

USMLE Step 1 Survey

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August 2015 Entering Class: took test in Summer 2017

The Numbers

Responses: 71/122 (58%)

USMLE Step 1 Score: 251.6 ± 7.6

WMPG: 91.52 ± 11.1

Average NBME practice test score: 248.5 ± 51.6

Average BSCE 2: 84.4% ± 5.5

weeks studied: 6.93

hours studied per day: 11.19

- 18.6% Felt not enough / 67.1% felt just enough / 14.3% felt too much

Studied with others during dedicated study period (outside of in-person courses):

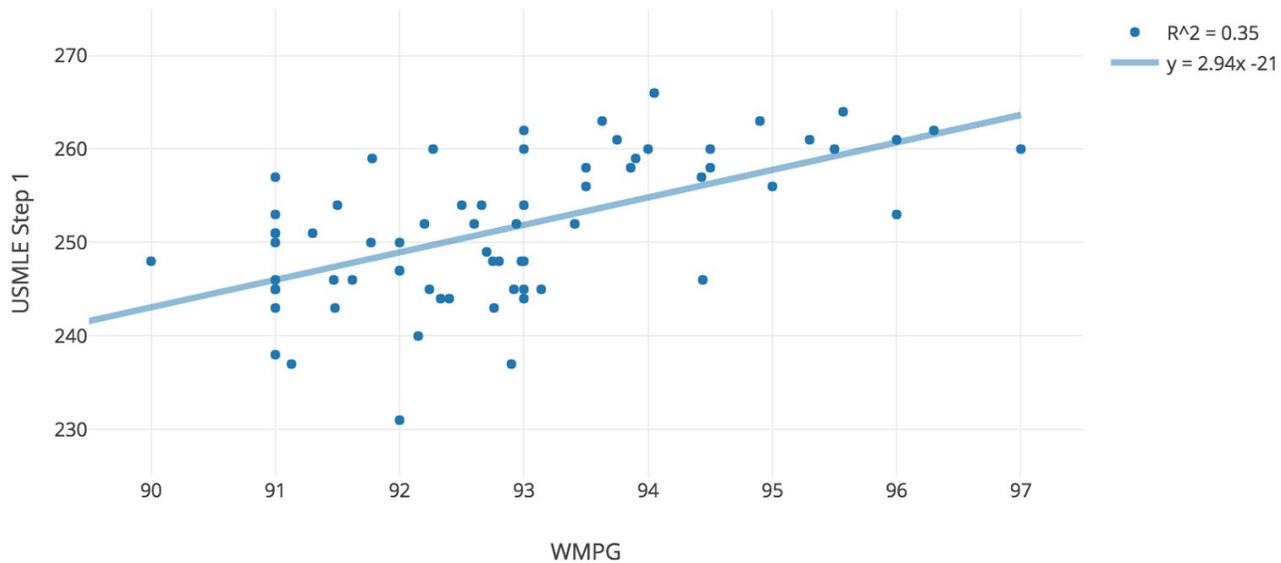
- Yes: 27%
- No: 73%

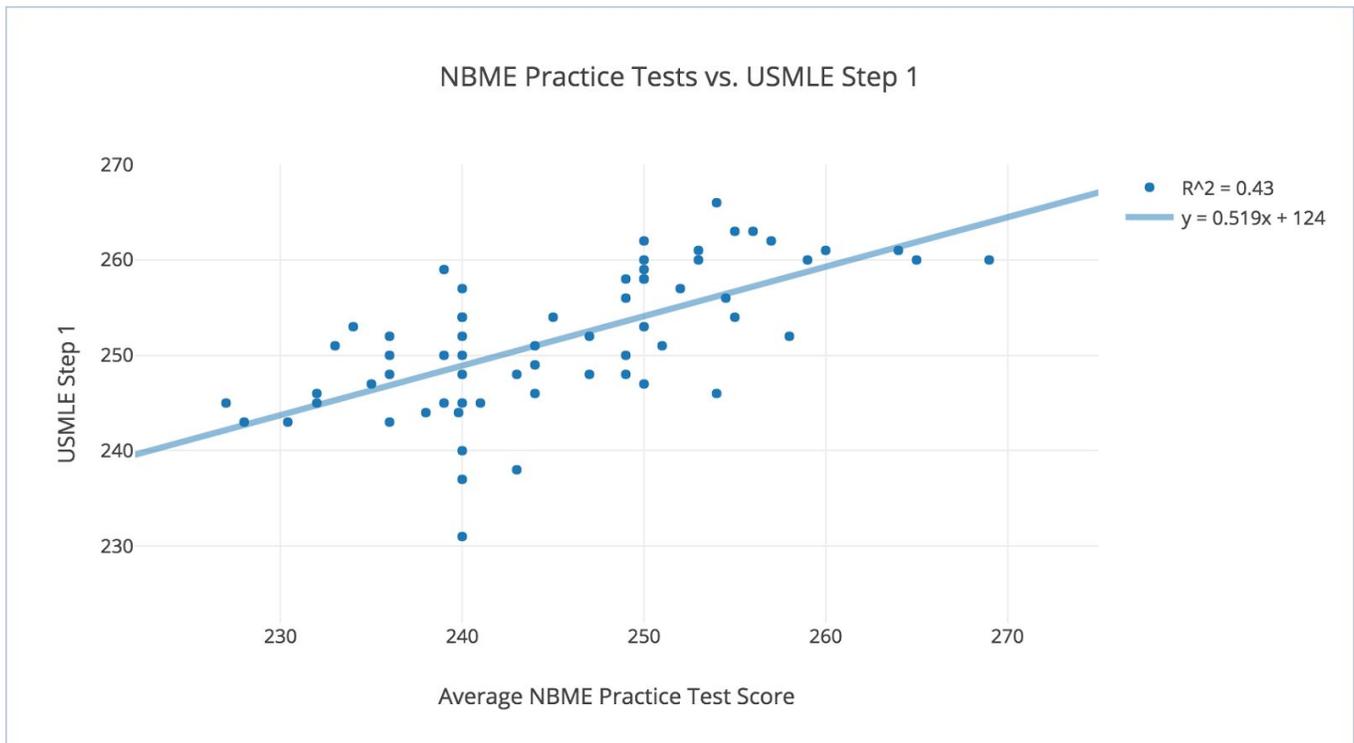
hours/day studied with others: 3.19 ± 1.9

