



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

MAY 14 2004

SENT BY FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

Mr. Andrés Reyes Rodriguez
Presidente, SEESCYT
Ave. Enrique Jiménez Moya esq. Juan de Dios Ventura Simó
5to. Piso, Centro de los Héroes
Santo Domingo, República Dominicana

Dear Mr. Reyes:

On March 8-9, 2004, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) met in Washington, D.C., to review materials from 13 countries, including the information and documents submitted by your office describing the accreditation standards and processes used by the Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia y Tecnología (SEESCYT) to evaluate and accredit medical schools in the Dominican Republic. The NCFMEA members wish to thank all of the officials from the Dominican Republic who attended the meeting, and the members especially appreciate the testimony that Mr. Emilio Huyke and you provided, which was most helpful to the members in their understanding of your accreditation system.

At the meeting the NCFMEA, based on the information and materials submitted and the testimony presented, reaffirmed its prior determination that the standards and processes used by the SEESCYT to accredit medical schools in the Dominican Republic are comparable to those used to accredit medical schools in the United States (U.S.). This determination of comparability by the NCFMEA has a maximum duration of six years from the date of this letter, unless the Committee withdraws, extends or renews its determination prior to that date. Before expiration of the six-year period, the NCFMEA will seek to confirm that your standards and processes for accrediting medical schools in the Dominican Republic are still comparable to the accreditation standards applied to medical schools in the United States. If so, its previous determination of comparability will be extended for another period.

As a result of the determination of continued comparability by the NCFMEA, any medical school in the Dominican Republic that is accredited by the SEESCYT may apply to the U.S. Department of Education to participate in the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program.

If a medical school's application is approved, students enrolled in the school who are either U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. may receive FFEL loans to finance their medical education if they meet all other eligibility requirements. Medical schools that wish to participate in the FFEL program may obtain the proper application forms from the Foreign Schools Team by calling (202) 377-3168 or by writing to the following address:

Foreign Schools Team
FSA/Schools Channel/CMO
U.S. Department of Education
Room 73C3
830 First St., N.E.
Washington, DC 20202-5340
USA

Please note that it is not necessary for any medical schools in the Dominican Republic that currently participate in the FFEL program to contact the Foreign Schools Team at this time; the status of those participating schools remains unchanged by the NCFMEA's decision of continued comparability.

At the meeting, the NCFMEA also requested that the Dominican Republic provide a report on its accreditation activities involving its medical school(s) for review at the March 2006 NCFMEA meeting, and the members requested that the report include information on several issues that were identified in the staff analysis. Please see the enclosure for details on the information to be provided in the report.

We would appreciate receiving the requested report by December 1, 2005, so we have sufficient time to review the information prior to the March 2006 NCFMEA meeting. Please send the information to the U.S. Department of Education at the address below.

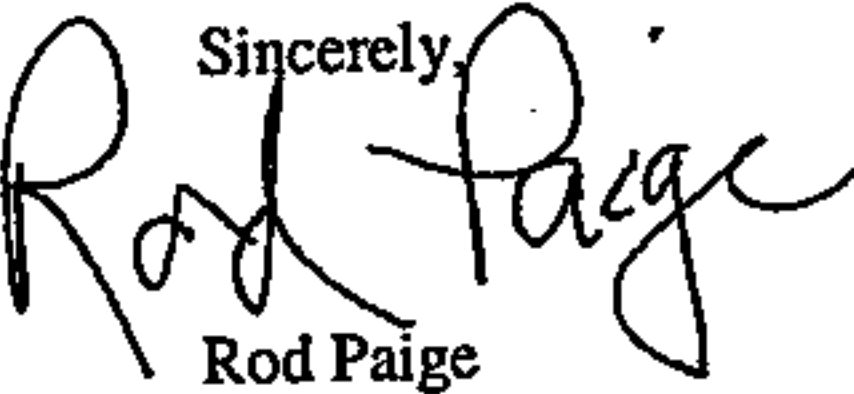
Mr. John Barth
Director, Accreditation and State Liaison Staff
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, N.W. – Room 7105
Washington, DC 20006-8509
USA

If you have any questions regarding the information requested, please feel free to contact Mr. Barth at (202) 219-7011 (telephone), (202) 219-7005 (fax), or john.barth@ed.gov (e-mail).

The Executive Director of the NCFMEA, Bonnie LeBold, will contact you in the autumn of 2005 to provide information regarding the March 2006 NCFMEA meeting. In the interim, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. LeBold at (202) 219-7009 (telephone), (202) 219-7008 (fax), or bonnie.lebold@ed.gov (e-mail).

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Thank you very much for providing information regarding your country's accreditation of its medical schools. The NCFMEA members and the U.S. Department of Education appreciate your ongoing assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Rod Paige

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Emilio Huyke
Consultant to SEESCYT

**Report Requested from Dominican Republic and the
Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia y Tecnología (SEESCYT)
by the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education
and Accreditation (NCFMEA)**

Due Date: December 1, 2005

Submit to: John Barth
Director, Accreditation and State Liaison Staff
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, N.W. – Room 7105
Washington, DC 20006-8509
USA

Phone: (202) 219-7011
Fax: (202) 219-7005
E-mail: john.barth@ed.gov

Content: The NCFMEA is requesting information (and any applicable supporting documents) regarding the following:

- ***Areas of concern identified in the Department staff report on the Dominican Republic prepared for the March 2004 NCFMEA meeting:*** The attached staff analysis identifies areas where additional information is needed. Please provide a status report on these areas, including:
 - Any standards that SEESCYT has established requiring medical schools to involve faculty in decisions related to admissions and in decisions pertaining to the hiring, retention, and discipline of faculty.
 - Any standards or procedures that SEESCYT has established to assess medical programs with respect to graduation rates, rates of acceptance into residency programs, and licensure rates.
 - Any standards or procedures that SEESCYT has implemented to minimize student exposure to infectious diseases.
- ***Current status of medical schools:*** A list of the medical schools currently operating in the Dominican Republic, indicating whether each school has gone through the accreditation process and what the outcome of that accreditation process has been (whether the school is fully accredited or provisionally accredited, whether accreditation has been terminated, etc.).
- ***Overview of accreditation activities:*** A summary of key activities involving medical schools in the Dominican Republic during 2004 and 2005, such as accreditation reviews conducted, meetings held and accreditation decisions reached, and accreditation conferences or training sessions held.
- ***Laws and regulations:*** Any changes in your country's laws or regulations during 2004 and 2005 affecting the accreditation of medical school(s) in the Dominican Republic.
- ***Standards:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2004 and 2005 in the accreditation standards that the SEESCYT uses to evaluate and accredit medical schools, and, if so, what those changes were in the areas listed below:

- administration,
 - faculty,
 - curriculum,
 - admissions procedures,
 - student services,
 - methods for evaluating student achievement, and
 - facilities.
- ***Processes and procedures:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2004 and 2005 in the accreditation processes or procedures used by the SEESCYT for the following:
 - conducting reviews of medical school campuses and clinical clerkship sites,
 - selecting and training individuals who conduct site evaluations or who make accreditation decisions,
 - periodically reevaluating and regularly monitoring medical schools,
 - reviewing substantive changes reported by medical schools,
 - ensuring the SEESCYT has effective controls against the conflicts of interest and the inconsistent application of accreditation standards, and
 - ensuring that accreditation decisions are based, in part, on the evaluation of student performance after graduation from medical school.
 - ***Schedule of upcoming accreditation activities:*** A listing of upcoming accreditation meetings and on-site visits to medical schools and clinical clerkship sites planned for 2006.

Attachment

U.S. Department of Education



Staff Analysis

Dominican Republic

**For the March 8-9, 2004 Meeting
of the
National Committee on Foreign Medical
Education and Accreditation**

U.S. Department of Education

**Staff Analysis of the Standards for the
Evaluation of Medical Schools used by**

The Dominican Republic

Prepared February 2004

Background

This is an application for redetermination by the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) regarding medical education in the Dominican Republic. The NCFMEA is asked to make a determination that accreditation standards used by the Dominican Republic to evaluate medical education at Dominican programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree are comparable to standards of accreditation used to evaluate medical education in the United States. The Dominican Republic is a governmental accreditor that accredits nine medical programs that are housed within public non-profit universities. The country last received a determination of comparability at the October 1997 meeting of NCFMEA.

Summary of Findings

Based on the information provided, it appears that the country has an evaluation system that remains substantially comparable to that used to accredit medical schools in the United States.

The Dominican Republic maintains a clearly designated accrediting body that is responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education and uses measurable standards for evaluative purposes. Although more attention to the adequacy of administrative staffing could be made, it appears that medical schools in the country are required to maintain clearly defined organizational structures with appropriate training for administrative personnel.

Faculty members at Dominican medical schools actively participate in the development of curriculum but are less active in the faculty admissions, hiring, retention, promotion or discipline processes. The country's requirements regarding qualifications of faculty appear to be comparable, although it is unclear whether policies are maintained to prevent conflicts of interest that sometimes arise with respect to private and official duties.

The Dominican Republic's curriculum requirements in both basic sciences and clinical sciences appear to be fully comparable with respect to course offerings,

the variety of clinical experiences offered, and the availability of support disciplines. The country appears to employ adequate measures to monitor the effectiveness of individual courses but could strengthen its evaluation system by assessing medical programs with respect to graduation rates, acceptances into residency programs and/or licensure rates.

Medical students in the Dominican Republic have access to medical services and periodic physical examinations, but it is not clear that the country emphasizes practices designed to minimize student exposure to infectious diseases. The country's requirements with respect to adequacy of facilities, including library and clinical teaching facilities, appear to be comparable to those used in the United States.

The country's processes for reviewing medical schools on a recurrent basis, securing qualified evaluators/decision makers, monitoring substantive changes, and making accrediting decisions based on accreditation standards are all fully comparable to processes used in the United States.

Staff Analysis

PART I: The Entity Responsible for the Accreditation/Approval of Medical Schools

There should be a clearly designated body responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the foreign country, and that body should have clear authority to accredit/approve medical schools in the country that offer educational programs leading to the M.D. degree (or equivalent) degree.

The country identifies one governmental entity that is given responsibility for evaluating the quality of medical education in the Dominican Republic. The entity identified is the Secretary of State for Higher Education, Science, and Technology (SEESCYT). Article 38, subpart (g) of Law 139-01 mandates that SEESCYT will approve the creation and accreditation of institutions of higher education, science and technology. Article 69 of Law 139-01 further assigns SEESCYT the task of stimulating the institutions of higher education to develop processes of self-evaluation that will guarantee the achievement of institutional ends, goals, and objectives. Although the statutory language does not specifically mention medical schools, SEESCYT interprets the language to mean that it has oversight responsibility over all institutions of higher education in the Dominican Republic, including medical education programs.

Documentation:

Narrative, p. 1.

Exhibit 1, Law 139-01, pp. 15 and 26.

PART II: Accreditation/Approval Standards

The entity within the foreign country that is responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the country and has authority to accredit/approve medical schools should have standards comparable to the following:

1. Mission and Objectives

(a) The educational mission of the medical school must serve the general public interest, and its educational objectives must support the mission. The medical school's educational program must be appropriate in light of the mission and objectives of the school.

(b) An essential objective of a program of medical education leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree must be to prepare graduates to enter and complete graduate medical education, qualify for licensure, provide competent medical care, and have the educational background necessary for continued learning.

SEESCYT describes the mission of medical schools as one of serving the public interest. To accomplish this mission, the agency requires each medical program to have educational objectives that are clearly stated and measurable. At a minimum, SEESCYT requires its medical program objectives to include: a) the offering of a strong base of human integrated skills that enables the practice of medicine; b) the contribution to community work that benefits the living conditions of citizens; c) the preparation of professionals who stay updated in their knowledge of advancements in their field; and d) the development of ethical, intellectual and moral attitudes to ensure confidence and leadership. Although preparation for licensure is not specifically mentioned in the objectives, facilities and resources for testing and license preparation are made available to students who wish to become licensed to practice medicine in the United States.

Documentation:

Narrative, p. 2.

Exhibit 2, "Regulations of the Secretary of State for Higher Education, Science and Technology (SEESCYT) for the Recognition of Medical Schools in the Dominican Republic", p. 3.

2. Governance

(a) The medical school must be legally authorized to provide a program of medical education in the country in which it is located.

(b) There must be an appropriate accountability of the management of the medical school to an ultimate responsible authority external to and Independent of the institution's administration. The external authority must have sufficient understanding of the medical program to develop policies in the interest of both the medical school and the public.

Only universities are authorized to offer medical programs in the Dominican Republic. In order to receive authorization, the prospective university must receive approval from the President of the Dominican Republic to create a non-profit educational organization at the higher education level. Once this authorization is received, the university must secure recognition from SEESCYT before it may offer a medical program. SEESCYT then performs the approval, oversight, evaluation and accreditation functions for the medical school.

Medical school management is accountable to SEESCYT for fulfillment of mission and compliance with SEESCYT standards. SEESCYT has the power to withdraw authorization or accreditation from any medical school that does not comply with agency standards. SEESCYT, as a government agency, is entirely separate and independent of the medical schools it accredits, and secures the services of persons to perform program reviews who have knowledge and understanding of the medical education field.

Narrative, p. 4.

Exhibit 1, Law 139-01, pp. 20-22.

3. Administration

(a) The administration of the medical school must be effective and appropriate in light of the school's mission and objectives.

(i) There must be sufficient administrative personnel to ensure the effective administration of admissions, student affairs, hospital and other health facility relationships, business and planning, and the other administrative functions that the medical school performs.

(ii) The chief academic officer of the medical school must have sufficient authority provided by the institution to administer the educational program. That individual must also have ready access to the university president or other university official charged with final responsibility for the school, and to other university officials as are necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the chief academic officer's office.

(iii) In affiliated institutions, the medical school's department heads and senior clinical faculty members must have authority consistent with their responsibility for the instruction of students.

SEESCYT requires that each medical school have a Board of Directors with final responsibility for the administration of the school. The school must also have a clearly defined organizational structure, with each department integrated through a Dean or School Director, supervisor coordinators, department heads, or the equivalent. Each medical school is required to maintain a document that presents the structure and organization of the school and the responsibilities of each employee. The organizational structure must include curriculum, basic science, clinical science, admissions, investigation (research), publishing, and library components. In each of these areas, SEESCYT program reviewers assess whether there is a mechanism for evaluating the performance of academic administrators. Program reviewers also investigate whether there is an in-service training program for administrative personnel.

