



Review Committee Report of Findings
Concerning the Application from Tufts University and Maine Medical Center
for

**Authority to offer academic courses and programs in Maine related to the Tufts
University School of Medicine Maine Medical Center “Maine Track” Program**

**June 10, 2019
Portland, Maine**

The Tufts University – Maine Medical Center Review Team:

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I. BACKGROUND

In 2008, the Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM) and Maine Medical Center (MMC) partnered to develop and provide a unique medical school program (called the “Maine Track”). The goals of the Maine Track are to enhance access to medical education for Maine students, to address Maine physician workforce needs, and to develop innovative curricula for the future physician. Students spend the majority of the 1st and 2nd years at TUSM, having specific experiences in Maine during these years, and then the 3rd and 4th years are predominantly in Maine.

A review Team was appointed by the Maine State Board of Education and met on June 10, 2019 at Maine Medical Center (Brighton Campus) to review the application for the Maine Track Program. The Review Team reviewed a self-study prepared by Tufts University and Maine Medical Center and toured facilities at the Brighton Campus. Additional materials as requested by team members were received in order to complete findings

II. INTRODUCTION

The following is the report of the review team appointed by the Maine State Board of Education to review the renewal application of Tufts University School of Medicine. The review was conducted in accordance with State of Maine Statute Title 20-A, and rules 05-071-149 and 05-071-170 which detail the process and procedures for consideration of degree-granting authority by out-of-state institutions.

III. REVIEW OF THE APPLICATION AND FINDINGS

The institution has legal authorization to operate and grant degrees in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). Additionally, the Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM) is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) of the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC).

A. ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

The institution has a current written document detailing administrative responsibilities of the governing board, administrators, the faculty, the staff, and the students. The institutional bylaws document the roles and responsibilities of the trustees, administration and faculty.

Tufts College Medical School was established in 1893 and has earned an outstanding international reputation. Tufts University School of Medicine is currently accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the national accrediting organization for all allopathic medical schools in the United States.

In 2008, the Tufts University School of Medicine and Maine Medical Center collaborated to create and offer the Maine Track program. In 2018 the partnership between TUSM and MMC was renewed for an additional ten years. Key features of this new agreement, as reported in the Executive Summary of the Renewal Application, were “expansion of conducting the Maine Track into the preclinical years and the potential to increase the class size from 40 to 50 students per year.”

An organizational chart exists that shows the lines of authority and the relationships among components units and personnel. In the application it is reported that there is a high level of ongoing communications and collaborations between senior leadership and faculty at TUSM. In addition, several MMC faculty serve on TUSM committees and several MMC faculty teach on both campuses. Also, the Joint Steering Committee meets 3-4 times per year.

The standard is met.

B. INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES

In 2008 Maine did not have an allopathic medical school. Students had to leave the state to attend medical school and many did not return to practice after receiving their M.D. The primary goal of the Maine Track program that began in 2008 was to provide opportunities for Maine students to become doctors without having to enroll in programs out of state. It was also hoped that students not from Maine, after having experienced and enjoyed the Maine lifestyle, will chose to remain and practice here. The four-year program leads to an M.D. upon successful completion of all degree requirements.

The goals of the Maine Track initiative are to “enhance access to medical education for Maine students, to address Maine physician workforce needs, and to develop innovative curricula for the future physician.” A focus of the program is to provide clinical experiences for students in rural medical facilities throughout the state in hopes that these newly licensed physicians are willing to pursue career opportunities in rural areas, an identified critical need in Maine.

As part of the new agreement the number of students accepted will increase from 40-50 annually at a mutually agreed upon future time. Thus, students will be able to spend the last three years of medical school (currently it is two years) in Maine expanding the opportunity to develop connections and relationships and increasing the probability of them staying in Maine.

The standard is met.

C. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

As a Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accredited institution, Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM), including its Maine Track, has demonstrated its compliance with a rigorous set of rules relating to the sufficiency of its requirements for degree completion.

Specific graduation requirements are as follows:

- Successful completion of the first two years of medical school.
- Passing the Step 1 examination of the United States Medical Licensure Examination (USMLE).
- Successful completion of the required clerkships in the Core Clerkships/ Basic Electives.
- Successful completion of the Advanced Clerkships & Electives requirements.
- Taking Step 2 CK and CS of the United States Medical Licensure Examination.
- A Passing performance in the Observed Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).
- Have paid a minimum of four full years of tuition (eight semesters) plus any additional tuition and fees incurred. Students, who transfer into third year, must pay a minimum of two full years of tuition plus any additional tuition and fees incurred. Students, who transfer into second year, must pay a minimum of three full years of tuition plus any additional tuition and fees incurred. All students must have paid all bills owed to the University.
- Recommended for the degree, Doctor of Medicine, by the Student Ethics and Promotions Committee and the Executive Council, and approved by the Trustees.