Exclusive Step 1 studying during Term 5:

- 9% Not at all/ 41% Infrequently/ 37% Frequently/ 13% Significantly

WMPG vs. USMLE Step 1





Resources

Study Materials

- Percent of students who used resource in parentheses

	Vital	Important	Somewhat Important	Unimportant
First Aid (97%)	80%	13%	7%	0%
Pathoma (77%)	44%	25%	24%	7%
Sketchy Micro (56%)	60%	13%	15%	13%
Sketchy Pharm (51%)	61%	22%	17%	0%
SGU Lecture Notes (25%)	0%	50%	50%	0%
Kaplan (23%)	13%	31%	38%	19%
Anki: Brosencephalon (16%)	54%	19%	9%	18%
BRS (13%)	11%	22%	66%	0%

Goljan (7%)	40%	40%	20%	0%
Picmonic (6%)	0%	0%	100%	0%
Firecracker (4%)	33%	33%	33%	0%
Dr. Najeeb (3%)	0%	50%	50%	0%

- **Boards and Beyond (13%)**
- **DIT (6%)**

Question Banks

- Percent of students who used resource in parentheses

	Vital	Important	Somewhat Important	Unimportant
UWorld (100%)	96%	4%	0%	0%
Kaplan (24%)	12%	41%	35%	12%
USMLE-Rx (23%)	19%	37%	44%	0%
First Aid Q&A (4%)	0%	33%	67%	0%
Pastest (11%)	0%	0%	88%	12%

- **UWorld Stats**
 - Average # questions done: 4133.7
 - Average percentile rank: 86.5%

Practice Tests

- Percent of students who used resource in parentheses

	Vital	Important	Somewhat Important	Unimportant
NBME (92%)	74%	18%	6%	1%
UWorld (85%)	66%	25%	7%	2%

Courses

Did you complete any courses?

- Yes: 38% (27 students)
- No: 62% (44 students)

Which courses (# of students who took course in brackets)? How useful (1 = unimportant, 6 = vital)?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Kaplan [12]	8%	8%	25%	17%	33%	8%
Doctors in Training [11]			9%	45%	18%	27%
The Institute of Medical Boards (Kansas City) [4]				50%		50%
Med School Tutors [3]			33%		67%	
USMLEagle [1]						100%

Advice

Advice for Term 5

Relax
Study for step and class simultaneously
<p>Use term 5 to learn pharm really well, so you don't have to review it again. For each pathophys week, review that system's physiology and pathology, ideally compiling it into First Aid so you have everything in one place. You will not have time to go over any older material during dedicated prep, but even simply reviewing it during term 5 will help you bring everything together. However, it's still important to focus on pathophys as a stand-alone course, it can seem redundant, but a lot of things that weren't in First Aid and seem too detailed can still pop up as questions in UWorld or even Step itself.</p> <p>But with all that, do not overwork yourself and burn out. This is a marathon. I'd take full days off during the semester and during my dedicated prep, and I never really hit that block where I couldn't keep studying. A day spent on struggling through an hour-worth of material when you are exhausted is far less productive than taking that day off completely and having some extra energy to catch up the next day.</p>
<p>Start using u world and first aid starting at the beginning of term 5! I don't think starting any earlier is necessary. Don't neglect regular classes to study for step. Working hard in pharm pays off when you are studying for step . I found that I did not need to do much pharm review since it was fresh from term 5.</p>
<p>Mainly focus on your classes and if time permits review First Aid for previous terms' materials. Get Boards and Beyond! It is great for your classes and Step prep.</p>
<p>Personally, I did the usmlerx and kaplan qbanks during term 5 along with the class material. I saved uworld for my dedicated study time which was the best decision since I was able to have a great fresh set of questions. I did all my questions random and timed which is vital. Also do not slack on pathophys and pharm studying in term 5 since they are extremely high yield (especially the up/down arrow questions). Try and get through first aid twice</p>

in term 5. After all this, you should be practically prepared for step 1 by the nbme cbse exam at the end of term 5. During dedicated time, all I used was FA, pathoma and uworld. Looking back, I think I was able to score in the 260s because I did all three qbanks as well as worked my butt off since day 1 of medical school. Never underestimate the knowledge you acquire in T1 through T5.