No evidence was presented as to whether SEESCYT evaluates the adequacy of staffing in each functional area. Also, there was no evidence of any assessment as to whether department heads and senior clinical faculty members have authority consistent with their responsibility for the instruction of students.

Documentation:

Narrative, pp. 5-7.

Exhibit 2, p. 10.

Exhibit 4, pp. 8-10.

(b) The chief academic official of the medical school must be qualified by education and experience to provide leadership in medical education.

The chief academic officer for medical schools in the Dominican Republic is the Dean or School Director. Minimum qualifications for a Dean or School Director include professional standing as a medical doctor, community leadership recognition, and experience in medical school administration. Although SEESCYT does not mandate specific functions for the Dean or School Director, the agency does require that the Dean or School Director have free access to university officials necessary to accomplish the mission of the medical school. The Dean or School Director must also communicate well with faculty members in the various academic departments to ensure adequate resources for each educational program.

Documentation:
Narrative, pp. 6-7.
Exhibit 2, p. 10.

- (c) The medical school may determine the administrative structure that best suits its mission and objectives, but that structure must ensure that the faculty is appropriately involved in decisions related to –**
- (i) Admissions;**
 - (ii) Hiring, retention, promotion, and discipline of faculty; and**
 - (iii) All phases of the curriculum, including the clinical education portion.**

SEESCYT requires faculty participation in the development of curriculum and mandates that they meet at least once per semester for this purpose. However, the agency provides no evidence that it requires faculty participation in the admissions process or in the hiring, retention, promotion or discipline of faculty.

Documentation:
Narrative, pp. 7-8.
Exhibit 2, p. 12.

- (d) If some components of the educational program are conducted at sites that are geographically separated from the main campus of the medical school, the school must have appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that –**
- (i) The educational experiences at all geographically separated sites are comparable in quality to those at the main campus; and**
 - (ii) There is consistency in student evaluations at all sites.**

The country reports that institutions operating campuses geographically separated from the main campus are responsible for maintaining the quality of instruction at each of those campuses.

In cases where a large number of locations are used or significant distances between campuses are found, the country reports that additional academic or administrative controls may be required. However, SEESCYT does not fully describe the nature of these controls.

Documentation:

Narrative, p. 8.

Exhibit 2, p. 11.

4. Educational Program

- (a) ***Duration:*** The program of education leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree must include at least 130 weeks of instruction, scheduled over a minimum of four calendar years.

The country provides evidence of the developmental components it uses in preparing a student for the M. D. degree, including two academic years of pre-medical courses, 132 calendar weeks of basic and clinical sciences instruction, one calendar year of pre-internship and one calendar year of internship or hospital rotation.

Documentation:

Narrative, pp. 9-12.

Exhibit 2, pp. 4-7.

- (b) ***Curricular Content:*** The medical school's curriculum must provide students with general professional education, i.e. the knowledge and skills necessary to become a qualified physician. At a minimum, the curriculum must provide education in the following:

(i) The sciences basic to medicine, including –

- (A) The contemporary content of those expanded disciplines that have traditionally been titled anatomy, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology and immunology, pathology, pharmacology, and therapeutics, and preventive medicine; and
- (B) Laboratory or other practical exercises that facilitate the ability to make accurate quantitative observations of biomedical phenomena and critical analyses of data.

The country's basic sciences component of its M.D. degree program includes biochemistry, microbiology and parasitology; anatomy; histology; embryology; genetics; pathology; immunology; pharmacology and therapeutics; behavioral

sciences; physiology; physiopathology; public health; image diagnostics; and semiology.

The clinical sciences component includes initial patient procedures, clinical history, physical examination, preliminary diagnostics, epidemiology, prevention, and socioeconomic factors. The clinical experience, which actively involves the student in hospital procedures, appears to provide the student with adequate opportunities for making accurate quantitative observations of biomedical phenomena and for critically analyzing data.

Documentation:
Narrative, p. 10.

- (ii) **A variety of clinical subjects, including at least the core subjects of internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, surgery, and psychiatry and, preferably, family medicine.**

Note 1: Medical schools that do not require clinical experience in one or another of the above disciplines must ensure that their students possess the knowledge and clinical abilities to enter any field of graduate medical education.

Note 2: Clinical instruction must cover all organ systems and include aspects of acute, chronic, continuing, preventive, and rehabilitative care.

Note 3: The medical school's program of clinical instruction must be designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for further training in the practice of medicine.

Note 4: Instruction and experience in patient care must be provided in both ambulatory and hospital settings.

Note 5: Each required clinical clerkship (or equivalent) must allow the student to undertake a thorough study of a series of selected patients having the major and common types of disease problems represented in the clerkship.

The Dominican Republic describes required training in the clinical sciences component of its curriculum that appears to fulfill the core subject requirements of the NCFMEA guidelines. Clinical training in internal medicine, pediatrics,

psychiatry, gynecology and obstetrics, surgery, family medicine and social science is included with a student's clinical science training. This training appears to include all organ systems and provides a foundation in all aspects of acute, chronic, continuing, preventive, and rehabilitative care. The clinical instruction is developmental such that students can augment their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors with further training. Instruction is provided in patient care in both ambulatory and hospital settings. The clinical sciences component provides students with the opportunity to observe patients directly under the supervision of instructors.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, p. 5.

(iii) Disciplines that support the fundamental clinical subjects, such as diagnostic imaging and clinical pathology.

The Dominican Republic lists image diagnostics and pathology as courses in its basic sciences curriculum. Image diagnostics is also included in the internal medicine curriculum for pre-internship.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, pp. 4-6.

(iv) Ethical, behavioral, and socioeconomic subjects pertinent to medicine.

The SEESCYT regulations state that a medical school's curriculum in the basic sciences must include ethical, behavioral and socioeconomic subjects relevant to medicine. The country lists behavioral sciences and public health as subjects that appear to satisfy these requirements. Ethics is not listed separately, although it is likely that ethical considerations are discussed as an aspect of behavioral sciences and public health.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, p. 5.

(v) Communications skills integral to the education and effective function of physicians, including communication with patients, families, colleagues, and other health professionals.

SEESCYT regulations require communications-oriented courses in the medical school's pre-med curriculum, including sociology, humanities, language, computers, methodology of scientific investigation, and social sciences. Also, practical work with patients under the supervision of teachers and instructors appears to foster improved communication skills.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, p. 4.

(c) *Design, Implementation, and Evaluation:*

- (i) There must be integrated responsibility by faculty within the medical school for the design, implementation, and periodic evaluation of all aspects of the curriculum, including both basic sciences and clinical education.**
- (ii) The medical school must regularly evaluate the effectiveness of its medical program by documenting the achievement of its students and graduates in verifiable ways that show the extent to which institutional and program purposes are met. The school should use a variety of measures to evaluate program quality, such as data on student performance, academic progress and graduation, acceptance into residency programs, and postgraduate performance; the licensure of graduates, particularly in relation to any national norms; and any other measures that are appropriate and valid in light of the school's mission and objectives.**

SEESCYT approves course offerings prior to their being offered to students, and the agency also periodically assesses whether the courses required by regulations are being offered. The regulations also require medical schools to establish an evaluation system for each course in the curriculum. These activities are all adequate for monitoring the effectiveness of individual courses. However, no evidence was provided of a concerted and periodic effort to measure overall program performance as measured by the percentage of students that graduate, the percentage of students accepted into residency programs, the percentage of students who obtain licensure, or by other appropriate methods of assessment.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, p. 8.

5. Medical Students

(a) *Admissions, Recruiting, and Publications*

- (i) The medical school must admit only those new and transfer students who possess the intelligence, integrity, and personal and emotional characteristics that are generally perceived as necessary to become effective physicians.**
- (ii) A medical school's publications, advertising, and student recruitment must present a balanced and accurate representation of the mission and objectives of its educational program. Its catalog (or equivalent document) must provide its admissions requirements for students (both new and transfer), the criteria it uses to determine that a student is making satisfactory academic progress in the medical program, and its requirements for the award of the M.D. degree (or equivalent).**
- (iii) Unless prohibited by law, student records must be available for review by the student and an opportunity provided to challenge their accuracy. Applicable law must govern the confidentiality of student records.**

SEESCYT does not set specific admissions requirements in its regulations, other than stipulating that the students should meet minimum requirements for intelligence, integrity, public service orientation, critical thinking skills, a respect for life, and the capacity to work as a team. Admissions directors and admissions committees are tasked with the responsibility of reviewing applications for admission and making recommendations for admission based on the medical school's own requirements, which are published in a written procedures manual. The procedures manual provides a complete accounting of admissions requirements and processes.

Student records are available for review by the students at all times. Public law in the Dominican Republic requires that student records be kept confidential.

Documentation:

Narrative, pp. 18-19.

Exhibit 2, pp. 8-9.

(b) *Evaluation of Student Achievement*

- (i) The medical school faculty must establish principles and methods for the evaluation of student achievement, including the criteria for satisfactory academic progress and the requirements for graduation.**
- (ii) The medical school's evaluation of student achievement must employ a variety of measures of student knowledge, competence, and performance, systematically and sequentially applied throughout the medical program, including the clinical clerkships.**
- (iii) The medical school must carefully monitor the progress of students throughout their educational program, including each course and clinical clerkship, must promote only those who make satisfactory academic progress, and must graduate only those students who successfully complete the program.**

SEESCYT reports that school faculty members establish an evaluation mechanism for each course, although no details have been provided regarding the principles and methods used in the evaluation process. The country reports that students attending basic science courses are monitored for progress in comparison to norms previously established among students taking examinations. No details are provided as to how this monitoring is carried out.

The country reports that clinical science students are evaluated for adequacy of student cognition at each particular academic level, although they do not explain what measures are used to evaluate student cognition.

The country reports that students may graduate only after completing all graduation requirements established in the school curriculum, and all other requirements published in the school's graduation policy.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, p. 8.

(c) *Student Services*

Students must have access to preventive and therapeutic health services, including confidential mental health counseling. Policies must include education, prevention, and management of exposure to infectious diseases during the course of the educational program.

SEESCYT regulations provide that students must have access to medical services, periodic physical examinations, and clinical care as necessary. No mention is made of any policies designed to prevent or manage the exposure of students to infectious diseases.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, p. 12.

6. Resources for the Educational Program

(a) *Finances:* The medical school must have adequate financial resources for the size and scope of its educational program.

(b) *Facilities:*

(i) The medical school must have, or be assured use of, physical facilities and equipment, including clinical teaching facilities, that are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate for the size and scope of the educational program, as well as the size of the student body.

(ii) The medical school should be encouraged to conduct biomedical research and must provide facilities for the humane care of animals when animals are used in teaching and research.

SEESCYT reviews each school's capacity to provide adequate resources to concrete needs as well as unforeseen situations. The agency evaluates the school's ability to provide services to the community and assesses whether the school is optimally using its resources to best achieve school objectives.

SEESCYT regulations provide that medical schools must have buildings and equipment that are adequate to promote a high quality teaching environment. The rules provide for administrative and faculty offices, adequate classroom and laboratory facilities, a registrar, access to a building large enough to accommodate the student body, a cafeteria, a library, meeting facilities, and a recreational area.

Medical schools in the Dominican Republic must be equipped to conduct biomedical research. In schools where animals are used in biomedical research, facilities must be provided for the humane care of the animals.

Documentation:

Exhibit 2, pp. 12-13.

Exhibit 3, sections H2 and H4.

(c) Faculty:

- (i) Members of the medical school's faculty must be appropriately qualified to teach in a medical program leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree and effective in their teaching. The faculty must be of sufficient size, breadth, and depth to provide the scope of the educational program offered.**
- (ii) The medical school should have policies that deal with circumstances in which the private interests of its faculty or staff may conflict with their official responsibilities.**

Although medical schools in the Dominican Republic set specific qualifications for faculty, SEESCYT does require faculty at its accredited schools to have the necessary training and experience to teach those courses assigned to them. SEESCYT requires schools to keep updated records of its faculty resumes, areas of specialization, professional qualifications, professional experience, teaching experience and each faculty member's work contract. The contract must clearly state the employee's duties, responsibilities and rights. SEESCYT rules also require that at least 15% of the faculty of any medical school must be employed on a full-time basis.

No mention is made regarding policies governing conflicts of interest that may arise with respect to a faculty member's private and official responsibilities.

Documentation:

Exhibit 2, p. 11-12.

- (d) Library: The medical school must have a library sufficient in size, breadth, and depth to support the educational program and adequately and professionally staffed.**

SEESCYT regulations require each medical school to have a library on its campus that contains books and reference materials that are supportive of the educational program. The library must employ a qualified librarian, offer Internet-accessible computer facilities, provide audiovisual equipment to support teaching, offer day and night service to students, and have a budget that is sufficient to continually purchase new publications and update reference

resources. The library must be large enough to accommodate the usage of at least 25% of the student body at any one time.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, p. 14.

- (e) *Clinical Teaching Facilities:*** The medical school should have affiliation agreements with each teaching hospital or clinical facility it uses that define the responsibilities of each party.

SEESCYT regulations require all medical school programs to incorporate the use of hospital and health-related facilities to facilitate a medical education program. The arrangement employed between the hospital or health facility and the school must be documented by means of an agreement or contract of affiliation that describes the covenants and responsibilities of both parties.

Documentation:
Exhibit 2, p. 15.

PART III: Accreditation/Approval Processes and Procedures

The entity within the foreign country that is responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the country and has authority to accredit/approve medical schools should have processes and procedures for granting accreditation/approval to medical schools that are comparable to the following:

1. Site Visit

The accreditation/approval process must include a thorough on-site review of the school (and all its geographically separated sites, if any) during which sufficient information is collected to determine if the school is in fact operating in compliance with the accreditation/approval standards. This review should include, among other things, an analysis of the admission process, the curriculum, the qualifications of the faculty, the achievement of students and graduates, the facilities available to medical students (including the training facilities), and the academic support resources available to the students.