Tufts’ Maine Track exhibits complete adherence to the mandates of this standard, as degrees are awarded upon completion of clearly-defined requirements that are provided in writing in several documents that are easily accessed via an assortment of locations (e.g., Student Handbook, program website). Attention is paid to residency requirements and credit hour mandates are in compliance with Maine Department of Education minimums for the degree in question.

TUSM does not subscribe to a “semester hour” definition for course requirements. Instead, it adheres to a curriculum design that focuses on outcomes, as opposed to inputs. Specifically, LCME’s Standard 6 requires that “faculty of a medical school define its medical education program objectives in outcome-based terms...”

The standard is met.

D. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission requirements for TUSM, including its Maine Track, are rigorous and clearly defined. The application process leading to admissions decisions follows an arduous trajectory, and it mandates that prospective students complete a series of requirements. The first step in this process is completion of the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) application [administered by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)] and referred to as the “Primary Application.” This requirement is standard for medical schools across the United States, and includes sections addressing background information, completed coursework, activities and work history, letters of recommendation, identification of medical schools to which prospective students will apply, and standardized test scores [specifically, the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)].

TUSM has clearly defined its standards for premedical coursework and competencies. Required completed coursework includes a full year of biology, two full years of chemistry (general chemistry and organic chemistry, with biochemistry highly recommended), and a semester of physics. Competencies in English, math, biology, and lab skills are also mandated.

After submitting the AMCAS application, prospective students are then required to complete the online “Secondary Application,” which is specific to Tufts University School of Medicine. It is in this application that further detail is elicited from Maine Track applicants.

Applications are reviewed only upon completion and receipt of both Primary and Secondary applications. Upon review by an Admissions Committee, applicants are either invited for an interview or issued a letter of regret.

Maine Track applicants are considered for admission to both the Maine Track and traditional MD track at TUSM. Applicants selected to interview for the Maine Track are invited to the Brighton Campus of the Maine Medical Center in Portland. Applicants selected for the traditional MD Track are interviewed at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston.

Interview days, which take place between September and March of each year, are daylong events that include speakers, presentations, lunch, interactions with current students, a campus tour, and two individual interviews with members of the Admissions Committee. Maine Track applicants are subject to a “Multiple Mini Interview” process wherein applicants participate in a series of brief interactions with members of the Maine Track Admissions Subcommittee. In these

interactions, non-cognitive assets, such as listening skills, ethical decision-making, and critical thinking, are assessed.

Interviewed applicants are then subject to another level of scrutiny. The Admissions Committee, which meets monthly during the interview season, makes a second round of decisions based on applicant performance during interviews. Applicants at this stage in the process receive one of the following notifications: Offer of Admission, Notification of Rejection or Notification of a Deferred Decision. Deferred applications are continuously reviewed throughout the admissions cycle, and individuals with this status may be accepted at any time and moved to a wait list that becomes active each spring.

According to the TUSM website, “selection of applicants for admission into the MD Program is based not only on performance in the required premedical courses, but also on the applicant’s entire academic record and extracurricular experiences. Letters of recommendation and information supplied by the applicant are reviewed for indications of promise and suitability for a medical career. A minimum of three years of college work is required, and strong preference is given to applicants who will earn a bachelor's degree from an accredited US college or university before medical school matriculation.”

Again, as part of its LCME accreditation requirements, TUSM, including its Maine Track, is in full compliance with the Admissions Requirements standard.

The TUSM Maine Track engages in substantial admissions activities beyond those required for enrollment in the regular Tufts program, as described above, and related policies are clearly delineated on the college’s website (as indicated below).

There are no concerns with the program’s compliance with this standard. Prospective students have easy access to comprehensive information about admissions requirements and admissions processes, as well as policies relating to transfer credit and refunding.

The institution has written policies defining the minimum requirements for admission into the academic credit courses or program proposed for offering in Maine. This information is clearly laid out in their website and accompanying admissions materials.

The admission policies include detailed attention to the standard for academic credit given for experience, and the criteria for transfer credit. In keeping with allopathic medical education practice, the Tuft’s Maine track curriculum is rather prescribed. Nevertheless, information does exist relating to this topic located on their website and within their student handbook.

A written refund policy is in evidence detailing the criteria for the refund of tuition and fees and can be found within their website and additional sources.

The standard is met.

E. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The purposes of Tufts University School of Medicine's Maine Track are to provide opportunities for Maine students to better access medical education, to help ameliorate the shortage of physicians in Maine, and to offer a creative and engaging curriculum. A significant component of the program is the imbuing of Maine-based experiences throughout the curriculum. To date, years 1 and 2 of the 4-year program are spent largely in Boston, alongside students in the general TUSM program. These years offer opportunities for students to participate in some Maine-based learning, but the majority of time is spent in Boston. In years 3 and 4, students relocate to Maine to complete their studies and clinical requirements. (As of this writing, plans are in place for students in the Maine Track to begin this Maine residency in year 2 of their studies.)