I found it really helpful to study BSFCR and Pathophysiology as if I was studying for Step. Since these two classes are organized by organ system, I found it really helpful to review the notes for these classes then look at corresponding sections in First Aid and in class notes that I had made from terms 1-4. This way I felt like I was studying for class, but also fitting in some Step studying at the same time. I also made it a goal of mine to finish all the UWorld questions by the end of Term 5 (I would do 20-40 Qs each morning) so that I had time to go through it a second time when I started studying exclusively for Step. The explanations in UWorld are great and I would make notes for concepts I had never seen before, so I could do a nice quick review of those principles.

Start UWorld soon after unifieds. It is very difficult to get through Uworld 2x if you don't start it early on. Same with annotating and studying First Aid. Definitely use first aid to study for pathophys. By doing all this, you will already have had a first pass of first aid and Uworld by the time the term ends AND have aced Term 5 exams. Oh and also--use ninja + sketchy!! They will be your best friends for pharm.

Don't start your UWORLD too early but definitely try to do some questions in the mornings and then maybe 40 on weekends. Focus on Pharm while you are learning it because you want to learn it really well and they teach it very well. Also read through FA and Pathoma for the sections of PathoPhys being learned that week.

Study pharm very very well because once you know it you spend MINIMAL time (if any just rematch sketchy) during dedicated step period
-also if u want to step study start after the first midterm there is PLENTY of time have fun a bit and get the hang of term 5

Learn pharm!!! Dr. Clunes has the course set up for STEP prep. I did not study any pharm besides ninja from term 5. I did a 1 day review during my dedicated time because I built the foundation while I was in term 5. Also rewatch the pathoma sections for the pathophysiology section that you are doing. its a good review for the class and will help you with step studying.

Use Qbanks as practice questions for classes, and annotate FA or other review books with class.

study for step

Start working through your first pass of uworld and first aid but don't stress too much because it is important to know term 5 material.

Dont worry about classes so much or your WMPG. By reading FA and doing Uworld during the semester it will prepare you for Step and Class. Just cram lecture notes the week before the exams. I didnt follow this and i feel that had I ignored class a little more and done more step prep i would've scored significantly higher. Also, sketchy pharm is worth the effort trust me!

Study for term 5, especially for pathophys

Start UW right away and chip away at it during lecture or whenever you get the time. I downloaded the app on my phone so instead of playing video games I would do questions. Try to make studying fun while preparing for step. DO NOT READ INTO NBME scores they are a joke! I scored an average in the 230s during those tests then got a 253 on step. Something is wrong with that picture if you ask me.

Do UWORLD questions alongside the pathophys course!!! It will help you prepare for pathophys AND study for step! For example, if pathophys spent one week on cardio, I would try my best to finish all the cardio uworld questions that week. I also did the pharm uworld questions alongside the pharm course. Take this time to really go over the uworld questions and annotate FA as necessary with the uworld notes - it will cut down on note taking during your dedicated step period. At the end of 5th term, I had about 80% of UWORLD complete. This made it easier to do UWORLD 2.5x overall.

For pathophys, I only read FA. Never read the lecture notes EXCEPT when upadhya was teaching. Definitely go over his notes for the exam since he writes it. I also did pathoma alongside pathophys.

For pharm, read the lecture notes; you don't need to read the supplemental lecture notes. I didn't and I did fine. Do sketchy pharm. Do pharm UWORLD questions; they used some of the pharm questions from UWORLD on their exams.

Complete a full pass through both First Aid and UWorld before the term is over. Follow along Pathophys with First Aid. Try to complete anywhere from 10-30 UWorld questions/day.

Study pharm hard, doing well in the class will mean you don't need to study much pharm during the dedicated step studying period. read first aid for the section you are covering in BSFCR and pathophys that week so you get 1 pass during term 5. don't worry about the lecture notes from the visiting pathophys professors, a lot of time they go into their research which is not relevant for step. dr. upadhya's lecture notes are very helpful tho and cover things that will be on step. I also listened to DIT and boards and beyond (for neuro and biochem) instead of pathophys lectures. for uworld, i got thru 35% during term 5 which was fine. i just did the questions for the section that we were covering that week. take time to enjoy the island before you leave because grinding during the dedicated step studying period is rough.

Do at least 10-20 UWorld questions per day.

Take the first half of the term to learn the term 5 coursework. Pharmacology is essential, and BSFCR is great review. Don't focus on Uworld until after the first exams, and then dedicate at least 1-2 hours per day on Uworld during the second half of the term. Following final exams, devote 6 hours per day to doing Uworld, and 1 hour to review it, and 1 hour to review First Aid. Those are the only resources necessary. Don't buy extra courses or waste time with extra resources. Exercise every day. Eat a clean diet. Sleep 8 hours a night. Enjoy your life when you're not studying.

Review pathoma during that week's system and do your best to study pharmacology

Term 5 is vital for integration, but you have to do the integrating.

Focus on Term 5 material and not Step 1 as long as you will have 6 dedicated weeks after classes end

Start integrating UWorld in your everyday studying, but do not underestimate the importance of doing well in Pharmacology, Pathophysiology, and BSFCR, as pretty much all the material covered in these classes is vital for Step1 and is a great review. Make sure to finish strong! Take care of your WMPG first and then take care of your Step preparation. Doing well in term 5 courses is a solid predictor of how ready you are for Step examination, and represents a big chunk of what is often tested by USMLE! I did not change my strategy going into term 5 and that made the integration of some UWorld questions into my everyday routine much easier.

Start studying at the beginning of term 5 and take an NBME practice test within the first month of term 5.

Focus on passing Term 5, and don't forget to enjoy yourself. Everything will be alright, just trust in that.