SEESCYT reports that its periodic evaluation of a medical school involves the verification of self-study data through on-site visit by agency reviewers who observe participants and processes on the campus. The site team collects information from students and teaching staff, and makes assessments of

curricula, resources, laboratories, and Information systems. With respect to admissions, the team assesses the school's selectivity in recruiting students and teaching staff. The team examines the school's flexibility in revising its curriculum in response to changing needs. The team assesses the level of satisfaction of the community and graduates of the school of medicine with respect to the quality of education provided at the medical school. In addition, the team assesses the institutional objectives and the level of resources (human, material, financial and informational) needed to attain them.

Documentation:
Exhibit 3, pp. 1-6.

2. Qualified On-Site Evaluators, Decision-Makers, and Policy-Makers

The accreditation/approval process must use competent and knowledgeable individuals, who are qualified by experience and training in the basic or clinical sciences, for on-site evaluations of medical schools, policy-making, and decision-making.

The evaluation of a medical school for purposes of accreditation is performed by a committee of medical doctors and educators who are recognized as experts in the medical education field. In addition, the committee includes representatives of SEESCYT who can provide expertise in SEESCYT regulations and procedures. Also included on the committee are medical doctors who are delegates of the Dominican Republic's public health department and who provide expertise in public health issues.

Documentation:
Exhibit 3, p. 1-2.

3. Re-evaluation and Monitoring

The accreditation/approval process must provide for the regular reevaluation of accredited/approved medical schools in order to verify that they continue to comply with the approval standards. The entity must also provide for the monitoring of medical schools throughout any period of accreditation/approval granted to verify their continued compliance with the standards.

The Dominican Republic conducts reviews of its institutions on a recurring five-year cycle, unless circumstances dictate a more frequent review.

Documentation:
Exhibit 3, pp. 1-3.

4. Substantive Change

The accreditation/approval process must require medical schools to notify the appropriate authority of any substantive change to their educational program, student body, or resources and must provide for a review of the substantive change by the appropriate authority to determine if the school remains in compliance with the standards.

SEESCYT regulations prescribe in fairly specific terms the subject areas that must be included in a medical school curriculum. Medical school faculty are given some discretion to develop the curriculum within these subject areas. However, any major curricular or program change would have to be approved by SEESCYT in advance. The agency has not described the process whereby a school would seek this approval.

Documentation:
Narrative, p. 28.

5. Controls Against Conflict of Interest and Inconsistent Application of Standards

The accreditation/approval process must include effective controls against conflicts of interest and the inconsistent application of the accreditation/approval standards.

The agency believes its evaluation system, featuring a process of contrasting and verifying of information submitted pursuant to self-studies, is a system that minimizes the need for subjective judgments by evaluators. There is no evidence that SEESCYT has policies designed to prevent conflicts of interest or the inconsistent application of standards.

Documentation:
None.

6. Accrediting/Approval Decisions

The accreditation/approval process must ensure that all accreditation/approval decisions are based on the accreditation/approval standards. It must also ensure that the decisions are based, in part, on an evaluation of the performance of students after graduation from the medical school.

The SEESCYT evaluation process is initiated by the medical school's submission of a self-study describing how it is meeting agency standards. The agency visiting team studies the report and visits the school to review and verify the results of the self-study. The visiting team compiles a report providing answers to questions designed to ascertain compliance with agency standards. The agency subsequently makes a determination as to whether the medical school is in compliance with agency standards. SEESCYT reports that it does not monitor graduate performance through licensing examination scores.

Documentation:
Narrative, p. 29.



PRESIDENCY OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Secretary of State

for

Higher Education, Science and Technology

(SEESCYT)

**Medical School Authorization
and Accreditation**

***Final Report to the National
Committee on Foreign Medical
Education and Accreditation***



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Secretary of State
For
Superior Education
Science and Technology
(SEESCYT)



**SECRETARY OF STATE
OF
HIGHER EDUCATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(SEESCYT)**

**Answer to the Questionnaire
Of
The National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation**

This response is prepared based on the purpose of presenting before the National Committee for Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation the current status of our nation's schools in lieu of approved Law Number 139-01 for Higher Education, Science and Technology. Also this presentation should not only serve as an instrument of assessment, but also as a stimulus, to continue the momentum of our medical schools as they continue move forward, insure they are in full compliance of regulations of our law. SEESCYT has endeavored to address all mayor concerns relating to school compliance, law and regulations. We have demanded immediate compliance and adherence to our medical reform while knowing that a law far reaching as this needed of a reasonable period of time to be fully implemented. Though we have given the opportunity to some institutions to adequate their universities to the requirements of law, it is now evident that they all are in reasonable compliance of all requirements. We are sure that all our universities will continue to strive even for grater excellence and fulfillment of their commitment to education.

**Lic. Andrés Reyes
Secretario de Estado
SEECYT**



**QUESTIONNAIRE
2003**



PART 1: The Entity Responsible for the Accreditation/Approval of Medical Schools

There should be a clearly designated body responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the foreign country, and that body should have clear authority to accredit/approve medical schools in the country that offer educational programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree.

Question: What is the name of the entity responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in your country?

The designated body responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the Dominican Republic is:

Secretaria de Estado de Educación Superior Ciencia y Tecnología (SEESCYT).

This body has clear authority to accredit and approve medical schools in the country that offer educational programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree.

Question: By what authority does this entity accredit or approve medical schools?

It is by virtue of law 139-01 of 2001. A copy of this law has been filed with the National Committee on Foreign Medical Schools and Accreditation.

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of the law, regulation, or other document that authorizes this entity to accredit/approve medical schools.

See Exhibit 1: Copy of Law 139-01

PART 11: Accreditation/Approval Standards

The entity within the foreign country that is responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the country and has authority to accredit/approve medical schools should have standards comparable to the following:

1. Mission and Objectives

Question: What are your country's requirements related to the educational mission of medical schools in your country? How does the mission serve the general public interest?

The most formidable task confronting higher education is to articulate the triple relationship that relates to the mission of the university, the specific needs of the university's social, economic, and cultural environment, and the characteristics of a rapidly changing world. The university is an institution that seeks truth through the development of knowledge. It must be ideally committed to scientific and technological advancement of society as well as to its material and spiritual development. The university must also fulfill its fundamental role in shaping the human resources necessary for social development and its responsibility to help solve social and cultural problems. It is required to open itself to all areas of knowledge and thought without neglecting or underestimating possibilities. This institution, above others, must recognize the universal value of debate for the development of humankind, science, art, and culture.

The universities of the Dominican Republic must serve this public interest. A Medical School must fulfill the needs of the society it serves. Therefore it is required that its mission assures the commitment to provide the means to fulfill its mission, improve society, serve humankind and to insure present and future well being of our citizens. The New World's oldest university is in the Dominican Republic. We are the cradle of all higher education activity and as such it is also our understanding and mission that make our education available to any citizen of any country who wishes to improve his knowledge, to educate himself, to forge forward in its quest for advancement and the fulfillment of his God given vocation.

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to how medical schools must prepare graduates to qualify for licensure and to provide competent medical care?*

The Medical School is responsible for designing a curriculum that will enable the student to learn the fundamental principles of medicine, to acquire critical thinking skills based on evidence and experience, and develop the capacity to use principles and abilities wisely to solve health problems and diseases.

The curriculum should include the basic medical sciences, a variety of clinical disciplines, and ethical, behavioral and socioeconomic subjects relevant to medicine.

It should be designed in such a way that it incorporates the scientific concepts that are essential to medicine.

Laboratory courses and/or practice will be clearly defined in the program

The duration of a Program will never be less than 5 years (270 weeks).

Programs will be stated by course, time for completion, theory, laboratory, practice and hospital requirements.

The requirements are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2, Article V.

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate a medical school's mission and objectives. Alternatively, please provide a copy of the specific law or regulation in your country that mandates the mission and objectives that all medical schools in the country must have. .*

The requirements are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2

2 Governance

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to authorization or licensure of medical schools in your country? Are they required to be legally authorized or licensed in order to provide a program of medical education in your country? If so, what is the name of the entity that authorizes or licenses medical schools?*

New and existing (Quinquennial evaluation, every 5 years) Institutions of Higher Education are approved, controlled and/or overseen and subject to evaluation and accreditation in accordance to law Number 139-01 of 2002 by the Secretary of State for Higher Education, Science and Technology (SEESCYT). Medical Schools must meet the requirements of SEESCYT'S regulations for Medical Schools of the Dominican Republic.

Only universities are authorized to offer a medical program. In order to be authorized as a university the proponents must secure authorization from the President of the Dominican Republic to create a non profit educational organization at higher education level. Once the President has decreed its authorization the new entity must secure recognition from the Secretary of State for Higher Education, Science and Technology.

Medical Schools are subject to authorization by SEESCYT before they offer a medical program. The Medical Program must meet the criteria set forth in SEESCYT regulations. An on-site visit is required prior to determination of approval/disapproval.

The requirements are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to the accountability of the management of a medical school to some authority external to the medical school? Is there such an external authority? If so, what is that authority?*

Yes there is. All Medical Schools are accountable to SEESCY. It is this agency who determines if the Medical School is fulfilling or not its mission or weather or not it is complying with the standards of Higher Education, Science and Technology, its rules and/or regulations. It has the power to withdraw authorization or accreditation from any Medical School that does not meet the standards.

The requirements are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the requirements for operating a medical school in your country. Also, please provide the specific standards your country uses to determine if the management of a medical school is appropriately accountable to some external authority. Alternatively, please provide a copy of any law*

or regulation in your country that mandates that medical schools must be accountable to a specific governmental authority.

The requirements are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2

3. Administration

Question: *What are your country's requirements regarding how medical schools are to be administered?*

The final authority and responsibility for the administration of the medical school lies with its Board of Directors. The members of the Board of Directors should be individuals with no financial interest or other conflict of interest in the administration of the school, its associate hospitals or any related company. The tenure of its Directors should be superposed and long enough to allow the members to have thorough knowledge of the School's programs to develop the school's policies and the community.

A medical school should be a component of the university with other programs that confer professional degrees. Any university environment should stimulate intellectual challenge, research spirit, search for new knowledge and permanent learning habits.

The school's administration is to be exercised by a Dean or School Director. The director must have the following qualifications in order to head the school.

A Medical Doctor, a professional of recognized standing, respected and recognized for his leadership in the community he serves.

Experienced and proven capacity to head a medical school. Must be a full time employee of the school.

Have a clear mandate to head the school.

The school will have a clearly defined organizational structure and stated in graphic presentation, integrated by a Dean/School Director, Supervisors, Coordinators, Department Heads, members or its equivalent.

The school will have a curriculum, Basic Science, Clinical Science, admissions, Investigation and Publishing, Library committee.

There should be a document that clearly presents the structure and organization of the school, the responsibilities of its employees and their rights.

The above mentioned committees can be part of the organizational structure of the school of medicine or the university itself. If it is at university level, the representative(s) of the Medical School will join the committees whenever it is a matter pertaining to the school.

The Dean must have free access to the rector of the university, and to those other university officials as are necessary to meet the responsibilities of the Dean.

When determining the most effective organization, emphasis should be placed on the importance of effective relations among the members of the faculty relating to pre med education [basic sciences and clinical sciences] and continuing and graduate education. The chief officer of the medical school should consider the commitments of the members of the faculty who have multiple responsibilities, to insure the appropriate resources for every educational program.

The requirements are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2, Article VIII, 8.2

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the effectiveness of a medical school's administration. Alternatively, please provide a copy of any law or regulations in your country that mandates the particular administrative structure all medical schools must have.*

The requirements are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2

Question: *What are the qualifications your country requires for the person who holds the position of chief academic official of a medical school?*

The final authority and responsibility for the administration of the medical school lies with its Board of Directors. The members of the Board of Directors should be individuals with no financial interest or other conflict of interest in the administration of the school, its associate hospitals or any related company. The tenure of its Directors should be superposed and long enough to allow the members to have thorough knowledge of the School's programs to develop the school's policies and the community.

A medical school should be a component of the university with other programs that confer professional degrees. Any university environment

should stimulate intellectual challenge, research spirit, search for new knowledge and permanent learning habits.

The school's administration is to be exercised by a Dean or School Director. The director must have the following qualifications in order to head the school.

A Medical Doctor, a professional of recognized standing, respected and recognized for his leadership in the community he serves.

Experienced and proven capacity to head a medical school. Must be a full time employee of the school.

Have a clear mandate to head the school.

The school will have a clearly defined organizational structure and stated in graphic presentation, integrated by a Dean/School Director, Supervisors, Coordinators, Department Heads, members or its equivalent.

They are in our regulations enclosed in exhibit 2, Article VIII, Section 8.2

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to determine if the chief academic official of a medical school is qualified for that position. Alternatively please provide a copy of any law or regulation that mandates the specific qualifications an individual must have to serve as chief academic officer of a medical school.*

They are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to the participation of the faculty members of a medical school in decisions related to admissions; the hiring, retention, promotion, and discipline of faculty, and curriculum?*

The faculty must participate in the development of the curriculum. They are responsible for curriculum development and accordance to the requirements set forth in the school's instructional plan under the supervision of an immediate supervisor.

The faculty shall meet as deemed convenient and such meetings shall be presided by the Dean or his/her appointee. A regular meeting will be held per semester, in addition to special meetings as necessary. Quorum shall be made up of one third of the teachers.

Teachers shall have office space available, as well as areas designated to meet among themselves or interview individual students.

The statutes or regulations of the School of Medicine shall contain provisions relative to stimulating improved academic and professional teacher performance, such as standards referring to sabbatical leave, promotion standards and retirement systems. Provisions will be made for reasonable financial security and promotion possibilities.

They are in our regulations enclosed in exhibit 2, Article VIII, Section 8.4

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the role of faculty in the types of decisions mentioned. Alternatively, please provide a copy of any law or regulation in your country that mandates the role of faculty in these types of decisions.*

The requirements are in our regulations enclosed in exhibit 2

Question: *What requirements does your country impose on a medical school that offers part or all of its program at a geographically separated site (sometimes called a branch campus or additional location) to ensure that the quality of education at that site is comparable to that at the main campus and that students are evaluated in a comparable manner at all sites?*

Geographically Separated Campuses:

If the program components are conducted in places geographically separated from the central campus of the medical school, the administration of the school of medicine should be wholly responsible for conduct and maintain the quality of the educational experiences, as well as of the faculty's identity in all such locations.

