



Policy Title: Academic Deficiencies and Student Progress

Accountable Dean(s), Director(s), or Office(s):

Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs

Approval Body:

Professionalism & Promotions Committee

RELEVANT LCME STANDARD:

10.3 Policies Regarding Student Selection/Progress and Their Dissemination

POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE:

The LCME states: The faculty of a medical school develop and implement effective policies and procedures regarding, and make decisions about, medical student promotion, graduation, and any disciplinary action. The medical school makes available to all interested parties its criteria, standards, policies, and procedures regarding these matters.

DEFINITIONS:

For purposes of this policy, the following definition applies:

- Academic Deficiency: A grade denoted as Incomplete (I), Condition (C), or Fail (F) [see policy on Grading Criteria].

ADVERSE ACTIONS DUE TO ACADEMIC DEFICIENCIES:

All students with academic deficiencies require review by the Professionalism and Promotions Committee (PPC). The PPC, in accordance with policy and in consultation with relevant course/clerkship directors, makes a recommendation as to the how the deficiency is to be resolved and the impact on the student's promotional status.

Pre-Clinical Deficiencies: Remediation and Advancement Guidelines

Single Deficiency:

- If a student has one 'C' grade at the end of a course/phase, they may remediate by re-examination via a cumulative internal exam or NBME exam. In some cases, remediation may occur by taking a summer course.
 - Students must earn a grade $\geq 70\%$ on the remediation attempt to earn a grade of C/P.
 - Students who score $<70\%$ on the remediation attempt will earn a grade of 'F' and be required to repeat the course.
- If a student has one 'F' grade, they must repeat the course (See Policy on Single Set of Core Standards for Promotion and Graduation).

- Repetition of the course should take place prior to beginning the next academic phase.
- When repeating a failed preclinical course, a student must earn a grade $\geq 75\%$ to earn a grade of 'Pass'.

Two Academic Deficiencies:

- If a student has two 'C' grades and no failures in courses within the same preclinical phase, the student must resolve the 'C' grades by re-examination or course repeat prior to beginning the next academic phase (See Policy on Single Set of Core Standards for Promotion and Graduation).
 - Students must earn a grade of $\geq 70\%$ on the remediation attempt to earn a grade of C/P.
 - Students who refuse the remediation attempt or score $< 70\%$ on the remediation attempt will earn a grade of 'F' and be required to repeat the course.
- A final grade of 'F' in one course and a grade of 'C' in a second course within the same Phase requires *repetition of the academic year (phase)* and approval by the PPC. As part of the review by the PPC, the student must submit a written reflection on their performance and outline what they plan to do differently the next year to ensure success.
 - Repetition of the phase includes participating in and performing at or above 70% in *all courses*, including those that were previously passed. Failure to do so will result in dismissal (See criteria for dismissal below). Note that while previously recorded course grades cannot be replaced for transcript or ranking purposes, the student must be able to demonstrate that they can handle the cognitive load of all courses at once to be promoted to the next academic level.
 - Regarding the failed course, the student will be registered for the course a second time.
 - The original 'F' grade remains on the transcript.
 - If the student passes the repeat attempt, a grade of 'P' will be noted on the transcript for the second attempt.
 - If the student fails the course, they will receive a grade of 'F.' Given that this would be the student's second attempt to pass a single course, the student will be dismissed (See criteria for dismissal below).
 - Regarding the 'C' course, the student will *not* be registered for the course a second time.
 - If successful on the repeat attempt (final grade of 70% or higher), the remediated grade (C/P) will appear for the initial attempt on the transcript.
 - If the student fails the repeat attempt (final grade $< 70\%$), they will receive a grade of 'F'. Given that this would be the student's second attempt to pass a single course, the student will be dismissed (See criteria for dismissal below).

Criteria for Dismissal from the School of Medicine:

- A student will be dismissed from the School of Medicine if they earn a combination of any of the following in a single preclinical phase:
 - Two failures (either same course or 2 different courses)
 - Failure of the same course includes the scenario in which a student repeats the year due to having an 'F' in one course and a 'C' in another course and does not pass the 'C' course on the second attempt.
 - For students repeating the academic year (phase), failure to earn a grade of 70% or higher in *any* course, regardless of prior performance, will result in dismissal. In other words, students must pass all courses and may not condition or fail any courses in a repeated year.
 - Any other combination of three or more deficiencies (1 failure and 2 condition grades or 3 condition grades)
- Students may repeat only one phase of the preclinical curriculum: not *both* Phase 1 and Phase 2.
- Any student deemed by the PPC as unfit for the practice of medicine due to unprofessional behavior or an inability to meet the school's Technical Standards may be considered for dismissal.