Set aside a couple hours each week for dedicated step studying time, but don't let that interfere with learning all the drugs for Pharmacology (some of which definitely come up on Step) and really tying together all of the concepts in Pathophysiology with the corresponding pathology images. If you can tutor, do it to prep for term exams but also step. If you can tutor someone on subjects you probably would rather avoid (ie. cardio embryology and the first 3 weeks of development?), do it. Really prep well for those tutoring sessions and you won't have to touch them again for step prep. Do not rely solely on Uworld for learning what SGU won't teach, and save those for step preparation. I used the Kaplan Qbank heavily during Term 5 to prep for exams and really learn all of the small details that aren't always asked about in Uworld (but definitely helped me with pathophys and Step). If you have DIT videos, or can get a hold of them, they can be helpful supplements to watch during Term 5/as part of your prep for NBME and BSCEs.

Uworld and first aid for each section
Start STEP studying NOW! I used DIT as my first pass through FA, and went through most of FA at least twice if not more before the beginning of dedicated study time. I went through Pathoma like it was a bible. Dr sattar is amazing, LISTEN to the videos over and over again. Each time you'll catch something new. Take practice exams, and stay motivated.
Cover First Aid and Pathoma for each module you cover.
Just as I did in the beginning of term 5, I utilized the topics in term 5 reviewed by pathophys and pharm to review ALL previous course material from SGU on that subject matter. For example, if pathophys was reviewing cardio i would review the histology, anatomy (thorax, yes do Grey's questions again), physiology, and finally the related pathology that week. I would then do pretest physiology (again) and Robbins pathology review (again) questions during the weekends. Whenever you come across a certain slide or piece of information that you think is valuable, take a screenshot of it and create an archive, i will explain in the step 1 advice section on how that can be handy. I can easily say that I knew many minute and detailed questions on step 1 that our school has taught-most of these question are NOT found in review books such as First Aid. Lastly, reviewing principles such as physiology made pathophys and pharm easy all the while helping you prepare for step 1.
Same old advice essentially that got you that far. Try to stay on top of T5 work. I personally did not get a lot of UWORLD done during the term. My plan was to do the disciplines/ sections that applied to the topic in Pathophys at the time, but this did not always happen and definitely it didn't happen in time, I was always behind. So try to ensure that doesn't happen. But the course work itself is very helpful, stuff like BSFCR is a beautiful summary and review of previous concepts. Term 5 is be no means a walk in the park but after term 4, it will feel a bit lighter. Just keep reviewing and trying to stay current on the terms work primarily.
make a good dent or get through uworld once during the semester & get pharm down during the semester so you don't need to give it much attention during step studying
I studied enough for term 5 to get solid A's and whatever time left I did Uworld. Try to make studying for term 5 fit into step studying. eg. if you're doing heart stuff in pathophys, read the cardiac section of first aid. Also try to finish Uworld by the time you finish term 5. I did not finish it, but I was close.
Take it seriously. Workload is extensive and you should stay on top of our game as well as start to prepare for Step as you go through the term
Study hard for pathophys with first aid and pathophys uworld questions and do well in pharm so you wont have to spend much if any time on it during dedicated study time
Study for the step
Start uworld
Focus on term 5 but make sure you have gone through first aid at least once while studying. BSCE is 40% biochemistry so study up on that the weekend before - I took 3 full days for it and rocked biochem on NBMEs and Step. Pharm is a dream course if you like things well laid out and solving problems; it's a bit like biochemistry in that way so know your class notes well (and definitely supplement with sketchy!). Do not waste time on class notes for pathophys unless they are Dr. Upadyha's. Use this class as an opportunity to go over first aid and Uworld - some of their information will show up on the test even if you didn't learn it in class.
My study time at SGU usually involved trying to find a single room in which no one was "group studying," i.e. not working effectively and obviating the ability of anyone else to effectively study around them. When I could find a quiet room, I would study lecture notes and do uworld, more the latter than the former. My advice to term 5 would be, accordingly, to shut up and study.
Everything you learn is vital throughout the 2 years in medical school. Some of my peers slacked and if you are that person Term 5 you need to work harder than ever.

Try to do a first pass through UWorld -- unimportant if you actually finish all the questions, by the subject area as they are covered in pathophys and pharm just to get used to the style and the questions

Save UWorld for your dedicated study time and focus on Rx questions during Term 5

Learn pharm like the back of your hand. It is great review of physio, pathophys, and really gives you more time for other subjects while studying for step if you're good with pharm from term 5. Also, use bsfcr wisely, it is a great exposure to old material.

Complete one pass of UWorld during term 5

Start question banks early

Make sure to a lot time daily for STEP studying

Learn pathophysiology and pharmacology very well during the term to minimize dedicated studying time as well as to gauge your weaknesses in terms of organ system. A bit of biochemistry and biostats review throughout term 5 couldn't hurt but it's not a necessity.

Pathoma at least once should be your goal for Term 5. I listened to a few sections which I was weak in. I also started reading and annotating FA at the start of term 5. I had almost done my first pass at the time the semester ended. I used FA as my primary resource for Pathophys. At the time I used the lecture notes to see investigations for particular diseases so that my prep for SGU exams was complete. Pharm department is strict but also very helpful. I realized that because my pharm was relatively solid by the end of the term, I wasn't stressing out about it during my dedicated step prep.