A large number of such locations or a significant distance between one and another may require additional academic and administrative controls to maintain the quality of the complete program.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in exhibit 2, Article VIII, Item 8.3

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the operations of a branch campus or additional location of a*

medical school and to determine if they are comparable to those provided at the main campus of the school.

The requirements is included in our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2, Article VIII, Item 8.3

4. Educational Program

Question: *How long must a medical school program of medical education leading to the M.D. degree (or equivalent) be in your country?*

Study Program:

The Program will be designed considering the conventional structure of a program leading to the creation of a medical doctor. Its designed will be by stages or levels whose logical sequence is fulfilled in order of its execution.

The structure will be as follows:

1. Pre-Med

All programs leading to a medical degree will commence with general studies in different areas of human knowledge such as; Mathematics, Physics, Biophysics, Chemistry, Biology, Sociology, Universal History, Dominican History, Humanities, Language, Introduction to computers, Methodology of Scientific Investigation, Social Sciences.

These areas will be organized and defined coherently and in a definite logical order.

Pre-Med will have a minimum duration of two academic years. (Each institution will define the academic year based on actual guidelines.)

The minimum credit content will be 90 semester credits, 100 credits in those programs measured in trimesters, 113 credits for those programs measured in quarters.

2. Basic and Clinical Sciences

This two stages or levels will never be less than 132 calendar weeks and must have a credit content of more than 200 semester credits, 215

trimester credits for those programs measured in trimesters or 215 credits for those programs measured in quarters.

A. Basic Sciences:

Basic Sciences is the second level of studies of the medical program. This level of studies will contain those courses known or identified as medical basic sciences. The primary objective of this period of instruction is to provide the student with the basic and/or general skills and knowledge to recognize the usual, the unusual, organic, non-organic, as well as health problems and the means to prevent them.

Basic sciences should include Anatomy, Biochemistry, Embryology, Histology, Physiology, Genetics, Immunology, Pathology, Pharmacology and Therapeutics, Microbiology and Parasitology, Physiopathology, Behavioral Sciences, Public Health, (Biostatistics, Preventive Medicine, Epidemiology,) Image Diagnostics and Semiology.

Instruction in these basic sciences should include laboratory and other practical exercises that facilitate the capacity to make precise quantitative observations of the biomedical phenomena and critical analysis of the data, which are considered essential for the doctor's formation.

B. Clinical Sciences:

The main objective of this level is to initiate the student in the required knowledge, practices and problem solving techniques that present themselves throughout the practice of medicine. Training will include direct, on hand experiences involving patient care under the direct supervision of the medical school's instructors.

The student will be trained in initial patient procedures, including clinical history, physical examination, and preliminary diagnostics. The student must be guaranteed an active participation at all times in all hospital procedures.

This level should also include public health subjects that provide the student with the necessary knowledge and skills applicable to epidemiology, prevention, socioeconomic factors pertaining to health and sickness.

Students will receive basic instruction in all required courses.

Experience and instruction will be provided in actual patient care at the ambulatory and hospital stages and will include the important aspects of emergency, chronic, continuous, preventive and rehabilitation care.

This level of studies will include the following subjects; Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Gynecology and Obstetrics, Surgery, Family Medicine, and Social Science.

Clinical Sciences will consist of two stages: Pre Internship and Internship,

A. Pre-Internship

During period of training will never be less than one calendar year. The student will receive instruction in theory, laboratory and practice of all courses pertaining to this level of training. Besides theory the student will be initiated in hospital practice as a pre-intern.

Minimum subject content is as follows:

Internal Medicine: Cardiology, Neurology; Endocrinology,
Hematology, Neumatology, Infectious,
Radiodiagnosics, Nefrology, Reumatology,
Gastroenterology and Image Diagnostics,
Psyehiatry, Oncology-Glinical Hematology.

Surgery: General and Vascular Surgery, Urology,
Traumatology and Orthopedics, Offalmology,
Otorinolaringology.

Psychiatry:

Gynecology and Obsterics

Pediatrics and Neonatology

During Pre-Internship the student will receive a minimum 32 weeks of actual hospital assistance experience.

B. Internship

This second stage of he third level of studies is identified as Internship or Hospital Rotation. It will be a minimum of 1 calendar year.

During this phase of studies the student will be engaged in a full time schedule of hospital work, assigned to specific areas for a specific period of time and under the supervision of a professor/instructor/teacher/coordinator that is part a the staff of the university.

The student will rotate during his internship through the following areas with the minimum specified time of experience:

Internal Medicine	12 weeks
Surgery	12 weeks
Pediatrics	06 weeks
Psychiatry	06 weeks
Gynecology and Obstetrics	08 weeks
Family (Social Medicine)	04 weeks

Total duration time of the internship [Hospital Rotation] is 82 weeks

Each course must be clearly stated including time and distribution of the academic load on a weekly basis.

The curriculum will offer elective courses as additional help in the learning process. These courses must be stated and defined in the curriculum.

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the specific standard, or regulation in your country that governs the length a medical program leading to the M.D. degree (or equivalent) is required to be. Alternative, if your country is a member of the European Community (EC) and, therefore, subscribes to the EC requirement of 5500 hours for the medical program, please provide documentation that your country is a member of the EC.*

The requirement is included in our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2, Article V, Section 5.3

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to the basic sciences component of a medical program leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree? What subjects does your country require a*

medical school to include in the basic sciences? What requirements does your country have for the laboratory portion of the basic sciences curriculum?

Curriculum and other requirements are found in:

Basic Sciences is the second level of studies of the medical program. This level of studies will contain those courses known or identified as medical basic sciences. The primary objective of this period of instruction is to provide the student with the basic and/or general skills and knowledge to recognize the usual, the unusual, organic, non-organic, as well as health problems and the means to prevent them.

Basic sciences should include Anatomy, Biochemistry, Embryology, Histology, Physiology, Genetics, Immunology, Pathology, Pharmacology and Therapeutics, Microbiology and Parasitology, Physiopathology, Behavioral Sciences, Public Health, (Biostatistics, Preventive Medicine, Epidemiology,) Image Diagnostics and Semiology.

Instruction in these basic sciences should include laboratory and other practical exercises that facilitate the capacity to make precise quantitative observations of the biomedical phenomena and critical analysis of the data, which are considered essential for the doctor's formation.

The requirement is included in our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2, Article 5, Section 5.3, Part A.

Question: ***What are your country's requirements related to the clinical sciences component of a medical program leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree? What subjects does your country require a medical school to include in the clinical sciences?***

The main objective of this level is to initiate the student in the required knowledge, practices and problem solving techniques that present themselves throughout the practice of medicine. Training will include direct, on hand experiences involving patient care under the direct supervision of the medical school's instructors.

The student will be trained in initial patient procedures, including clinical history, physical examination, and preliminary diagnostics. The student

must be guaranteed an active participation at all times in all hospital procedures.

This level should also include public health subjects that provide the student with the necessary knowledge and skills applicable to epidemiology, prevention, socioeconomic factors pertaining to health and sickness.

Students will receive basic instruction in all required courses.

Experience and instruction will be provided in actual patient care at the ambulatory and hospital stages and will include the important aspects of emergency, chronic, continuous, preventive and rehabilitation care.

This level of studies will include the following subjects; Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Gynecology and Obstetrics, Surgery, Family Medicine, and Social Science.

Clinical Sciences will consist of two stages: Pre Internship and Internship,

A. Pre-Internship

During period of training will never be less than one calendar year. The student will receive instruction in theory, laboratory and practice of all courses pertaining to this level of training. Besides theory the student will be initiated in hospital practice as a pre-intern.

Minimum subject content is as follows:

Internal Medicine: Cardiology, Neurology, Endocrinology,
Hematology, Neumatology, Infectious,
Radiodiagnostics, Nefrology, Reumatology,
Gastroenterology and Image Diagnostics,
Psychiatry, Oncology-Clinical Hematology.

Surgery: General and Vascular Surgery, Urology,
Traumatology and Orthopedics, Oftalmology,
Otorinolaringology.

Psychiatry:
Gynecology and Obsterics

Pediatrics and Neonatology

During Pre-Internship the student will receive a minimum 32 weeks of actual hospital assistance experience.

B. Internship

This second stage of the third level of studies is identified as Internship or Hospital Rotation. It will be a minimum of 1 calendar year.

During this phase of studies the student will be engaged in a full time schedule of hospital work, assigned to specific areas for a specific period of time and under the supervision of a professor/instructor/teacher/coordinator that is part of the staff of the university.

The student will rotate during his internship through the following areas with the minimum specified time of experience:

Internal Medicine	12 weeks
Surgery	12 weeks
Pediatrics	06 weeks
Psychiatry	06 weeks
Gynecology and Obstetrics	08 weeks
Family [Social Medicine)	04 weeks

Total duration time of the internship [Hospital Rotation] is 82 weeks

Each course must be clearly stated including time and distribution of the academic load on a weekly basis.

The curriculum will offer elective courses as additional help in the learning process. These courses must be stated and defined in the curriculum.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2, Article 5, Section 5.3, Part B.

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to the inclusion of disciplines that support the fundamental clinical subjects in a medical program leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree? What does your country require a medical school to include in these disciplines?*

The curriculum will offer elective courses as additional help in the learning process. These courses must be stated and defined in the curriculum.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2, Article 5, Section 5.3, Part B.

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to the inclusion of ethical, behavioral, and socioeconomic subjects in a medical program leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree?*

The curriculum will offer elective courses as additional help in the learning process. These courses must be stated and defined in the curriculum.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in exhibit 2, Article 5, Section 5.3, Part B.

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to the inclusion of communications skills in a medical program leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree?*

The curriculum will offer elective courses as additional help in the learning process. These courses must be stated and defined in the curriculum.

The requirement is included in our regulations are enclosed in exhibit 2, Article 5, Section 5.3, Part B.

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the content of the curriculum of a medical school's program leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree, including a copy of the specific requirements for each component of the program (basic sciences, clinical sciences, etc.)? Alternatively, please provide a copy of any law or regulation in your country mandating the specific content of the Curriculum Design, Implementation, and Evaluation:*

Present Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations (Exhibit 2) are enclosed.

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to the design, implementation, and evaluation of a medical school's curriculum? Does your country require each medical school to have its own system for evaluating the effectiveness of its curriculum and making changes to the curriculum as a result of its evaluation? If so, what role does your country require the faculty members of the medical school to play in that process? Alternatively, does your country mandate the evaluation of the curriculum all medical schools are required to have to be provided by some centralized authority or body? If so, what is that authority or body?*

All programs to be offered by a university must be previously approved by SEESCYT before they are included in their offerings. Program content must satisfy the existing regulation.

The Medical School is responsible for designing a curriculum that will enable the student to learn the fundamental principles of medicine, to acquire critical thinking skills based on evidence and experience, and develop the capacity to use principles and abilities wisely to solve health problems and diseases.

The curriculum should include the basic medical sciences, a variety of clinical disciplines, and ethical, behavioral and socioeconomic subjects relevant to medicine.

It should be designed in such a way that it incorporates the scientific concepts that are essential to medicine.

Laboratory courses and/or practice will be clearly defined in the program

The duration of a Program will never be less than 5 years (270 weeks).

Programs will be stated by course, time for completion, theory, laboratory, practice and hospital requirements.

The Program will be designed considering the conventional structure of a program leading to the creation of a medical doctor. Its design will be by stages or levels whose logical sequence is fulfilled in order of its execution.

The chief officer of the medical school should consider the commitments of the members of the faculty who have multiple responsibilities, to insure the appropriate resources for every educational program.

The faculty must participate in the development of the curriculum. They are responsible for curriculum development and accordance to the requirements set forth in the school's instructional plan under the supervision of an immediate supervisor.

The requirements included in our regulations are enclosed in Exhibit 2, Article 5.

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the effectiveness of a medical school's system for the design, implementation, and evaluation of its curriculum. Alternatively, please provide a copy of any law or regulation specifying how the content of a common curriculum mandated for all medical schools in the country is to be evaluated and updated by some centralized authority or body.

The requirement is included in our regulations are enclosed in Exhibit 2

5. Medical Students

Question: What are the requirements for the admission of students to medical schools in your country? Are these requirements specified at the national level for all medical schools or is each medical school allowed to set its own standards for admission

The school will have an Admissions Department under a Director of Admissions. The director is responsible for compliance with the established requirements and procedures.

In addition to the Admissions director the school will have an Admissions Committee integrated by faculty members and specialist in the admission process that will review all applications and give their recommendations based on the school's regulations.

Each medical school will have a written procedures manual for the admission department that includes its requirements and admission process.

There shall be no discrimination as to race, color, nationality, creed, sex, age, etc.

All medical school students must meet minimum requirements as to intelligence, integrity, sense of duty, humanism, service minded, critical problem solving skills, respect for life a capacity to work as a team and inclined or interested in investigation work.

The requirement is included in our regulations are enclosed in Exhibit 2. Article VI.

Question: *What access do students have to their records in your country? What laws (if any) govern student access to records and the confidentiality of student records in your country?*

The requirements are included in Law 139-01 of 2002 (Exhibit 1) and our regulations are enclosed in Exhibit 2

The university must guarantee the right to privacy of all student records (as it is guaranteed in our constitution and public law.

Students have access to inspect their records at all times. Previous notification is required so that the registrar can make the arrangements to insure compliance with the student's request.

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of a medical school's admissions requirements. Alternatively, if admissions requirements are mandated centrally in your country, please provide a copy of the law or regulation specifying those requirements. Also, please provide a copy of any standards, law, or regulation related to student access to records or the confidentiality of those records.*

All schools of medicine will establish their evaluation system for each course in accordance to the characteristics and nature of each area. Evaluation must be continuous and accumulative and must be in accordance to the evaluation policy the university.

Pre-med and Basic Science evaluation should give priority to student progress in accordance to the development of the program and the results of pre-established norms for evaluation a examination.

Clinical Science evaluation will be collected in a form that specifies the different aspects of cognition and non cognition learning of importance that should be evaluated in a student at that level.

The medical school will publish and make readily available the names of the members of its faculty, its standards, procedures, methodology and evaluation criteria, satisfactory progress policy and graduation requirements.

The requirement is included in our regulations are enclosed in Exhibit 2, Article V, 5.5

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the adequacy of a medical schools methods for evaluating student achievement Alternatively, please provide a copy of any law or regulation mandating a specific methodology and/or examination to be used by medical schools in your country to evaluate student achievement.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2.