Notes:

- A student can receive a 'C' or 'F' grade in a course based on professionalism alone, regardless of academic performance.
- A student who must repeat the academic year due to academic deficiencies is charged appropriate tuition and fees based on the academic year of repetition. Check current tuition policy.
- A student may not advance to the third year until all preclinical deficiencies are resolved (See Policy on Single Set of Core Standards for Promotion and Graduation).
- In order to be eligible for the ballot to serve as a class officer or student leader in an organization, including medical student government, students must be in good academic standing. This means having no in-progress course grades with current averages <70% or any unresolved condition, fail, withdrawn, or incomplete grades on their academic record.
 - Future ability to remediate in-progress course grades will not be a consideration for leadership eligibility.
 - A student who experiences academic difficulties after assuming a leadership role may be required to vacate the position to focus on academic success.

Clinical Deficiencies: Remediation & Advancement Guidelines:

Single Clerkship Deficiency:

- If a student fails a clerkship, a grade of 'F' is recorded on the transcript, and they must repeat the clerkship. When the clerkship is repeated, it is listed again on the transcript along with the grade earned on the second attempt.
- When repeating a clerkship following a failure, a student must meet the parameters established by the clerkship as noted in the clerkship syllabus.

- Failure to meet these parameters results in a second failure of the clerkship and dismissal from the School of Medicine.
- A 'C' grade in a clerkship may be resolved by retaking and passing the NBME Shelf Exam. (see policy on Grading Criteria for remediation timelines)
 - If unsuccessful on the repeat attempt, the student earns a grade of 'F' and must repeat the clerkship.

Two Clerkship Deficiencies:

- A student who has two clerkship deficiencies (combination of I, C, or F but no more than one F) cannot proceed in the clinical curriculum until these deficiencies are resolved. This requires taking a leave of absence to remedy the deficiencies prior to advancement (see Leave of Absence and Return/Re-Admission Policy).

Criteria for Dismissal from the School of Medicine:

- A student will be dismissed from the School of Medicine if they earn a combination of any of the following during years 3 and 4:
 - Two clerkship failures (either same clerkship or 2 different clerkships)
 - Three or more deficiencies (I, C, or F) in required clerkships
- Any student deemed by the PPC as unfit for the practice of medicine due to unprofessional behavior or an inability to meet the school's Technical Standards, may be considered for dismissal.

Notes:

- A student can receive a 'C' or 'F' grade in a clerkship based on professionalism alone, regardless of academic performance.
- In order to be eligible for the ballot or serve as a class officer or leader of a student organization, including medical student government, students must be in good academic standing, having no unresolved condition, failing, or incomplete grades on their academic record. A student who experiences academic difficulties after assuming a leadership role may be required to vacate the position to focus on academic success.

USMLE Promotion Guidelines

- A student must take USMLE Step 1 prior to beginning 4th-year rotations.
 - Students who need additional time after the T3 year to study/prepare for Step 1 may delay beginning T4 rotations by a maximum of 8 weeks. Note that depending on a student's progress toward degree, this may delay graduation. If the student requires more than 8 weeks of study/preparation time, they will be placed on Leave of Absence until the USMLE records a passing score (see Leave of Absence and Return/Re-Admission Policy).
 - Students who take Step 1 prior to beginning 4th-year rotations but don't achieve a passing score will be allowed to complete their current in-progress rotation. They will then be placed on leave of absence until the USMLE records a passing score (see Leave of Absence and Return/Re-Admission Policy).
 - Students who have taken a leave of absence between a completed T3 donut and the T4 year must pass Step 1 before they can return and begin their T4 year.

- All students are recommended to sit for USMLE Step 2 CK no later than December 31 of their T4 year so that in the event of failure, there is sufficient time to study and record a passing Step 2 score prior to graduation. Note, however, that other factors should be considered when determining the exam date, as the Step 2 score is an important consideration for match in certain specialties. Students should consult with their specialty mentor/advisor regarding optimal timing of Step 2.
- A student is allowed a maximum combined total of 24 months leave time for the purpose of meeting USMLE requirements (see Leave of Absence and Return/Re-Admission Policy). Failure to successfully pass USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 CK within this timeframe will result in dismissal.
- Regardless of leave time, a student who fails to pass USMLE Step 1 after three attempts will be dismissed.
- Regardless of leave time, a student who fails to pass USMLE Step 2 CK after three attempts will be dismissed.

LAST REVIEW DATE/APPROVAL:

Professionalism & Promotions Committee: 06/04/24

REVIEW CYCLE:

Annually