Begin to start studying for STEP by using USMLE-Rx videos or watching DIT. Start UWorld early, it is important to get through UW multiple times and thoroughly understand all the answers (this takes time)

Find a way to combine step studying with term 5 subjects

Trust in the pharm department, they are terrific. Boards and Beyond and Pathoma are great resources to study for pathophys. Do 10-20 Uworld questions a day, spending an hour per 10 questions. By March, April I was doing 30-40 q's a day.

Enjoy yourself because your dedicated time is miserable. Give yourself a break for the real deal. That being said, having pharm down cold is critical. I barely had to study pharm for step because it was fresh in my head. Use pathophys just to get your first pass through first aid, that will help you a lot during dedicated.

Do not freak out. Just put up the SGU's bullshit one last term and your out of here. The last month gets stressful with exams, so just know that going in. Sell your scooter early.

Practice pharm the small group cases are the best. If you can get DIT videos just 10 minutes long but you can learn a lot. You can do it believe it.

Advice for Step 1

Trust your method. Don't waste time on reddit and other forums during dedicated time.

One main advice I can give is to remember that it's not only a test of knowledge or logic, but it's also a test of endurance - both mental and psychological. The psychological aspect cannot be understated. I went into the exam thinking I know just about everything high-yield there was. I consistently felt comfortable during UWorld, scoring in the 95th percentile with my last 20 blocks averaging about 90%. I never had below A- in any sgu course. And yet, a good 10% of Step 1 questions were things I've never even seen before, and it seemed to be

getting only worse with each block (I semi-guessed on probably 15 questions in the last block). But I knew that if I don't know it, it's not likely that everyone else somehow knows it, and clearly that was a correct assumption, since I scored over 260. Trust yourself, trust your knowledge, and don't let random/low-yield/poorly-written/unclear questions throw you off, even if you get 5 of them in a row. And another advice is to not let anyone tell you how you need to study or take the exam if you have a method that clearly works for you. For instance, a lot of people talk about allotting the 1 hour of break-time during the exam. I know that taking breaks throws me off, so I only took a single 20 min break for lunch after 4 blocks. It was exhausting, but I knew that throwing my focus off would have been worse. So again, trust yourself, do not change how you do things when you have an important exam, it's a dangerous strategy.

Take one full day off per week! Exercise and eat well. Studying for step can be tiring and repetitive, so recharging is so important. Also register to take a practice step 1 exam at the testing center you plan to take the actual step 1 at. This way you are accustomed to the testing center procedures already.

When you start your dedicated study do the first Uworld test 1 to see where you're at. Do two blocks of Uworld every morning in timed mode with all sections selected, not tutor mode. Then review your weaknesses noon to afternoon using all your resources, I loved Boards and Beyond for this. Do First Aid/Pathoma reading in the evening. Do sketchy before bed. Every week do an NBME leading up to test day. A few days before do the Uworld test 2. Take off completely the day before.

The biggest piece of advice is to study hard in your classes from term 1. Learn as much as possible from lectures, labs, books etc. Other than that, master first aid, pathoma, uworld, usmlerx, and kaplan qbanks. Try not to memorize. Instead learn and apply concepts. I had maybe 5 straight recall questions on step 1. The other 275 had you apply a concept or analyze data/graph/picture to come up with the answer.

My best advice for Step 1 is don't freak out- you know way more than you think you know! I started to get really nervous that I was forgetting things I had reviewed early in my Step prep, but I was just working myself up for no reason. If you slowly prepare for the exam throughout Term 5 and then have a few weeks/months that you study exclusively Step material then you will set yourself up for success. While the studying may seem long and frustrating at the time, if you just make a plan and commit yourself to studying for it then all your hard work will pay off!

SGU prepares you well enough, you just need to push yourself and practice the knowledge you already have in your head. Repetition was a big thing for me; I always kept reading things from first aid. Sometimes I would see a topic 4-5 times before it really stuck in my head. I also wrote down key points from UWorld into a journal (writing sticks in my head better than typing) that I would go over every other week or so. READ UWORLD ANSWERS!! Even if you think it is an easy question, read the description. It's like a textbook, but the best one you will ever read for this exam. It can be frustrating, because it makes doing questions take FOREVER (sometimes hours for just 40 questions), but it is so worth it. I did not get through Uworld 2x fully, but I did well on Step because I was very thorough in my first pass of UWorld. I spent a lot of time on the answers and really tried to understand the content of each question. Also, I came to realize Step 1 is 70% a reading exam...you have all the answers in your head, but the way they word questions and answers is where they get many people. It took me 2+ NBME's to really figure out the question style and work through other important test taking skills (i.e. not switching answers or not overthinking wording in questions etc).

Figure out the best way to study as quickly as possible and adjust as time goes. Make a schedule for yourself so you have motivation to keep up with it but don't let your schedule stress you out too much. I did about 4 NBMEs just to make sure I was consistently doing around the same but I scored 8 pts higher than my avg NBME score so don't take it hard if you are not doing well. I did much better than my highest NBME score. UWSA 2 was an excellent predictor for me. UWSA1 was an overpredictor but all in all I preferred UWSA because they were difficult and more like the real STEP. The real STEP was VERY HARD. Harder than any practice test I ever took but even though it was hard, I performed fine so do not stress about it after the test, IEA usually does great.

Start studying early on! Know yourself and your study habits and do what works for you. If you can't study for 10 weeks, then cram it in for 6 and take the test when YOU feel comfortable, not when people say you should.