Question: ***What are your country* requirements for the provision of student services by medical schools?***

The schools should give attention to the students as individuals and shall facilitate to the maximum intellectual and professional development, such as counseling, tutoring and financial assistance. The student should be provided medical services, periodic physical exams and clinical care if necessary.

Regulations should also contemplate the responsibilities and rights of the students, as well as the basic principles governing student life. Students should be polled for information regarding the schools and teacher's performance.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2, Article 9, 9.2

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of the specific standards your

Minimum Physical Facilities

A school of medicine should own or have sure, use of buildings and equipment which are quantitative and qualitatively adequate to provide an environment conducive to high productivity of both faculty and students.

Facilities should include:

Administrative and faculty office.

Adequate Classrooms and laboratory facilities

Pre Med and Basic Science laboratories

Registrar

Academic Department

Access to a building large enough to accommodate the student body

The school should be equipped to conduct biomedical research and shall provide facilities for the humane care of animals should they be used for teaching and research.

Cafeteria Library

Auditorium (Preferred)

Biosterium

Meeting facilities

Recreational Area

Class Rooms

The School of Medicine should have at least two classrooms per class admitted in a given academic year, and the total number of rooms shall be equal to the number of classes of regular students registered in a given year.

Minimum Laboratory Requirements

The School of Medicine shall have laboratory facilities which should that include at least the following:

Pre Med

Physics Laboratory

Biology Laboratory

Chemistry Laboratory

Basic Science

Physiology and Pharmacy Laboratory

Histology Laboratory

General Pathology Laboratory

Microbiology and Parasitology

Dissection Laboratory

Clinical Pathological and Anatomical Pathology Laboratory

Each lab shall have facilities to accommodate the total number of students registered in a given course during the corresponding academic

the best utilization of its resources. The library must be supervised by a professional, qualified librarian.

The library should offer computer based facilities with connections to national and international internet.

The Library shall be equipped with the necessary audiovisual equipment to insure adequate teaching resources.

The library will offer service day and night and will be opened at least 6 days a week.

The library will be supervised by a trained professional and shall be of sufficient size and scope to meet the needs of the students.

The library shall have a yearly budget to improve its quality, to purchase new publications and update its resources.

Library facilities will be available to all students and will be of sufficient size to service at least 25% of the student population of the university, school or department.

Bookstore

The school should have its own bookstore equipped to supply students with the books, equipment and/or materials required in their courses.

Registrar

The School shall have a records department headed by a Registrar in this case the university's registrar who has the responsibility to record all results of the academic process.

The Records Department has the mission to oversee the fulfillment of the enrollment agreement.

The Records Department must be able to meet all the requirements of security, reliability and privacy of the student records.

Student records at a minimum should include a summary of admission credentials, attendance and assessment of the student's work and the degree obtained.

Records shall be kept in an organized system to enable the transfer of credit to be granted on the basis of a specific methodology.

Records shall be kept by operational methods that insure prompt and reliable services to students.

The Records Department shall be integrated by qualified staff that may cope with the needs of the school and efficiently and promptly carry out its

A medical school must have hospital facilities where students can be appropriately trained under the direct supervision of the school and its professors/teachers /instructors/ coordinators.

The affiliated hospital must be equipped to provide instruction in accordance to the program.

Instructional/teacher /professors/coordinators must be affiliated to the hospital where the student is receiving training and they must be members of the school's faculty. Training will be conducted in accordance to the written objectives of each rotation.

The school of medicine shall have a hospital(s) with the minimum facilities with at least five beds per regular student.

Each clinical facility area shall be directed by a competent doctor of the corresponding subject.

The degree of authority of the school should reflect the extension to which the affiliated clinical facility participates in the school's educational program.

The clinical facilities are of critical importance for the excellence of the affiliated clinical training programs.

The student should have access to hospitals that give medical attention in general terms as well as specialized services. The school should also include in the student practical training primary and ambulatory service to insure a complete and competent training.

The student should be aware of his/her responsibilities as well as their rights. the student will be evaluated at the end of each rotation. Evaluation criteria will be clearly defined and stated and must take into consideration the diverse parameters related to the practice of medicine.

Hospitals recognized as training centers shall be equipped with all the necessary facilities to provide instructional service. The school should be able to offer its students the opportunity to work in the Internal Medicine, gynecology, obstetrics, surgery, pediatrics, psychiatry and out patient areas.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2, Article X, XI.

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses in evaluating the adequacy of a medical school's facilities. Alternatively, if all medical schools are public and funded by the government, please provide a copy of any law or regulation governing the provision of facilities for medical schools.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2.

Faculty composition requires at a minimum 15% full time professors/teachers/instructors.

The faculty must participate in the development of the curriculum. They are responsible for curriculum development and accordance to the requirements set forth in the school's instructional plan under the supervision of an immediate supervisor.

The faculty shall meet as deemed convenient and such meetings shall be presided by the Dean or his/her appointee. A regular meeting will be held per semester, in addition to special meetings as necessary. Quorum shall be made up of one third of the teachers.

Teachers shall have office space available, as well as areas designated to meet among themselves or interview individual students.

The statutes or regulations of the School of Medicine shall contain provisions relative to stimulating improved academic and professional teacher performance, such as standards referring to sabbatical leave, promotion standards and retirement systems. Provisions will be made for reasonable financial security and promotion possibilities.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2, Article IX

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses in evaluating the adequacy of a medical school's faculty. Alternatively, please provide a copy of any law or regulation that mandates the size of the faculty and/or the qualifications for appointment to the faculty of all medical schools.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2.

Question: *What are your country's requirements related to a medical school's library?*

Library and Complementary Teaching Services

The school's library is one of the most important instruments in the offering a quality medical program.

The School of Medicine shall have a library containing at least those materials and volumes necessary for their formation, and shall schedule day and night continuous services. It should also be subscribed to major medical publications and make these available to students, thus enabling the best utilization of its resources. The library must be supervised by a professional, qualified librarian.

The library should offer computer based facilities with connections to national and international internet.

Library facilities will be available to all students and will be of sufficient size to service at least 25% of the student population of the university, school or department.

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the adequacy of a medical school library.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2., Article X, 10.3

Question: What are your country's requirements related to a medical school's clinical teaching facilities?

Clinical Facilities

All medical school programs conducive to a doctor's degree in medicine shall have the necessary hospital and health related facilities to implement a program of this nature.

The medical school shall have hospital facilities and or demonstrate by mean of an agreement or contract of affiliation that clearly establishes the covenants and responsibilities of both parties in the instructional and formation period of the students. The affiliation contract must establish the nature of the relationship between the university and the hospital.

A medical school must have hospital facilities where students can be appropriately trained under the direct supervision of the school and its professors/teachers /instructors/ coordinators.

The affiliated hospital must be equipped to provide instruction in accordance to the program.

Instructional/teacher /professors/coordinators must be affiliated to the hospital where the student is receiving training and they must be members of the school's faculty. Training will be conducted in accordance to the written objectives of each rotation.

The school of medicine shall have a hospital(s) with the minimum facilities with at least five beds per regular student.

Each clinical facility area shall be directed by a competent doctor of the corresponding subject.

The degree of authority of the school should reflect the extension to which the affiliated clinical facility participates in the school's educational program.

The clinical facilities are of critical importance for the excellence of the affiliated clinical training programs.

The student should have access to hospitals that give medical attention in

gynecology, obstetrics, surgery, pediatrics, psychiatry and out patient areas.

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of the specific standards your country uses to evaluate the adequacy of the clinical facilities a medical school has or makes available to its students.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2, Article XI.

PART 111: Accreditation/Approval Processes and Procedures

The entity within the foreign country that is responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education in the country and has authority to accredit/approve medical schools should have processes and procedures for granting accreditation/approval to medical schools that are comparable to the following:

Question: Does the entity that is responsible for accrediting/approving medical schools in your country conduct a site visit to a medical school prior to granting it accreditation/ approval? If so, does the site visit include a review of the school's admissions process its curriculum, its faculty, the achievement of its students and graduates, the facilities, and the academic support services available to students? Does the site visit involve both the main campus of the medical school and any other branch campus(es) or additional location(s) operated by the medical school?

SEESCYT is responsible for accreditation. A site visit is required prior to granting accreditation/approval.

The evaluation of a medicine school is done in an integral manner, which consists in a combined process of self-evaluation, contrasting, verification of information and assessment of qualitative improvement" Integral evaluation supposes that the results of a self-evaluation process can be easily and quickly verified, through direct visits made by external evaluators. Another dimension of integral evaluation that is no less important is its relation with the context and the sphere of influence (Cruz Cardona, 1991). This latter dimension, in referring to a school of medicine, orients the evaluation process towards social requirements for health services and also towards the concrete results attained by the graduates of the school in terms of satisfaction of community needs.

The requirement is included in our enclosed Evaluation Process presented in Exhibit 3

Documentation to be provided: Please provide a copy of your country's policies regarding site visits to medical schools for the purpose of granting them

for Higher Education, Science and Technology, members of the Dominican Medical Association and delegates of the Secretary of Public Health.

The requirement is included in our evaluation manual enclosed as Exhibit 3.

Question: *What are your country's requirements regarding the qualification and training of the individuals who participate in on-site evaluations of medical schools, the individuals who establish the accreditation/approval standards for medical schools, and the individuals who decide whether a specific medical school should be accredited/ approved?*

Evaluation takes place by a committee of experts in medical education who acts as advisors to SEESCYT. These experts must be medical doctors and proven educators with a minimum five year experience. Also included are technicians of the Secretary of State for Higher Education, Science and Technology. These are specially trained evaluators of required regulations, procedures and administration. Members of the Dominican Medical Association. These must be medical doctors and delegates of the Secretary of Public Health. These are medical doctors and public health administration specialists.

The requirement is included in our Evaluation Manual enclosed in Exhibit 2.

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of the law or regulations in your country that govern the selection of individuals to participate in the evaluation of medical schools for accreditation/approval.*

The requirement is included in our Evaluation Manual enclosed in Exhibit 2. and documentation in Exhibit 4.

3. Re-evaluation and Monitoring

Question: *Does your country require accredited/approved medical schools to undergo periodic reevaluation to determine if they are still in compliance with the standards for accreditation/approval? If so, how frequently are medical schools reevaluated? How does your country monitor medical schools throughout any accreditation/approval period granted to them to verify their continued compliance with the standards? Are medical schools required to submit an annual report? If so, what does it contain?*

The requirement is included in our Evaluation Manual enclosed in Exhibit 2 and documentation in Exhibit 4

Question: *If a medical school wants to make a substantive change to its educational program or some other aspect of the medical school, what are your country* requirements requiring notification of the change to the appropriate entity and review by the entity?*

All changes to curriculum content must be notified and approved by SEESCYT

The requirement is included in our regulations included in Exhibit 2

Documentation to be provided: *Please provide a copy of any policies, law or regulation governing substantive changes at a medical school.*

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibit 2.

5. Controls against Conflicts of Interest and Inconsistent Application of Standards

Question: *How does your country ensure that those involved in the accreditation/ approval decision for a specific medical school do not have a conflict of interest that might prevent them from making an objective decision? How does your country ensure that your standards for the accreditation approval of medical schools are applied consistently to all schools that seek that accreditation/approval?*

The evaluation of a medicine school is done in an integral manner, which consists in a combined process of self-evaluation, contrasting, verification of information and assessment of qualitative improvement" Integral evaluation supposes that the results of a self-evaluation process can be easily and quickly verified, through direct visits made by external evaluators. Another dimension of integral evaluation that is no less important is its relation with the context and the sphere of influence (Cruz Cardona, 1991). This latter dimension, in referring to a school of medicine, orients the evaluation process towards social requirements for health services and also towards the concrete results attained by the graduates of the school in terms of satisfaction of community needs.

Evaluation takes place by a committee of experts in medical education who acts as advisors to SEESCYT. These experts must be medical doctors and proven educators with a minimum five year experience. Also included are technicians of the Secretary of State for Higher Education, Science and Technology. These are specially trained evaluators of required regulations, procedures and administration. Members of the Dominican Medical Association. These must be medical doctors and delegates of the Secretary of Public Health. These are medical doctors and public health administration specialists.

to grant that school accreditation/approval? What procedures does your country use to ensure that accreditation/approval decisions are based on your accreditation/approval standards?

Our rules and regulations specify a Quinquennial (every 5 years) review and evaluation of all Institutions of Higher Education. This review was initiated in 1983 as Decree Number 1255 and the resulting regulations required.. It establishes the requirement for a self evaluation to determine the achievements of the university (College, School), and the criteria, goals and objectives of the institution in the light of its mission.

The institution initiates the process by completing a self-study report based on the input of its components. Self study is a process by which a school seeks to determine how it is meeting the standards. The self study and appropriate documentation is sent to SEECYT where reviewed and it is distributed to a visiting team. SEECYT visiting team studies the report and visits the school to review and verify the results of the self-study of the university. A report is made of this visit and the university is given time to respond to the findings of the visiting team. The school responds to the findings of the visiting team. SEECYT technical personnel review these reports, verify areas that require documentation or verification and make appropriate recommendations to complete the self-study process, or to request further information or make recommendations to the Accrediting Commission. The Accrediting Commission reviews the reports and makes a determination. If the school disagrees with the findings of the Commission and/or its determinations it can appeal. A panel is named by SEECYT to hear the appeal and its determination is final.

The requirement is included in our regulations enclosed in Exhibits 2,3,4.

Question: Does your country have any benchmarks or minimal levels of performance on licensing examinations that medical school graduates must meet in order for the medical school to be granted accreditation/approval? If so, what are they?

No benchmark is use at this time.

Documentation to be provided: Sample data collected from medical schools on their graduates and how the information was used in the accrediting decision.



