to become a doctor.
- **Rotation** – A period of clinical training in a specific medical specialty, typically lasting 4–8 weeks, where students gain hands-on experience with patients.
- **Rounds** – To go around a hospital or clinic to check on patients.
- **SAP** – Student Academic Progress. A term used by financial aid to determine successful completion of coursework toward an eligible degree.
- **Senior Resident** – A resident who has completed more than half of their residency program.
- **Shelf Exams** – Standardized subject-specific exams created by the NBME (National Board of Medical Examiners) to assess medical students' knowledge and application of clinical sciences.
- **Shadowing** – Following a physician through their daily routine to observe their methods and responsibilities.
- **SOAP** – Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program. A process for unmatched medical students to apply for and obtain residency positions after the initial Match process.
- **Specialist Physician** – A doctor who specializes in a particular medical area. Highly sought-after specialists are doctors who have completed a sub-specialty through a fellowship program.
- **Specialty Advisor** – A faculty member who provides career guidance to medical students regarding specific specialties.
- **Standardized Patient (SP)** – An actor trained to simulate real patient scenarios for teaching and testing purposes in medical education.
- **SPC**) – Student Promotions Committee, the governing body responsible for evaluating student progress and performance throughout their medical education, making recommendations for promotion to the next level of training, and ensuring that all

students meet the academic and professional standards required for successful completion of the program.

- **Sub-I** – Sub-internship, an audition rotation during your last two years of medical School.
- **USMLE** – The United States Medical Licensing Examination. Assesses an examinee's ability to apply knowledge, concepts, and principles, and to demonstrate fundamental patient-centered skills.
- **USMLE Step 1** – The first of three USMLE exams taken after the second year of medical School.
- **USMLE Step 2** – The second USMLE exam taken during the fourth year of medical School.
- **USMLE Step 3** – The final step of the USMLE is typically taken after the first year of residency.
- **Wellness Program** – Institutional initiatives designed to support medical students' physical, mental, and emotional well-being.