Don't listen to what other people are doing. Only you know how you need to study and what you need to be

doing. I was not doing great on NBMEs and scored 15 points better than my average on my actual STEP because I know the type of test taker I am. Use your resources and just stay focused. 6 weeks is a long time to dedicate only to studying and you can easily get burned out but if you just keep with it, it will all be worth it once the test is over.

Get one pass in uworld before dedicated step studying. And have gone through first aid once.

study for step

Trust your study methods that you have used for the past two years. Don't change how you study if it is working.

Dont fear it. I did 1 pass of FA and 1 pass of Uworld, i kept feeling like everybody else was ahead of me all the time but i ended up outscoring several of those people. Dont let the practice NBMEs bring you down, i had my dark days when my score would regress, you just have to keep pushing. Think back to your SAT and MCAT days. Did taking courses help you? Was studying on your own more effective? I did this and took a risk by not doing any courses, worked out in the end.

Uworld, read at least the learning objective of each question even if you get it right

Start using FA during second term and really come familiar with it backwards and forwards as it will save you a lot of time when studying for 5th term and step. Also always try to find out the bigger picture on how something works not just memorizing worthless details.

The best advice someone gave to me that I want to share with you all - **DON'T CHANGE YOUR STUDY HABITS**. You're in IEA for a reason; you know how to study. So don't try to do anything drastic that you think might better prepare you for step. If you study alone, keep studying alone. If you're used to taking naps like me during the day, keep on doing that! If you go to the gym to destress, keep on doing that! In the end, STEP is just another exam.

Find out what study method works for you. I figured this out by learning what worked for me at SGU. Repetition was key to my success at SGU and I'm an audio/visual learner. For example, I LISTENED to pathoma 3x (once in 4th term, once in 5th term, and again during my step period) listened to sketchy micro 2x (once in 4th and during step period) and listened to sketchy pharm 2x (once during 5th and once during step period). I had gone over FA 3x (once in 5th term, 2x during dedicated step). Obviously, this method won't work for everyone. But repetition and listening to videos helped me succeed in my classes at SGU so I incorporated that into my STEP study.

LESS IS MORE. I cannot stress this enough but UFAPS (UWORLD, FA, pathoma, and both sketchy's) is more than enough. Please do sketchy; I killed my pharm and micro section on step because of these 2 resources. Yes, sketchy pharm is long but I'm not exaggerating when I say that pharm in STEP is ALL sketchy pharm. 80% of questions on STEP is covered by UFAPS. The other 20% will unfortunately be random stuff that you probably have never come across before or will never bother to study during your step period. From my experience, even if I gave myself more time to study, there was no way I would have studied or encountered that 20%.

I took practice NBMEs / UWORLD SIMs every Saturday. I would then go over the wrong answers with my friend. This was the only "group" study I did but it didn't take more than an hour. I would then take the rest of the day off. This became my "break" day.

Speaking of, TAKE BREAKS. Do something that de-stresses you EVERYDAY. For me it was going to the gym and watching TV. Do not cut yourself off from the world - socialize! I'm not saying go out and rage, but go to dinners once in a while or grab some coffee with a friend. You will start to feel burnt out around your 5th week (if you study >4wks). If you start to feel burnt out, take a day off. It will mentally reboot you.

All of the hard work that you put in will finally pay off. Just keep at it, you're almost there. Best of luck.

Don't panic when taking the test. You will see questions that are nothing like you've seen before. Trust yourself

and use the knowledge that you know. Don't let panic make you second guess yourself. Questions can be frustrating from the first block that stick with you until the last block so have a short memory.

the test will be hardest test you ever take. there's questions that we never have learned that you just have to give your best shot and move on so don't panic. in week 6-7 of my studying i started forgetting stuff so it is better to study more intensely for a shorter period rather than taking 9-10 weeks in my opinion. i also followed a schedule that DES helped me put together which was very helpful. the older nbmes are written differently than the newer ones but my last 2 nbmes were 252 and 250 which is what i got on the exam so they were good predictors.

Use Sketchy, DIT and UWorld and make a schedule and stick to it!

Study 8 hours a day. Anything more may be counterproductive and cause early burnout. I took the exam July 1st, and honestly felt just as prepared by June 25th when I did a practice Step1 exam at the testing center. Eat lots of fruits and vegetables, and a clean diet. Exercise an hour every day. Don't consume alcohol or stay out late partying. Sleep 8 hours a night. Don't study at your house; find a library. Enjoy your evenings with family or friends, to ensure a happy, healthy mind. Healthy minds think and retain information best. Just use Uworld, First Aid, and Sketchy only if you feel the need to. Don't overwhelm yourself with extra resources, and don't compare your study techniques to anyone else. Just remain confident, and remind yourself of HOW MUCH you know when you start to feel nervous. Stay positive, and if you find yourself anxious or have trouble sleeping, attempt to do a guided meditation before bed. They really are helpful! BEST OF LUCK!

I would advice to save one to two hundred uworld questions toward the very end of the dedicated study time. I found the thinking process I developed while doing uworld to be the most helpful one, and this thinking process could be lost if you start doing other question bank.

Focus on First Aid and only use other resources if you feel the information in First Aid isn't enough

Study your ass off leading up to the exam because you only get one chance. Then take 2 days off right before you take it.