Exhibit 1



LAW # 139-01-2002
Higher Education, Science, and Technology

THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

IN THE NAME OF THE REPUBLIC

**LAW NO. 139-01, REGARDING HIGHER EDUCATION,
SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY**

CONSIDERING: That higher education constitutes a public function that acts in the general interests of the national community, and that its regulation is the responsibility of the Dominican state, which, in fulfillment of this duty, must watch over its normal and correct operation;

CONSIDERING: That the development of science and technology is an objective that is of the highest national interest, and that it is the responsibility of the Dominican state to stimulate and foster this development, inasmuch as it comprises elements that are essential to the development of the country, and especially to productive activities and to social service;

CONSIDERING: That measures have been taken with the intention of organizing, updating, and reforming the system of higher education, as well as the system of science and technology, and that because of this the conditions exist for a new legal instrument to regulate the activities of these systems, ensuring that their working meets the needs of the country;

CONSIDERING: That the present dispositions have as their purposes to: to establish and organize the following inalienable principles of the freedom of education, the respect of the human being, and the power of decision inherent to the academy; the definition of duties and responsibilities of the institutions that make up the system within society; guaranteeing an adequate academic level in the institutions of higher learning, science, and technology; contributing to better the efforts for the formation of professionals and associates, and to produce and/or adopt the scientific and technical knowledge that the country requires, and bestowing on it the legal norms that allow the institutions of the system to grow in quality and in quantity;

CONSIDERING: That autonomy is the very principle and the foundation of the nature of the institutions of higher education, science, and technology;

IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF: Laws No. 5778, dated December 31st, 1961, which proclaims the Autonomy of the University of Santo Domingo; No. 6150, dated December 31st, 1962, which recognizes the legal identity of the Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra in Santiago de los Caballeros, and No. 273, of June 27th, 1966, which regulates the formation and operation of private university establishments and centers of higher education, and which establishes the equivalences of their degrees with those of the official or autonomous entities; modified by law No. 236 of December 23rd, 1967;

HAVING SEEN: Regulation no. 1255, of July 25th, 1983, which regulates Private Higher Education; Decrees No. 1406, of September 13th, 1983, which creates and integrates the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACITE), a dependency of the Presidency of the Republic; no. 258, of July 15th, 1996, and no. 517, of October 14th, 1996, which regulate the operation of higher education in the Dominican Republic;

HAVING HEARD: The opinions of the Presidents and Directors of the institutions of higher education; of the associations of legally established universities; of the directors of institutions of science and technology; of the Boards of Directors of financing institutions, researchers, experts, and of the different public and private sectors involved in higher education, science, and technology;

HAS PASSED THE FOLLOWING LAW

CHAPTER I

GENERALITIES

Art. 1.- The fundamental purpose of this law is to establish the National System of Higher Education Science, and Technology, to set down the regulations for its operation, the mechanisms that will ensure the quality and pertinence of the services rendered by the institutions that compose it, and to lay the legal foundations for the scientific and technological development of the country.

Art. 2.- The National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology of the Dominican Republic is made up of all the institutions that are explicitly oriented toward the achievement of the goals and objectives of higher education and of the scientific and technological development of the country.

Art. 3.- The state, through the corresponding organizations, will ascertain that the institutions of higher education, science, and technology and their activities adequately meet the demands of the changes in the national and international settings, in all that concerns higher education, science, and technology.

CHAPTER II

ON HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Art. 4.- Higher education is a permanent process that takes place after secondary school, leading to an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, or graduate or postgraduate degrees.

Art. 5.- Higher education is essential to the development of society, since society's ability to innovate depends on higher education. This education also promotes production, the appropriation and application of knowledge for sustainable human development, and the promotion of values and attitudes that are inclined toward the realization of the human being, thus increasing his possibilities of contributing to the development of society as a whole, and to the production of goods and services.

Art. 6.- A higher education, the production and access to scientific knowledge and to technology, are rights of all citizens. Therefore, the development of these fields is a public service, inherent to the social purpose of the State. Likewise, it is the learner's duty to contribute to the academic excellence of higher education, and to its continuance, depending on his economic possibilities.

Art. 7.- The end of higher education is to provide a formation of the highest quality, be it scientific, professional, in the humanities, the fine arts, or technical; to contribute to economic competitiveness and to sustainable human development; to promote the generation, development, and diffusion of knowledge in all its forms; to contribute to the preservation of natural culture, and develop the attitudes and values required for the formation of responsible persons, with a sense of ethics and solidarity; people who are reflexive, innovative, critical, capable of bettering the quality of living, consolidating the respect of the environment; respectful of the institutions of the country and of democracy.

Art. 8.- Science is not only the process of generating knowledge through deductive reflection and experimentation and by the empirical measuring of natural and environmental phenomena and events of social life and human behavior. It is also the organized whole of said knowledge. Technology is the capacity of obtaining results that materialize as goods and services, through the application of scientific knowledge and the adaptation to the social scene of the procedures, instruments, and equipment that come from the national and international scientific community. Scientific and technological development is essential to society, inasmuch as it has a significant influence on the economy in creating and absorbing more productive technology, which in its turn has repercussions on productivity, increases the capacity to compete on the world market, and, therefore, contributes to the betterment of the quality of life of all citizens. Scientific and technological development also contributes to bettering public services and to increasing the sense of civic responsibility in the people; it contributes to raising the quality of education and, in general, contributes in all aspects of national development.

Art. 10. - Liberty is established as the fundamental principle of higher education, science, and technology. It is academic freedom, which includes the right to open educational centers, in compliance with the requirements of this law and its regulations, and also the freedom of research in the teaching of scientific truth and of the different expressions of human thought.

Art. 11. - The National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, has as its mission to do the following:

- a) Form highly-qualified graduates; people who are critical and who participate actively, and are capable of meeting the needs of all aspects of human activities, in which theoretical and practical knowledge of the highest level are needed;
- b) Gather, increase, diffuse, transfer, and foster scientific and technological production at a national and international scale, thus contributing to development and to raising the standard of living of the Dominican people;
- c) Make way for the formation of higher education, science, and technology that shall in turn further permanent formation, promote the strengthening of innate capacities, and provide critical and objective perspectives, with the intention of transforming social and economic reality;
- d) Contribute to understand, preserve, reinforce, foster, and diffuse national, regional, and international culture, in a context of diversity, thereby collaborating in the creation of conditions for the understanding among peoples, solidarity, and the keeping of world peace;
- e) Contribute to protect and consolidate the values that conform the identity of the Dominican people, being sure to instill into the youth those principles that support a democratic society, the defense of national sovereignty, the respect of human rights, the search for a more just and fair society;
- f) Contribute to the development and betterment of education at all its levels, especially through the formation and training of teaching personnel, and through socio-educational research;
- g) Foster and encourage scientific research, as well as experimentation, innovation, and invention of technologies associated to talents and capacities that are inherent to the development of the sciences, and to the application of these to industry and services;
- h) Further the interchange of experiences and the establishment of mechanisms of communication and cooperation between enterprises and the institutions of higher education, science, and technology.

Art. 12.- These values are the basis of (the task of) higher education, science, and technology in the Dominican Republic:

- a) National identity and culture, as a point of reference in going toward the universality of cultural legacy;
- b) Respect for the human being, his dignity, and his liberty;
- c) Freedom of speech and ideological pluralism, both political and religious;
- d) A spirit of democracy, social justice, and human solidarity;
- e) Scientific rigor and ethical responsibility in research and in the discovery and organization of knowledge;
- f) Creativity, a critical spirit, integrity, and responsibility;
- g) Equal opportunity in the access to a higher education, regardless of prejudices based on social or ethnic origin, religion, or gender;
- h) Cultural self-esteem and national talent; esteem for the capacity to innovate and to invent;
- i) An attitude of service and of rendering account to society as a beneficiary and as the entity that supports all academic, scientific, technological, and cultural activities;
- j) An attitude of cooperation and solidarity among human beings, organizations, and nations;
- k) An investigative attitude, open to change and able to adapt to national and international changes.

Art. 13.- We acknowledge the need of articulating the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, as an instrument that is essential to the development of the capacity for innovation and renewal that will make competitiveness possible for our society.

Art. 14.- The objectives of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and technology can be classified in four large groups:

- a) Objectives aimed at fostering, orchestrating, and offering a higher education that is relevant to the needs of the people, of good quality, and accessible to all Dominicans;
- b) Objectives that are oriented toward the creation and incorporation of knowledge, innovation, and invention, at every level of Dominican society;
- c) Objectives whose aim is to obtain the mediation and articulation of the institutions, and at obtaining results from the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, together with the rest of society;
- d) Objectives aimed at fostering and funding higher education, science, and technology.

Art. 15.- The educational objectives of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and technology are as follows:

- a) The formation of critical and democratic persons who can be identified with the national values and with international solidarity, and who can participate efficiently in the social, economic, cultural, and political changes of the country;
- b) To provide human, ethical, scientific, and technological formation to the different persons involved in activities of research, development, and innovation or renewal;
- c) To contribute to the holistic formation of creative, supportive, critical, involved, and responsible citizens, through their permanent relationship with literary, scientific, and technological creations, as well as universal culture;
- d) To form human resources that shall have the abilities, skills, aptitudes, attitudes, and values required by the social system in order to attain sustainable development, the creation of riches, and the constant betterment of the quality of life;
- e) To form human resources that shall have the abilities, skills, aptitudes, attitudes, and values required for the production of goods and services;
- f) To make it possible for all citizens to receive a higher education;
- g) To make relevant to the needs of Dominican society the knowledge that has been created or incorporated into the system;
- h) To develop in students and teachers the values and attitudes that will allow them to become promoters of the advancement of knowledge and the betterment of the quality of life, acting as the critical conscience of society;
- i) To contribute, within the scope of permanent education, to the development of choices in continued education that will allow human resources in the country to be updated and kept up to date, thus making use of the existing development of technology;
- j) To enrich and diffuse universal culture, and, in particular, the cultural patrimony of the Dominican people, of which cultural patrimony it shall serve as a depository;
- k) To foster the culture of solidarity, world peace, and respect for human rights, by assuming and diffusing, in the programs of higher education, the principles and resolutions of the competent international organizations.

Art. 16. The objectives whose aim is the development of science and technology are as follows;

- a) To implement, to foster, and diffuse scientific research, innovation, invention, and technological development, as well as the more advanced and valuable forms of creation within the field of education, science, culture, art, and technology;
- b) To incorporate into the store of knowledge that is available and pertinent to the Dominican people, the knowledge technology that have been developed throughout the world;

- c) To encourage and favor that this work of creation, incorporation of knowledge, and transfer of technology be relevant to the needs and objectives of social and economic development in Dominican society.

Art.17.-The objectives relative to the coordination and transfer of knowledge and technology are the following:

- a) To establish free communication between the institutions of higher learning, science, and technology and the rest of society;
- b) To assure the transfer of knowledge and of technology that have been developed or adapted by the institutions of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, to the institutions and enterprises of society that are responsible for producing goods and services, as well as the other public institutions and to society as a whole;
- c) To put at the disposal of all, and to diffuse within, society the knowledge and values that have been accumulated and are available within the institutions of the System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology.

Art. 18.- The objectives that deal with the fostering and the financing of higher education, science, and technology, are the following:

- a) To offer equal educational opportunities to all citizens throughout their lives;
- b) To finance public higher education and to contribute to the financing of private higher education;
- c) To encourage the observance of the creative function, and to the transfer and incorporation of knowledge of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and technology, ensuring for this System the resources that are necessary to this end;
- d) To be conducive to the establishment of ties between the institutions of higher education and the social milieu, and in particular with the sector that produces goods and services, through the joint financing of the activities of higher education, science, and technology;
- e) To contribute to the financing of the activities, institutions, or enterprises that perform scientific research, innovations, and inventions that bring into being products and services that are pertinent to the different parts of the economy and to society in general.

Art. 19.- It is the State's responsibility to formulate policies aimed at meeting the objectives of the System and at the creation of the mechanisms, instruments, and norms that may be necessary for said system to function properly, observing the objectives that have been set forth, and in conformity with the values and norms that are essential to the same.

Art. 20.- All of the institutions that coordinate to meet these objectives constitute the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology. These institutions can be public or private, or of a mixed nature.

CHAPTER III

ON THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Art. 21.- The National System of Higher Education, Science and Technology is made up of:

- a) Institutions whose role is higher education;
- b) Institutions whose role is the creation and incorporation of knowledge and technology;
- c) Institutions whose role is the transfer of knowledge and technology;
- d) Institutions whose role is the promotion and financing of education;
- e) Institutions whose role is regulation, control, and supervision.

An institution can fulfill one or several of these roles.

Art. 22.- The institutions of higher education are all those that offer professional and academic training after secondary school, as set forth in law 66/97, and that have the following characteristics:

- a) They are entities that bring together administrative personnel, professors, students, employees, and alumni in the task of research and the discovery and organization of knowledge, as well as in creating awareness as to the basic necessities of society, aiming the research and its results toward the solution of the problems of the Dominican people in order to raise the quality of life of the population;
- b) They are social entities, public services, open to all schools of thought. Discrimination of any sort, whether because of nationality, ethnic origin, gender, social condition, ideology, religion, or political preference, is therefore inadmissible at school;
- c) The institutions of higher education are those that dedicate themselves to education after the secondary school level. These studies lead to degrees at different levels: a associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, and graduate degrees. One of their basic purposes is to contribute to the development of science and technology, the formation of associates and professionals, continued education, the diffusion of scientific and technological advances, and serving society;
- d) The institutions of higher education must offer their personnel and students an adequate spiritual and pedagogical environment, as well as the correct materials; they must have the resources and physical facilities that allow them to fulfill their function, as well as those that correspond to the requirements of the curriculum they offer, incorporating the advances of science and technology in the areas into which they enter.

Art. 23.- The following levels of formation in higher education are hereby established:

- a) An associate's level, which assures the issuance of the degree of associate, technician, a teaching credential, and other equivalent degrees;
- b) A baccalaureate level, that issues the following degrees: Bachelor's degree, architect, engineer, physician, and other equivalent degrees;
- c) A postgraduate level, which issues certificates of specialized studies, master's degrees, and doctorates.

Item: The National Council for Higher Education regulates the nature and the number of credits needed for each of these levels or degrees.

Art. 24.- The institutions of higher education are classified by categories depending on their nature and objective. These categories are as follows:

- a) **Technical Institutes of Higher Education:** These are centers that are authorized to offer and prepare students for a career up to the associate's level;
- b) **Specialized Institutes of Higher Education:** These are centers that are authorized to offer and prepare for a career, and to issue bachelor's degrees and graduate degrees in different majors, having previously been approved by the CONESCT (Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia y Tecnología, that is to say, the National Council for Higher Education, Science and Technology);
- c) **Universities:** These are centers that are authorized to offer careers and issue degrees at the associate's level, at the bachelor's level, and at the graduate or post-graduate level in the different fields of knowledge. In order to issue doctorates, they will require the development of a research project in the field in which the degree is to be issued.

