Criteria for the Award of M.D. Degrees with Latin Honors

Among the awards for excellence of medical student achievement is the designation of the M.D. degree with Latin honors. A committee of the faculty, selected according to the by-laws of Boston University School of Medicine, reviews the academic record of each candidate for the M.D. degree. Policies approved by the faculty, most recently revised in 1996, are used as the guidelines for selecting candidates for the honor cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude. These recommendations are then forwarded to the Dean of the Medical School and presented to the faculty for approval at its meeting in May.

The selection of students for this award is based on overall academic achievement and excellence. Recorded grades in courses for the entire four year curriculum are considered; however, no more than seven honors grades in fourth year electives are included in the evaluation.

For the honor cum laude, selection is primarily based on achievement in the required course work of the curriculum and results of the U.S. Licensing Medical Examination. No more than ten percent of awarded degrees are granted with the cum laude distinction. For the honor magna cum laude, additional criteria include extraordinarily high academic achievement and evidence of extensive and effective participation in elective programs. Generally, this honor is limited to only two to three percent of the awarded degrees. For the honor summa cum laude, additional criteria include unusually outstanding achievement with demonstrated extreme initiative and talent. Generally, this honor is limited to one percent of awarded degrees.

The faculty appreciates the opportunity to acknowledge outstanding academic achievement through the University's conferring of degrees with Latin honors, as one form for recognition of exceptional accomplishments of M.D. graduates.

For more information, contact Lisa Norton, MD, Committee Chair