NBME questions and Uworld questions are easier than the real thing. Don't waste time doing more than 3 NBMEs as they are not really representative anymore (since Step 1 questions are now longer and more involved)

Frankly, I stock to the well-known success frame: UFAP (UWorld, FirstAid, Pathoma), there is more than enough information in just these 3 resources given that your time allocated for preparation is usually less than 2 months, so overwhelming yourself with extra resources is not the smartest idea. Though, if you did find some resources to be extra useful during your Basic Sciences years, use them by all means. From my experience, mastering UFAP gives you a pretty good chance of scoring high on Step 1.

If you are disciplined you do not need a course. You have all the materials and knowledge you need to be successful on the exam. Do all the practice tests and practice questions.

Start your UWorld question bank as soon as they send you the link in Term 5, and don't forget to use your FA book as well! Be a sponge and absorb everything and anything you can into your noggin.

I did not have an hourly schedule, but instead a reasonable task list for what I wanted to cover each day or couple of days for my step review. I did the Kaplan course on the island but did not always go to class (8h of lecture each day for 5 or 6 day blocks with a couple of days off in between), instead electing to make the most out of my self-study time. Whether you choose to do Kaplan or DIT, pick a primary resource for preparation and stick with it. I couldn't stand the online Kaplan videos and supplemented my self-study and Qbank reviews with DIT videos and pathoma. Create a schedule (or ask upper termers for theirs) that allows for a consistent sleep schedule and time off for mental breaks each week. Try not to get overwhelmed, and if you need someone to talk to, reach out to students in the terms above you. I would have lost my mind if I didn't have a couple of friends I saw each day who also studied in Modica. However you choose to prep for the exam itself, also make sure you mentally prepare yourself for whatever you end up scoring since you're stuck with that if you pass. We've all done it, and we all understand how hard it is. It's a difficult exam, you'll make some stupid mistakes and feel

terrible coming out of it, but try not to beat yourself up about it too much. There may be a delay in score release, but just keep in contact with Clin Ed.

U world 90%, FA 10%

Don't let NBME define you! Go into the exam knowing you have it your all you'll do fine. You will never be ready for the exam. You'll walk out angry and defeated and feel like you hit a brick wall, but it'll be okay!

Start First Aid term 1 and use it like a bible so when you get to dedicated, you already know everything in it. Save UWorld for dedicated and use USMLE-RX QBank during term 5 - it gives explanations right out of first aid so it hammers the information over and over - repetition is key. Do all the practice NBME exams - my last 3 exams predicted my score within 2 points.

Utilize SGU's lecture notes!! I reviewed all the lectures for every subject and it helped tremendously on Step 1 to answer difficult questions in physiology, pharmacology, biochem, and especially behavioral science. NBMEs are essential to gauge your standing and proficiency, do not take them lightly and create a test like environment (8am exam time, cubicle, etc) for each exam. A week prior to the exam i utilized my screenshot archive to review high yield lecture slides that i either forget easily or find very important in terms of concepts, etc. By doing this you will have a ton of information fresh in your brain that you may have forgotten because you studied it in the beginning. First aid and pathoma should be used as a review and not a primary study source, i am so happy with taking the harder route by studying SGU lecture notes. Good luck!

Notwithstanding what I've said above, I think I saw UWORLD as this daunting thing but you don't have to start out doing 2 blocks a day, every day. Set aside some time maybe once a week in the beginning and do a block. And then gradually increase it. I think I would've been in less of a stressful place when it came to step if I had done this. Dr. Madden makes it sound like if you're not doing UWORLD from the womb then you're doomed. Please don't think u should be doing UWORLD in term one. You don't know enough and it will only frustrate you and cost u money. Perhaps buy it/request it during the break between terms 4 & 5.

In terms of step prep, follow the advice of the person they bring in to talk to you guys. He was really good. I made my schedule based on his advice. On the day, try and stay calm, I know it's hard. But try. Don't let the length of the exam freak you out. I thought of it as seven separate one hour exams versus a big eight hour exam because that was just too much for me to process. I would also suggest that you take small little snacks, preferably something healthy like fruit and granola bar since you don't really have a lot of time between the signing in and signing out process it really takes up a lot of your time.

Try to forget about any questions from a previous section you weren't sure about. You submitted it and you can't change it. During a section don't let one question fluster you. My first question raised my HR so quickly but then I came back to it in the end and I was like oh, so simple. So try to move on from a question if you find it's taking too much time.

And finally, be confident. You've studied all the material and it's in there somewhere! Good luck

pace yourself

Ideally you can finish Uworld twice by the time you take step. I didn't finish twice, but only had about ~180 questions left of my second pass left. I could have finished it but in the last couple days before step I felt like just reviewing first aid instead.

I did not do a review course. I just used first aid and pathoma. I watched all the pathoma vids prior to my dedicated step studying time so i didn't have to watch them again. I just read the book.

I don't wanna sound cocky but I think a review course would have slowed me down. If you're IEA and on top of your stuff, and study better on your own, you don't need a review course.

Take your time, do not rush through studying and TAKE YOUR BREAKS (1 day per week). Burnout is real and it happened to me. I should have done better on the step but exhausted myself because I gave myself no room to breath. If you are reaching high marks earlier than you thought, take the exam as soon as possible because students tend to peak and then burnout after that. Try and take the exam before the burnout point happens. Biggest mistake I have ever made.

do uworld + one more q-bank if a 250+ is desired

make a schedule and keep it! Personally, I would do uworld questions in the morning and then review first aid and my uworld notes at night. Take notes on your uworld questions, both correct and incorrect, and read over them daily. Taking notes on uworld did take forever and really made it so i could only do about 20 to 40 questions a day during dedicated but knowing those explanations is key.