Item I An institution can ask CONESCT for a change in category, for which it must meet all the requirements.

Item II -- Military, naval, police, religious, and other similar educational post-secondary institutions could be recognized in one of these categories should they meet with all the requirements set forth in this law and in the regulations that complement it.

Item III The institutions of higher education that seem (to the public) to belong to a category other than in which they belong according to this law will have a three-year time limit, as of the passing of this law, to adapt to the new category.

Art. 25.- The National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology is open and flexible. The Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology (SEESCT) will establish mechanisms to make easier the transfer of learners between the different categories of institutions, levels, and manners or modalities of higher education. Mechanisms will also be set up for the acknowledgment of life experiences, so that access to the system can be open to persons who show the required merits and abilities, depending on the level and mode or method of higher education at which they apply for admission.

Art. 26.- All institutions that dedicate themselves to research aimed at bestowing on the country the knowledge and technology required for its development are also part of the National

System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology. These institutions can be classified as follows:

- a) **Universities;**
- b) **Institutes and/or Centers for Scientific and/or Technological Research.**

Item: New additions to the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology are the following: The Dominican Institute of Technology (Instituto Dominicano de Tecnología – Indotec), the Dominican Institute for Farming and Livestock Research (Instituto Dominicano de Investigaciones Agropecuarias – IDIA) and the Academy of Sciences of the Dominican Republic (Academia de Ciencias de la República Dominicana).

Item II The National Council of Higher Education, Science, and Technology will regulate all that concerns the creation and operation of these institutes and research centers.

Item III The Institute for the Formation and Professional Training of Teachers (Instituto de Formación, Capacitación del Magisterio) is also integrated into the National System of Higher Education, with the functions and attributes established by law no. 66/97 about education, as a decentralized organ assigned to the Department of Education.

Art. 27.- All institutions that encourage the creation of bonds between the institutes of higher education, science, and technology on the one hand, and the rest of the population on the other hand, are also part of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology. It shall be their duty to foster mechanisms that will ensure the transfer and the diffusion of the research performed at the Institutions of the System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, toward the sector that produces goods and services, as a means of elevating the country's competitiveness, and also to all the other sectors of society.

Art. 28.- The institutions of transfer of knowledge are those which promote the establishment of bonds between:

- a) **The university, the productive sector and society;**
- b) **The Specialized Institutes of Higher Education, the productive sector, and society;**
- c) **Higher Technical Institutes, the productive sector and society;**
- d) **Institutes and/or Centers of Science and Technology, the productive sector, and society as a whole.**

Art. 29.- The National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology must do the following:

- a) **Establish clear incentive policies to create and put into operation these institutions of transfer. These policies should make possible the coordination of the scientific, technological, and productive environment.**
- b) **Establish rules and regulations that set the norms for their creation and operation.**

Art. 30.- Yet another part of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology is made up of all the institutions whose basic objective it is to promote and to finance higher education, science, and technology. These are:

- a) Institutions for the promotion and financing of scientific and technological research;
- b) Institutions for the promotion and financing of technological innovations and inventions;
- c) Institutions for the promotion and financing of the formation of human resources.

Art. 31. The institutions that make up the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology are organized as non-profit organizations. Therefore, any income that is the result of their administration must be used for their consolidation and development, that is to say, reinvested.

Art. 32.- The main function of promoting the National System of Higher Education, Science and Technology falls to the Dominican State. To such an end, the Dominican state shall establish a set of norms that will make possible the following:

- a) The creation of a competitive system of scholarships and student loans that will make possible equal opportunities in the access to higher education;
- b) The realization of joint research and educational activities between the institutions of higher education and the institutions that produce goods and services;
- c) Carrying out research as to the real needs of the county;
- d) The creation, adoption, and transfer of technology.

Art. 33.- The institutions of higher education, science, and technology will have academic, administrative, and institutional autonomy, which includes the following attributions, according to their nature: They will be able to:

- a) Write and amend their own rules and regulations;
- b) Define their organs of government, establish their own mission, and elect their own authorities, according to the mechanisms set forth in their rules and regulations;
- c) Administer their goods and resources, according to their rules and regulations and to the corresponding laws;
- d) Introduce and teach careers at an associate's level, a bachelor's level, and a graduate level, according to the norms set forth by this law and its regulations;
- e) Formulate and develop plans of study for scientific and technological research, and for extensions and services to the community;
- f) Issue academic degrees, as set forth in this Law;
- g) Teach, having as a goal experimentation, pedagogical innovation, and/or professional teaching practice;

- h) Establish rules for the access, permanence in the institution, and promotion of teachers and other personnel;
- i) Appoint and remove the personnel who work at the institution, according to this country's laws;
- j) Establish the rules and procedures for the admission, stay, and graduation of students, as well as the system of equivalences;
- k) Develop and participate in projects that support the advancement and application of knowledge;
- l) Be in relationship, and make agreements with, (other) institutions in the country and abroad.

Item: The process of convalidating degrees issued by foreign universities is a prerogative of the Dominican state, through its institutions of public education, and validated by the observance of the dispositions established in the regulations in force under the certification of the SEESCT (Secretaría de Estado de Educación, Ciencia, y Tecnología – Department of Education, Science, and Technology).

CHAPTER IV

ON THE ORGANS OF DIRECTION, ADMINISTRATION, AND SUPERVISION OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Art. 34.- The Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology (SEESCT – Secretaría de Estado de Educación Superior, Ciencia y Tecnología) is hereby created as an organ of the Executive Branch in the field of higher education, science, and technology, with the task of encouraging, regulating, and advising the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, and ensuring that all the measures of this Law and all the policies coming from the Executive Branch are carried out.

Art. 35.- In order to fulfill its mission, the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology (Secretaría de Estado de Educación Superior, Ciencia, y Tecnología) will perform, through its organizational arms, the following tasks:

- a) The formulation of public policies in the domain of higher education, science, and technology;
- b) Planning;
- c) Evaluation, supervision, and execution.

Art. 36.- The structure of the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, (Secretaría de Estado de Educación Superior, Ciencia, y Tecnología – SEESCT) will be the following:

- a) A superior organ: The National Council for Higher Education, Science and Technology (Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia y Tecnología – CONESCT). This organ will be the highest governmental organism in the system. The CONESCT will be able to set up as many subcommittees as it deems fit. The two following sub commissions will be constituted, among others:
 - 1) A National Sub-Committee for Higher Education;
 - 2) A National Sub-Committee for Science and Technology.

The National Council for Higher Education Science, and Technology (Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia, y Tecnología) will regulate all that concerns the correct operation and the objectives of these Sub-Committees.

- b) An executive organ made up of:
 - 1) The Secretary of Higher Education, Science, and Technology;
 - 2) A Sub-Department of Higher Education;
 - 3) A Sub-Department of Science and Technology;
 - 4) An Administrative Sub-Department.

Art. 37.- The Council will determine the internal administrative system of this department, depending on the needs and characteristics of the development of the sector, within the framework set by the laws that regulate the operation of the departments of government and of public administration in general.

Art. 38.- The functions and attributions of the National Council of Higher Education, Science, and Technology are the following:

- a) To establish policies designed to develop the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, ensuring that said measures meet the economic, social, and cultural needs of the country;
- b) To define the strategies, programs, and goals for the development of the section, in coordination with the institutions of higher education, science, and technology;
- c) To set forth policies regarding funding, priorities, and criteria in the use of funds assigned to the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology;
- d) To encourage equal opportunity in the access to a higher education, as well as in scientific and technological advances;
- e) To safeguard the preservation of liberty, democracy, plurality, and all the highest values of the country, in the exercise of academic and scientific activities;
- f) To approve the regulations that make possible the implementation of the present law;
- g) To approve the creation and accreditation of institutions of higher education, science, and technology, in compliance with the rules and regulations established by, and at the demand of, the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology (Secretaría de Estado de Educación Superior, Ciencia, y Tecnología);
- h) To approve the suspension, intervention, or definitive closing of institutions of higher education, science, and technology, according to the present law;
- i) To establish, by mutual agreement with the institutions of higher education, science, and technology, the general guidelines that will serve as a basis for the evaluation of said institutions;
- j) To hire educational, scientific, and/or technological consultancies and researchers;

k) To approve the creation of extensions of higher education institutions, as stipulated in the established regulations;

l) To approve and determine the minimal number of credits for each level of education and /or academic degree;

m) To propose to the Executive Branch programs for scholarships and student loans that would favor students, professors, and researchers of the System.

Art. 39.- As part of his functions and obligations, the Secretary of Higher Education, Science and Technology must perform the following tasks:

a) Carry out the national policies regarding higher education, science, and technology;

b) Be conducive to good relations and to activities that institutions of the system may coordinate among themselves, with the rest of the educational system, with the State, as well as with other scientific, technological, cultural, and business organizations or associations, and with society in general;

c) Serve as advisor to the President in matters of higher education, science, and technology;

d) Observe, and have others observe, the provisions of this law, as well as the policies, regulations, and resolutions that may be decided by the national Council for Higher Education, Science, and Technology (CONESCT) and by the President;

e) Convoke and preside over the meetings of the CONESCT;

f) Represent the Secretary of Higher Education, Science, and Technology in public and private ceremonies, as well as in legal cases;

g) Direct and coordinate the activities of the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology;

h) Formulate the draft bill for the SEESCT budget, bearing in mind the guidelines and priorities established by the CONESCT, and make sure that these guidelines and priorities are observed;

i) Certify and legalize degrees and other academic documents issued by the institutions of higher education;

j) Give advice, at the demand of the institutions, concerning national and international agreements and development projects;

k) Make sure that there is a minimum of coincidence and standardization in the outline of similar careers offered in the country at the level of higher education;

l) Watch out for the preservation of the national character of the institutions of higher education;

- m) Permanently monitor the institutions of higher education, science, and technology, in order to ensure that they meet the norms set forth in this law and in the regulations that complement the same;
- n) Present to the CONESCT, for its approval, the applications for the creation and accreditation of new institutions of higher education, science, and technology, in compliance with the norms set forth for those ends;
- ñ) Present to the CONESCT for its approval any requests for the suspension, intervention, or definite closing of institutions of higher education, science, and technology;
- o) Present to the CONESCT incentive proposals and acknowledgments to institutions of higher education, science, and technologies, as well as to the students, professors, and other employees of the system;
- p) Coordinate and decide about the execution of evaluations of the institutions of higher education, science, and technology, present the reports and recommendations to the CONESCT, and follow up the results of the same;
- q) Decide the carrying out, at least once every five years, of an analysis of the operation of the entire system of higher education, science, and technology, with the intention of recommending readjustments and changes in its policies and goals, as well as in the requirements and the criteria of quality that the institutions of the system must be able to meet;
- r) Keep under constant surveillance the institutions of the System, in order to ensure that their missions, ends, goals, and objectives are well met, and that the institutions offer an adequate educational service to society;
- s) Arrange to have technical assessment and advice given to the institutions of the system that may request it, in order to better their programs and to contribute to the betterment and continuous professional formation of their teaching staff, researchers, and administrative personnel;
- t) Keep a modern system of information and statistics of all the activities of the system; said information system must be open to all the institutions, researchers, and society at large. In order to carry out this function, the SEESCT shall open an information center, with a database and all the mechanisms that are necessary to give updated information to the whole of the system;
- u) Give to the Executive Branch and to society in general the corresponding accounts about the progress of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology.

Art. 40.- The National Council of Higher Education, Science, and Technology will be composed of:

The Secretary of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, who presides it;

The Secretary of Education;

The Secretary of Culture;

The President of the State University of Santo Domingo (UASD) -- Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo;

An academician elected in an assembly of the presidents of private and fully autonomous universities;

A representative of the professors, chosen by the CONESCT from those proposed by each institution of higher education;

A student representative, chosen by the CONESCT from those proposed by each institution of higher education;

A representative of the administrative personnel, appointed by the CONESCT from those proposed by the institutions of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology;

A representative of the Association of Technical Institutes of Higher Education;

A representative of the institutions of transfer and of the institutions of promotion and funding;

The President of the National Council of Private Enterprise;

Three members appointed by the Executive Branch, who have a good reputation in the field of higher education, science, and technology;

The President of the Academy of Science of the Dominican Republic;

The Director of INDOTEC;

Two members designated by the institutes of scientific and/or technical research, well-known to the CONESCT;

A representative of the System of Self-Evaluation and Accreditation,

A representative of the former Secretaries of CONES or former Secretaries of Higher Education, appointed by the Executive Branch. These persons cannot belong to the party in power.

A representative of the Institutes of Higher Education of the Armed Forces.

Item: The CONESCT will elaborate the regulations that will serve as a basis for the election of all these representatives. These regulations will establish mechanisms that will in turn ensure the yearly renewal of one third of these members, in order to guarantee the continuity of the work of the CONESCT.

Art. 41.- The Assembly of Presidents and Directors of Institutions of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, is hereby created, as an organ of consultation and liaison between the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, and the institutions of the System.

Art. 42.- The Assembly of Presidents and Directors of the institutions of Higher Education, Science, and Technology will be convoked ordinarily once a year, and extraordinarily as many times as necessary. The convocation can be issued by the Secretary of Higher Education, Science and Technology to at least one third of the Presidents and/or Directors who are members of said Board.

CHAPTER V
ON THE OPENING, ORGANIZATION, OPERATION
AND CLOSING OF THE
INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Art. 43.- The interested party shall ask the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology for the Department's approval to open an institute of higher education, as well as before establishing an extension of an existing center. Said request must be accompanied by all the documents stipulated by the regulation that the CONESCT has elaborated to such an end.

Art. 44.- The following are some of the criteria that the SEESCT will bear in mind in the evaluation of said requests:

a) The pertinence of the request presented with a view to founding the institution, and the plans for its operation during the first five (5) years, depending on the county's needs in the formation of technical and professional personnel, as well as the production of science and technology;

b) The agreement of its rules and regulations with the dispositions set forth in this law, its regulations, and the legislation in force at the time;

c) The adequacy and degree of concordance of the academic regulations with the mission, ends, and objectives of the institution;

d) The institutional capacity that guarantees the quality of the academic activity, as well as the scientific and technological production, depending on the nature of the institutions;

e) The plan for funding, and the social, pedagogical, and economic feasibility of the proposed plans and programs.