A recent innovation in the Maine Track is the addition of the Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LIC) in Year 3. In lieu of the traditional clerkship model, wherein medical students spend set blocks of time in a variety of disciplines, the LIC compels students to follow a cohort of patients as they engage with various medical disciplines and in multiple settings. Validated benefits of this model include enabling students to provide a continuity of care for patients, establishing meaningful relationships with patients, and positively impacting education through creating longitudinal preceptor/student relationships and effectively integrating multiple clerkships.

Specific compliance with the discrete aspects of this standard as defined by the Maine Department of Education is described below.

The educational program and curriculum to be offered in Maine is reflective of the philosophy, purpose, and objectives of the institution.

An appropriate starting point for addressing this mandate is a delineation of the mission and vision of Tufts University, which serve to capture the college's philosophy, purpose, and objectives. These are as follows:

Mission

University: Tufts is a student-centered research university dedicated to the creation and application of knowledge. We are committed to providing transformative experiences for students and faculty in an inclusive and collaborative environment where creative scholars generate bold ideas, innovate in the face of complex challenges and distinguish themselves as active citizens of the world.

School of Medicine: The mission of Tufts University School of Medicine is to educate a diverse body of students and advance medical knowledge in a dynamic and collaborative environment. We seek to foster the development of dedicated clinicians, scientists, public health professionals, and educators who will have a sustained positive impact on the health of individuals, communities, and the world.

Vision

To be an innovative university of creative scholars across a broad range of schools who have a profound impact on one another and the world.

From this description, this requirement is being met by the TUSM Maine Track. For evidence, one need only review the particulars of the TUSM Maine Track. Specifically, the program is in full alignment with the college's mission in that it provides a student-centric experience (per participants in a panel interview during the visiting team's visit, who raved about the program's robust support) that, by its very nature, is focused on knowledge dissemination and application. Collaboration was evident among faculty and students as they described their work together in meeting learning outcomes. Students are mentored by medical school faculty in the classroom and clinical environments. Faculty collaborate to create and evolve an innovative curriculum (e.g., the Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship, which, as indicated, is a 9-month experience for third-year students, who follow a cohort of patients across a variety of disciplines and in various locations).

As described above, the Maine Track was designed in part to help ameliorate a shortage of physicians in the rural state of Maine. To date, it has made great strides in addressing this shortage (with 20 graduates from the Classes of 2013, 2014, and 2015 currently practicing in Maine), thereby contributing to Tuft's vision of creating profound impact on individuals and societies.

The institution has a written policy describing its system for evaluating student performance, the minimum performance considered satisfactory, the criteria for academic probation and conditions for dismissal for unsatisfactory performance. This information is readily available in the TUSM Student Handbook.

Procedures of evaluation of program of instruction and specific courses are clearly stated in writing. This information is readily available in the TUSM Student Handbook.

The standard is met.

F. FACULTY

The MMC based faculty members provide clinical and classroom instruction. They possess academic, scholarly and teaching qualifications appropriate to their positions. These faculty members are heavily involved with curriculum development. This means that although the courses being developed for second year students will have the same objectives, content and means of assessment, course delivery in Maine may not be the same as the second-year courses provided in Boston. The MMC faculty participate in the governance and planning of the Maine Track Program.

Some faculty/student teaching sessions are recorded or monitored so that feedback can be provided to faculty about their teaching. Additional training in teaching is provided by the MITE (Maine Institute for Teaching Excellence) which is administered by the MMC Department of Medical Education.

Clinical faculty at other hospitals who teach students during the longitudinal integrated clerkship or other clinical rotations and Competency-based Apprenticeship in Primary Care (CAP) clinicians are offered faculty development opportunities. This includes videocasts. These are more appealing to clinicians if AMA (American Medical Association) and AAFP (American Academy of Family Medicine) credit is included.

It is critical that sufficient primary care rural practices are recruited for the three-day first year experience and the second year CAP program. Incentives for practicing physicians to be involved in these programs need to be tailored to their needs.

The standard is met.

G. STUDENT SERVICES

Students are supported by the Maine Track team all four years of Medical School, even when based in Boston. Students are provided strong support for academic issues, mental health issues, housing, etc. Time for student support is built into the schedule of administrators. When students are on rotations or short-term experiences away from the MMC or Boston campus housing and transportation issues are handled by Maine Track administration. The students are very supportive of each other. Maine Track graduates who are residents at MMC and other hospitals provided support to Maine Track students they are supervising. Maine Track students indicate that they are comfortable turning to faculty and administration for help when needed.

The standard is met.

H. LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

As noted in the self-study and confirmed during the visit, Maine Track students have access to the Tisch Health Sciences Library at TUSM through the TUSK on-line system (Tufts University Sciences Knowledgebase). TUSK is a web-based platform which offers access from any internet site. All TUSM students can access course materials, videotaped lectures, and schedules 24/7 throughout their 4 years at TUSM. Additionally, the Maine Medical Center Library supports the clinical, research and educational needs of MMC employees, medical staff, and residents, and medical students.

The standard is met.

I. FACILITIES

TUSM main facilities are located in Boston while Maine operations are based out of the Brighton Campus of Maine Medical Center in Portland. Maine Track students use the facilities in Portland and elsewhere throughout the state for their placements. The institution provides and maintains an appropriate learning environment with the necessary supports and technologies sufficient for student achievement of educational objectives. In doing so, industry standards for health, safety, and maintenance are followed.

The standard is met.

J. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Maine Track of the Tufts University School of Medicine demonstrated its compliance with this standard by providing Maine Medical Center's most recent audited financial statement and by offering an explanation regarding its financial viability. As a stand-alone program, the Maine Track would not be sustainable. Because of its unique and formidable partnership with Maine Medical Center, the program is sure to enjoy lasting viability. As evidence, Tufts and MMC recently renewed their Maine Track partnership agreement for a 10-year period (starting in 2018). Part of this agreement addresses this revenue shortfall and ensures that MMC will subsidize the program from patient care dollars.

There is further assurance that MMC will continue its support, given the very real contributions that the Maine Track program makes to the hospital's strategic goals of Care Team Well Being, Healthy Communities, Affordable Care, and Patient-Centered Care - all of which are positively impacted by developing Maine-based providers.

The standard is met.

K. TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTRUCTION

The Maine Track program does not deliver coursework primarily through an online platform although offers online and additional technology opportunities to deliver some content or provide additional forums for communication. As such this standard is not applicable, as related courses are offered in a face-to-face modality.

GENERAL NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Tufts University School of Medicine-Maine Medical Center Program complies with all non-discrimination regulations and has policies published to support its compliance with all federal and state laws.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Review Committee found that Tufts University School of Medicine-Maine Medical Center Program has the organizational, academic, and fiscal resources needed to carry out the proposed education of Maine Track students through coursework and program offerings as well as the support of field placement sites in Maine. The team is impressed with the quality of instruction and the candidates that were interviewed. The team continues to be interested in the commitment of the program to attract candidates who will be willing to remain in the state to enhance the quality of healthcare in rural areas, in particular.

V. RECOMMENDATION TO THE MAINE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Review Committee recommends that the State Board of Education approve the request from Tufts University and Maine Medical Center to continue to offer the Maine Track program in Maine from Fall 2019 to Fall of 2023.

VI. LIST OF INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

Maine Track Program Administration

Doug Sawyer, MD, PhD	Chief Academic Officer, Maine Medical Center (MMC) Academic Dean, Tufts University School of Medicine- Maine Medical Center Program
Robert Bing-You, MD, MEd, MBA	Vice President Medical Education, MMC
Bob Trowbridge, MD	Director, Undergraduate Medical Education Curriculum Co-Course Director, Introduction to Clinical Reasoning Course, Internal Medicine Clerkship Site Director

Faculty

Scot Remick, MD	Co-Course Director Hematology/Oncology Course
Vicki Hayes, MD	Director Competency Based Apprenticeship in Primary Care (CAP) Co-Course Director Scientific Foundations of Social and Behavioral Medicine Course
MaryBeth Ford, MD	Director Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship
Suzanne Roberts, MD	Course Director Healer's Art
Pat Patterson MD	Pediatrics Clerkship Site Director
Frank Chessa, PhD	Co-Course Director, Ethics and Professionalism, Co- Course Director Scientific Foundations of Social and Behavioral Medicine, Director MaineTrack Themes and Threads
Sarah Dodwell, MD	Co-Course Director Brain (Neurology) course
Dena Whitesell DO	Co-Course Director Brain (Psychiatry/Addiction Medicine) Course; Psychiatry Clerkship Site Director
Peg Cyr, MD	Family Medicine Clerkship Site Director

Students/Alumni

Carolyn Larkins	Class of 2022
Ashley Jean	Class of 2016; Resident in Pediatrics, MMC
Anna Meader	Class of 2015; Resident in General Surgery, MMC
Nabeel Hashmi	Class of 2020
Meg Curran	Class of 2015; Chief Resident in Family Medicine, MMC
Richie Byrnes	Class of 2020
Joshua Linscott	Class of 2018; Resident in Urology, MMC
Adriana Eurich	Class of 2019; Resident in Rural Internal Medicine in Maine Program at MMC and Western Medical Health
Dianna Stade	Class of 2019; Resident in Maine-Dartmouth Family Medicine Program at MMC