Make a schedule

This is the hardest test you will ever take. Make sure you know your first aid and uworld well - they'll give you a few easy points on the exam. BUT if you want a high score don't settle for just UFAP - they will give you 50% of the questions but the other 50% is taken from EVERYTHING you learned these past 2 years. You may think things are minor details or even not medicine but ANYTHING can show up, so if you want a high score you have to supplement your knowledge or do something different to everyone else. I used later terms to run over class notes from term 1,2,3,4 and it definitely helped me remember minor details on STEP. Lastly, in the weeks following the exam you will freak out. Use NBMEs to get used to the feeling of doing horribly, then checking your score to find out you know more than you think.

Pathoma, lecture notes, UWorld. And again, shut up and study, all day every day.

This follows my Term 5 advice. You will NOT get through nearly as much information as you did in the first two years of medical school. With that said dedicated study time should involve condensing and applying the information you know. You should also be tackling your weaknesses. UWorld is essential. Also timed random blocks of 40. For weeks 1-4 do two blocks a day. For the last 2/3 weeks do three locks a day and start redoing your incorrects.

My last piece of advice is give yourself time off. I decreased my studying time in my last weeks to benefit my mental state. It is essential to have fun on your day or half a day off. You should have one day off per week.

While UW is a great question bank, the questions on the NBME are very different. It is unfortunate that there are so few NBME practice tests, because those are the kinds of questions that matter for the test. In the end, your STEP score will line up much more closely with your NBME score than your UW scores, because you are likely to have done so many more UW style questions, and will get used to the content and style.

Exam is unlike anything ever written. If you have done well throughout all SGU coursework it should translate into a good step score.

Learn the material as best you can during the two basic sciences years and it will take a huge load of stress off of your back when you go to review it for step.

Be able to understand every UWorld question backwards, forwards and sideways, the step questions are not identical to any of the questions you have seen but if you know the concepts you can answer them.

Take practice tests regularly to see where you stand and focus on your weak points from there. Time management may become a problem even if it has never been before on the actual exam.

A very difficult exam, but not impossible. Nicely written and very clear stems. Bottom line: It's easy to study what you're good at, but it's those who dedicate themselves to turning their weaknesses into strengths that end up dominating this exam.

Try to do at 2 passes of UWorld, I never even got to complete the bank once which I now realize was a big mistake. Skimming through all high yield stuff in the 2 days before step was very useful for me since many easy to forget points can be picked up. Other than that, FA at least 2 times.

DIT was so important to do. Do NOT waste your money on the Kaplan course unless you are extremely weak in your basic sciences. Overall DIT and Boards and Beyond are the best resources you can use along with First Aid and the UWorld Q bank.

Every day counts. No mercy

The best way to study for step 1 is to have a great term 5. Try to make Term 5 your best term at SGU so you can go into dedicated with your confidence at an all-time high. If you do well in pharm, you should be able to answer nearly every pharm q on Step. That's 15% of the test right there. Pathophys is a great review for path and some physio. Do 10-20 Uworld questions a day, spending an hour per 10 questions. By March, April I was doing 30-40 q's a day. Annotate FA during Term 5 according to the corresponding lectures in pathophys. Pre-read pathophys with Pathoma. I thought Boards and Beyond was an invaluable resource during term 5 and step studying. It's great for your first run-through of FA since it mirrors the book. I used UWorld to relearn anatomy and Uworld and Boards to relearn neuro and biochem. Try to do an NBME or UWorld Assessment every week during dedicated, I did about 7. My step score was the exact same as UWorld 2. Uworld 1 is inflated. Take the NBMEs really seriously as if they were an actually step exam, have a routine before NBMEs and use that routine before the real deal. Stay Calm and Trust the Process!

Don't freak out and don't burn out. You've learned all this stuff already, now it's time to just refresh your memory.

OK so if you are in IEA you are probably NOT a dumbass who requires dumps to get by. You probably understand the "why" behind most of the material of previous terms. That is good, it means reviewing for step 1 will take less time and should go smoothly.

I want to talk about something that I think many people fail to realize going into step 1. I scored above a 260 not because I'm "super smart" or "a hard worker" rather I did not let the test fuck with me. The exam will have questions on material that you have NEVER heard of. Some incredibly detailed questions where even if you were published on the matter you would still say "WTF are these words?" The point is never get phased. Carry yourself with a sense of nonchalance and swagger. Remember that no one has gotten a perfect score, and that stupid question about the female Chinese hamster ovary was probably experimental (yes there are many experimental questions in the real USMLE).

The examiners are going to put in extremely difficult questions on purpose to see if you can bounce back from them. When you see a hard question, think simple. Try to recall a core medical principle, attempt to apply it, then move on. Do not look back. I know this is the biggest test of your life, but you need to trust yourself. You will not fully understand why the answer you picked is correct, but trust it. Once you spend too much time on one question emotion will take over and you will change your answer to the trap the examiners set you up for. That pent-up emotion will build as the exam goes on and you will second guess yourself time and time again. Do not do that. Be cool.

Anyways I think what I am trying to tell you is do not succumb to stress, have a beer every now and then, and try your absolute best to be completely relaxed when you take practice tests and on test day. Try it out. Good luck - NJR -

It is different but relax. Stressing stops you from thinking. You got it take a breath and do your best.