Art. 45.- The Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology shall evaluate the documentation that is presented, and proceed to formulate its recommendations in response. It will make the due observations, should there be any, to the interested party, giving the time determined by the regulations to make any pertinent adjustments to the project it.

Art. 46.- The Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, upon having evaluated the required documentation, if the applying institution meets the requirements, and in compliance with the established regulations, shall give its approval to the new institution and submit its request to CONESCT with a view to obtaining its ratification.

Item Should the request be turned down, the interested party shall be able to submit it anew, upon having met the requirements set by the CONESCT.

Art. 47.- The institutions thus created will have administrative, institutional, and academic autonomy, but must limit themselves to offering services that belong to the institutional category, levels, and fields of study approved by the CONESCT. Any modification to the conditions under which they were accredited must be made known to and approved by the National Council of Higher Education, Science, and Technology.

Art. 48.- The SEESCT shall order that all institutions be evaluated at least every five (5) years. After two (2) successful five-year evaluations, the National Council of Higher Education,

Science, and Technology will bestow full autonomy on the institution. Said autonomy will enable the Institution to open and offer programs of study within its scope of action, with no need for further accreditation from the CONESCT. In no case will this autonomy be granted until an institution has existed for at least fifteen (15) years, or with fewer than two consecutive favorable evaluations by the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology.

Item Those institutions of higher education that, at the time of the promulgation of this law, already possess full autonomy, granted by the special laws under which they were created, shall continue to possess said autonomy, under the circumstances of their foundation.

Item II As for the institutions of higher education that are authorized by decrees of the Executive Branch at the moment of the promulgation of this law, it will be considered that they have been in existence for two years; and the evaluations made by the CONESCT to date will count toward their meeting the requirements for obtaining full autonomy.

Art. 49.- The teaching staff of the institutions of higher education must be composed of personnel who are duly qualified to fulfill their responsibilities, depending on the level and field of specialty in which they carry out their activities. The CONESCT shall establish the norms that will govern teaching.

Art. 50.- The institutions of higher education, as well as those of science and technology, can be closed, wholly or in part, permanently or temporarily, for not obeying their regulations, for breaches of ethical purposes, for ignoring their mission and objectives, or for flagrant breach of this law.

Art. 51.- Should an institution of higher education have its accreditation revoked by the SEESCT, or by a sentence of similar authority, the SEESCT shall take whatever academic and/or administrative measures are pertinent to safeguard academic interests.

Art. 52.- The SEESCT has the authority to officially audit the office of the registrar, the academic files, records, and documents of any institution of higher education, should there be evidence of grave irregularities that question the academic administration of said institution.

Art. 53.- Should an institution of higher education be audited or closed down, and in order to defend the interests of the academic community, the SEESCT will be able to take these academic and administrative measures among others:

- a) Make arrangements for the issuance of certificates, degrees and certifications thereof, and all other documents that are legally recognized in an institution of higher education;
- b) Acknowledge all the studies that have been completed, and facilitate the transfer of students from the center of studies that has been audited or closed down, to another institution of the same level;
- c) Leave without legal value all certifications, degrees, diplomas, and certifications thereof, as well as any other document issued by persons who have not been authorized by the CONESCT, or, who are not duly authorized by the files and records of the institutions of higher education.

Art. 54.- Any institution of higher education can be dissolved in compliance with its rules and regulations and with the laws in force. Should that happen, it shall be the duty of its legal representative to communicate said decision to SEESCT immediately, so that the latter can,

together with the authorities of higher education, take measures intended to guarantee the complete liquidation of the academic concerns of the dissolved center. Likewise, any extension, faculty, school or academic unit can be closed at the request or demand of the interested party.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Art. 55.- The National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology shall generate a culture that furthers and develops quality as a continuous and essential process, as well as the establishment of public policies aimed at the search thereof.

Art. 56.- Quality in the System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology has many varied meanings and aspects, qualitatively as well as quantitatively, including the pertinence of the system, of the mission and the objectives of the institutions, the satisfaction of the entities that intervene in the process, as well as the scientific and technological development and the needs of the country.

Art. 57.- The quality of the institutions of higher education, science, and technology shall be valued based on the quality of human resources that enter the system, the processes, and the results. Because of this, the following are now components: Administrative and academic leadership, resources for continuing education, and the integrity and credibility of said institutions.

Art. 58.- This law disposes the creation of an Academic Career regulated by guidelines to be approved by the CONESCT.

Art. 59.- An initial diagnostic test for measurement and orientation of Higher Education, Science, and Technology will be responsible for it. Said test is to be administered before the candidate begins higher education. It shall be for all those who wish to enter higher education. The results of this exam shall be used by the institutions so that they can use it among their criteria for admissions, and for research, regarding academic level, in planning, and in research.

Item This diagnostic test does not exclude the internal dispositions that exist in the policies in the different institutions of higher education .

Art. 60.- In order to ensure the quality of the education that the institutions provide to their alumni, the institutions must consult, when designing and writing their curricula and/or other formal organizations that already exist in the corresponding areas, and also create consulting committees made up of practicing professionals and representatives from the business world, where the alumni of the institutions carry out their activities.

Art. 61.- The quality of the institutions of higher education, science, and technology is determined by:

- a) The pertinence of the institutional mission and objectives;
- b) The pertinence of its regulations, policies, norms, and procedures;
- c) The quality of the institutional services;
- d) The level of formation and experience of the teaching personnel, the personnel of science and technology, the extension personnel, and other employees;
- e) The pertinence of its programs in the areas of teaching, research, and its extension programs;
- f) The logistical support and the available infrastructure.

Art. 62.- The quality of the institutions of higher education, science, and technology will be determined, furthermore, by the relevance expressed by the curricular configurations, the alumni's characteristics as professionals, the suitability of the scientific and technological contributions, and the ends and objectives on the one hand, and the planning and the goals obtained. On the other, it will also be determined by the efficient management of the available resources, depending on the priorities set forth in its institutional mission, in both the academic and the administrative dimensions.

CHAPTER VII

ON THE EVALUATION OF QUALITY

Art. 63.- Evaluation is a continuous and systematic process that has as its fundamental purpose to develop and transform the institutions of higher education and those of scientific and technological activity; to obtain significant levels of quality, determine the efficacy and the efficiency, the pertinence of, and establish the relationship between the mission, objectives, and goals, and the results of the institutional effort.

Art. 64.- The evaluation shall have among its objectives the following:

- a) To contribute to the strengthening of institutions, to support the making of decisions, the giving of accounts, to support answering the needs of society, and the planning of future actions;
- b) To foster the development of, and strengthen the belief in, the institutions of higher education and the institutions of science and technology;
- c) To offer reliable information to the users of higher educational services, to the public at large, and to the Department of Higher Education, Science, and Technology.

Art. 65- Depending on its scope, the evaluation shall be global or partial. The global evaluation encompasses the institution as a whole, and its fundamental purpose is to determine up to what measure the institution fulfills its mission, meets its objectives, and if its records of accomplishment correspond to the required levels of quality. The aim of the partial evaluation is to determine the pertinence, efficacy, and quality of the field, or of the program, being evaluated.

Art. 66- The evaluations performed on the institutions of higher education, science, and technology can also be internal or external.

Art. 67.- Internal evaluation, or self-evaluation, is an intrinsic task of the institutions of higher education, science, and technology. It should be part of the culture and institutional duties. Because of this, it must be assumed to be a participative process, one that is coherent with the underpinnings and approaches expressed in the institutional mission and the needs of society.

Art. 68.- Self-evaluation should allow the institutions to obtain useful and reliable information about their strengths and about what they must improve, as part of an efficient process of decision-taking, which will contribute to institutional development.

Art. 69.- The Secretary of Higher Education, Science, and Technology shall stimulate the institutions of higher education to develop processes of self-evaluation that will guarantee the achievement of their ends, goals, and objectives, as well as the quality of the services they offer.

Art. 70.- The following external evaluations for the institutions of higher education are hereby established:

- a) Those carried out by the SEESCT;
- b) Those carried out by well-known non-public evaluating agencies, made up of academic peers.

Art. 71.- The Secretary of Higher Education, Science, and Technology shall order that evaluations be carried out every five years, in coordination with the institutions of higher education.

Art. 72.- The evaluations carried out by the SEESCT shall have among their purposes these:

- a) To contribute to development and to bettering the quality of the system and of the institutions that constitute it;
- b) To guarantee the pertinence, the efficacy, and the efficiency of higher education and of the activities of science and technology;
- c) To ensure that higher education offers answers to the demands and needs of the formation of human resources in society;
- d) To guarantee that the present law, as well as the regulations that complement it, is obeyed;
- e) To inform society about the workings of the institution that make up the system;
- f) To use the results in establishing policies that have as their goal the strengthening of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology.

Art. 73.- The Institutions of higher education that show flaws or deficiencies at the time of a five-year evaluation shall have up to three years to overcome said flaws, depending on the degree and nature of the limitations found. This is the procedure established in the corresponding regulation.

Art. 74.- When the deficiencies and the flaws detected in the institutions of higher education are grave or repeated, in the light of ethics and of the criteria used for evaluating said centers, the Secretary of Higher Education, Science, and Technology shall recommend that the measures stipulated in the regulation for such an end be taken.

Art. 75.- The evaluations carried out by the SEESCT shall take into consideration the mission, the objectives, and the model expressly assumed by each institution.

Art. 76.- The CONESCT, according to the attributions which this law bestows upon it, and in coordination with the institutions that make up the system, shall elaborate a regulation establishing the general principles that will orient the process of evaluation.

Art. 77.- The external evaluations carried out by non-public institutions, made up of academic peers, have as their purpose the accreditation of the institutions of higher education.

CHAPTER VIII

ON THE ACCREDITATION OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Art. 78.- Accreditation is a social and institutional acknowledgment, of a temporary nature, by which are recognized and made public the merits and the quality of an institution of higher education, of a program, or of one of its functions or components. It implies a process of voluntary evaluation, carried out by accrediting entities, which culminates in the certification that the institution or the program that has been evaluated meets certain pre-established standards.

Art. 79.- Accreditation must consider the following objectives as essential:

- a) To inform society about the results of the workings of institutions of higher education;
- b) To serve as the mechanism for the giving of accounts, before society and the state, of the use of those resources, within a framework of efficacy and efficiency;
- c) To contribute to the formation of a culture of evaluation, by rendering systematic the process of self-evaluation of institutions and of academic progress;
- d) To procure the competence, the credibility, and the solidity of the institutions that impart the service of higher education.

Art. 80.- The accrediting institutions are non-public, non-profit associations, of a national character, autonomous, founded in compliance with the laws of the land, whose essential purpose is to contribute to the betterment of the institutions of higher education through self-study and accreditation.

Art. 81.- The basic functions of the accrediting institutions are the following:

- a) To elaborate a conceptual and methodological framework that will enable each institution to develop by itself its own self-study, bearing its accreditation in mind;
- b) To execute processes and develop techniques that are appropriate to the evaluation and the accreditation of institutions and programs of higher education;
- c) To confer accreditation on the institutions of higher education.

Art. 82.- The Dominican State holds itself responsible for the quality of higher education, and will therefore contribute economically toward the operation of the institutions of accreditation. This will not, however, affect their autonomy.

Art. 83.- All the programs and institutions of higher education that of their own free will undergo the process of evaluation and fulfill the requirements established to such an end can be accredited.

CHAPTER IX

ON THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF INFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Art. 84.- We hereby create the National System of Information of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, under the responsibility of the Secretary of Education, Science, and Technology. The fundamental purpose of this system of information is to gather, process, and diffuse information in order to orient society about the institutions of the System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, as well as to serve as a source of information for the design of policies, planning, research, and evaluation.

Art. 85.- The National System of Information of Higher Education, Science, and Technology shall collect and make available to society the results of the five-year evaluations carried out by the SEESCT, as well as those carried out by the National System of Accreditation, as well as all the annual statistics of the institutions of the system.

Art. 86.- The SEESCT shall periodically order the carrying out of diagnostics of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, in order to offer quantitative and qualitative information, relevant for taking decisions, and for the development of the social sciences, to society in general, and in particular to state agencies and researchers.

Art. 87.- The SEESCT will dispose the necessary resources for the system of information to count on the most advanced technology and the necessary personnel to fulfill its role well and efficiently.

Art. 88.- The institutions of higher education, science, and technology, must provide SEESCT, within the lapse of time established, with all the information and documents to keep the National System of Information of Higher Education, Science, and Technology up to date.

CHAPTER X

ON THE FUNDING OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Art. 89.- Higher education must be adequately funded by society in order to guarantee its coverage, pertinence, and quality, and so that the entry and the duration in the system shall be accessible to all those who qualify on the basis of their merits, capacity, and effort. It is likewise necessary to encourage and finance the development of research, since that will allow the discovery of new knowledge, and the incorporation of scientific and technological advancements to everyday production, which will in turn benefit economic and social development on a local, regional, and national scale. This financing shall be requested and/or offered, and the arguments for or against it shall be based on criteria of efficiency, efficacy, transparency, and rendering of accounts.

Art. 90.- We hereby establish as a principle in the financing of higher education, science, and technology, the participation of the state and of private enterprise. It shall be the responsibility of the Dominican state to finance public higher education and to contribute economically toward financing private higher education. It will also make better and more flexible, and transform the administrations of higher education, science, and technology in the country, through the adoption of appropriate funding policies that will guarantee access to higher education, fairness, and solidarity in the distribution of the benefits of the National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology.

Art. 91.- The public investment to be made the first year this law shall be in force shall not be less than five percent (5%) of the Budget of Income and Law on Public Expenses, obligated in Law 5778, of December 31st, 1961, which declares the autonomy of the University of Santo Domingo, and states the sums to be allotted to the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo and to public universities. Besides, it shall include the subventions assigned to the other institutions of higher education.

Art. 92.- The SEESCT budget shall have at least the following programs:

- a) A program designed for the administration, regulation, and supervision of the system; said program would in turn finance the activities of the SEESCT;
- b) A program dedicated to public higher education, based on the criteria for allocation as defined in the corresponding regulation;
- c) A program for contributing to finance higher education in the country, to be determined by the criteria for allocation defined in the corresponding regulation;