AN INTEGRATED REVIEW PROGRAM FOR THE PREPARATION FOR THE UNITED STATES MEDICAL LICENSE EXAMINATION (USMLE)

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The primary objective of the present educational research program is to improve upon existing commercially available USMLE review programs. With the clear shortage of both residency slots, the medical student's performance (score), on the USMLE assumes a new and critical importance. Furthermore, there is a global need for 4.3 million new doctors and nurses. This shortage is particularly evident in Central and Southeast Asia. Many of the needed new doctors will most probably be required to pass the USMLE.

Most review programs consist of review lectures and/or the completion of multiple choice questions derived from commercially available review texts. We have developed a review program that presents clinical cases for diagnosis using actors and 3D simulations to present the case. The student then proceeds to be examined in manner consistent with the format of the USMLE (i.e., multiple choice questions). We have replaced the didactic component with a strategically integrated "audiovisual" instructional component that accompanies the students" responses - both correct and correct.

It is this comprehensive "integration" of frequent testing, immediate feedback in the form of concept and cognitive maps and audiovisual reinforcement that distinguishes this review program from other available commercial programs. It is noted that this approach can be employed for actual classroom/ laboratory instruction. This review system will be expanded and can be readily adapted for use in the preparation of the Medical College Admission test (MCAT) and the Graduate Record Exam (GRE).

In summary, the project here provides a unique and comprehensive review program for the USMLE and the Basic Medical Science courses using contemporary educational technology and current educational practices. The American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) now promotes the use of digital educational technologies and has provided specific guidelines for the use of digital technology in medical education. The review program developed here at NU is entirely consistent with the suggestions and guidelines proposed by the AAMC.